**Sprint Review and Retrospective**

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CS-250

10/19/25

Chada tech was hired to complete an overhaul of the SNHU travel application, adding key aspects requested by customers of SNHU. The team we assembled to work on this project used a scrum-agile style approach with a focus on the agile practices such as daily stand ups, sprint reviews, and user stories. The SNHU travel team was one of few teams piloting a trial run as Chada tech transitions to the new scrum agile methodology from the older waterfall method. The purpose of this review is to evaluate the level of success of the agile process, identify lessons learned and assess how agile principles improved the software development flow.

Each role within our team serves a purpose to aid in a smooth method of software development. The product owner interacts directly with the client and the product user to determine the desires of each and also convert those desires into technological terms to better aid the developers and testers in doing their job. Product owners are not an essential part of the daily standup meeting, but are welcome to attend.

There are some people that believe the scrum master is somewhat like a manager to the developers and testers, but it's not quite that simple. While they are in a position over them they act more like a facilitator to aid them with problems that arise outside the scope of software development. They also usually have a significant amount of experience with development, allowing them to guide and mentor the developers and testers. A great scrum master can really help to organize and increase the level of knowledge of their team.

Developers and testers are the individuals that are essentially the “boots on ground” of the team. They work together to create the required piece of the program for the current sprint. Once the developer has completed a portion, the tester puts it through a series of tests that they create based on user stories and the clients desires. It's best for the team when the testers and developers understand each other's job and a little about how they do it. When these two roles have a solid relationship and a good understanding of both roles they will not just have an easier time working on a project, but they will start to create more high quality products over time.

In the scrum agile methodology it's important to utilize user stories to the fullest extent possible. No matter how great the product a development team creates is, if the user base that will actually use it the most is not satisfied then it will be a failure or at least not as successful as it could be. Utilizing regular sprint reviews allows for early feedback and aids in minimizing rework or at least reduces the rework to a smaller portion of the final product. It's also important to seek more information to amplify user stories when questions arise in development to better support the development of a product that fits the desires of both the clients and its users.

During the SNHU travel project some of the user stories either lacked enough details or conflicted with each other or the clients instructions, requiring either the product owner or any part of the scrum team to contact the necessary parties for additional information. At the beginning of the project it was somewhat unclear how the new SNHU travel program would be accessed, some thought it would be a web based program while others thought it was to be a mobile application. After receiving more detailed information, the team was able to determine that the product was to be designed as a custom slideshow tailored to the user that signs in. Each slide would display a recommended destination with detailed info about it tailored to what the user is looking for.

Like the user stories issue, problems arise and must be handled swiftly to keep the project moving at a pace that keeps the time line for completion accurate and without delay. Interruptions are inevitable, so a scrum team must be ready and equipped to handle those interruptions. The best scrum teams will rely heavily on their scrum master to handle any issues outside of the development teams, but that doesn’t mean the developers and testers shouldn’t be ready.

The testers’ and developers’ ability to overcome issues at their level as much as possible will aid in the team's ability to handle all arising problems. When the client makes a sudden change in direction, forcing the team to go back and rework the project. When doing rework the developers can increase their productivity by working with the testers and fully understanding the tests they will develop for the code. Doing this ensures that when requirements shift midway through the project, deadlines can still be met and the quality of the product does not suffer.

Scrum teams are creating a program for a customer, and that customer may want this program for its customer, which makes communication so important. Proper communication starts right away when the client requests a project. The client needs to provide as much information to the product owner as they can before the development begins, doing so ensures the base understanding for the end product is well understood. Communication can be by email, phone, or face to face. No matter the type of communication involved, how the team communicates with the client and users is the important part. Being able to properly take technical wording and change it so a non technical individual understands what you're asking and can give the information necessary for the team to overcome the obstacle.

Communication isn’t just necessary for communicating with those outside of the scrum team either, if the team has poor communication with each other then the team won’t have good cohesion. A team that has good communication operates in a much better fashion then a team that doesn’t. Poor team communication breaks down team cohesion eventually leads to overall failure on projects.

It’s important to start each day with a strong daily stand up, which revolves around the team's communication ability. It’s not uncommon in life to come across different types of people, the most difficult types to incorporate into a well rounded team are those who over power everyone else and those who would rather not speak out. All members of the team need to be active members of the team to properly support and help build the team. A good scrum master will find ways to help the individuals who lack the confidence to give their opinions actually speak out, and vice versa for individuals who tend to talk the most. It's important for a well rounded team to have contributions from all members, which comes from good communication within the team.

When transitioning to a Scrum-Agile method, it's important to utilize the common tools and practices to aid in a smooth transition. Tools like Jira and Trello aid in backlog and sprint management. Trello and Jira provide a helpful support aspect into workflow by giving a visual aid of the tasks for the current sprint and manage dependencies. These tools are key aspects to events like sprint planning, daily stand ups, and sprint reviews that also provide strong support to the scrum methodologies. Sprint plannings set the stage for how the team will proceed through the development process while the daily standups will keep the team on track and at the end its important to perform reviews and retrospectives to improve the process between sprints and projects.

There are great reasons why Agile methodology has gained traction lately. While everything has its own pitfalls, the pros of this method are overwhelmingly helpful to software development. Contrary to older methods Agile methodology offers more flexibility and feedback throughout the development process where older methodologies are hard charged to the end. This prevents products from reaching the deadline and potentially being completely incorrect or needing massive amounts of rework to give a product that actually meets the clients wants. The morale of a team also tends to be higher when using the agile method from every person in the team having more pride in the overall success of the product.

Like any method, there are still cons in agile methodology. If the team lacks cohesion or discipline the project will suffer in terms of meeting sprint deadlines. The agile method relies on a well rounded team to be as successful as possible. It's important to manage additional requests that come in throughout sprints to avoid scope creep as well. Basically all the pros of the Agile method create all the cons, but they can be avoided by a well rounded team that has the desire to excel and is well managed from the top down.

In the end the Agile method will be a great new approach for projects at Chada Tech. Our team ran into its fair share of issues, but it was expected as we tried to iron out the kinks in a new method. As our team continues to utilize this new method I believe it will help us to grow in our strengths, and also aid in identifying our weaknesses providing the opportunity to overcome those weaknesses. We will continue to improve and show other teams that the Agile method will be great for everyone at Chada Tech.

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