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CS-250 SDLC

Professor Washington

**Sprint Review & Retrospective**

In this sprint review and retrospective I will be reflecting on the first iteration of SNHU Travel’s travel app, which the team delivered in this past 30-day sprint. Due to the fact that this was the team’s first experience with agile after transitioning from the old waterfall development model, I would like to assess not only the quality of the team’s final product but also the overall effectiveness of the Scrum-agile approach for the SNHU Travel project and I’d also like to brainstorm any improvements the team could implement for the next sprint.

Our team is the pilot team for ChadaTech’s new Scrum-agile approach to product development. Because of this, my role of Scrum Master is a new one. As Scrum Master, part of my job is to execute sprints. One of the most important aspects of sprint execution is leading daily Scrums with the team. These short meetings allow for communication and collaboration between team members that otherwise might not happen. Daily Scrums are where team members can share what they’ve completed, what they wish to complete, and what they are struggling with so that all are aware of how close the team is to completing the sprint goal. In this past sprint, I facilitated these daily meetings, in which I lead the team by example by opening the daily Scrum and speaking first in order to create a comfortable environment where the team felt open to sharing their progress. In these meetings the team also discussed any impediments to their progress, which I as Scrum master worked to remove so that development could run smoothly. I also used these meetings to refine and adapt the sprint backlog as necessary by listening to developers and marking what had already been completed.

I was very impressed with how the developers jumped into agile headfirst in this sprint. The development team displayed an eagerness to communicate with not only one another but the product owner and stakeholders as well. The speed at which the team was able to produce this first iteration of the SNHU Travel project really highlighted why collaboration is so encouraged in agile. If the developers are willing to share their knowledge with the team and one another, it prevents individual silos (which had a tendency to happen too easily in the old waterfall development model) and allows the team to work together more cohesively because everyone becomes just as knowledgeable as everyone else and so the whole team can share work.

Our product owner was also a massive help during this sprint. She did a fantastic job of meeting face to face with the customer and translating the customer’s vision for the product into digestible user stories. These user stories allowed the team to see the product through the lenses of different types of users who wanted specific things from the product. She really helped to add a human element to the project as developers could use the user stories she created to get into the headspace of each type of user and to understand exactly what they wanted. Her timely organization of the product backlog was also essential to the project, especially when SNHU Travel changed their requirements from lists of destinations to destination slideshows on the app.

The product testers were quick to ask questions, communicate their needs, and also collaborate with the product owner and developers frequently during this sprint. Their enthusiastic participation was crucial, as the testers ultimately ensured that the product met the customer’s expectations and achieved the sprint goal. Below I’ve included a sample email from one of our product testers to our product owner so that the team can see an example of the product tester’s effective communication skills.

Example Email:

Hello Darby,

The user stories you created provide a useful outline for the product tests that I am writing. I believe I am almost fully aware of user’s expectations for SNHU Travel’s new app. The only piece of information I am missing is an understanding of the website design. In order to write the appropriate tests, I would like to know where the user should expect to see each slideshow on the website. Any information you can provide me on this matter will be greatly appreciated.

Thank you,

Dave

Part of the reason the whole team was able to transition to the agile development model so well in this past sprint was partially due to the use of Azure Boards. Azure made it easy for both our in-office and our remote team members to actively and easily participate. It provided ways for them to communicate with one another, to see who is working on what, and to view a digital Kanban board so that they could visualize what was complete, what still needed to be done, and what was up next in the backlog. Before Azure boards, the team was connecting via Google Workspace chat, which was useful, but it was clearly not designed with agile in mind.

Our team’s test run of the new agile development model worked well in this first sprint. The team completed the sprint goal, and version one of the SNHU Travel app is complete. I was particularly surprised at how quickly the team picked up Azure Boards and with how well the team communicated with one another. Agile really gave the team opportunities to collaborate that they otherwise may not have had in the old waterfall development model. The way the Scrum-agile approach broke this large project into manageable pieces kept team morale high and made for fast-moving development. If there are any cons to this approach I would say that it could be challenging for larger teams to adopt. Our team is tight and very small and so it was easier for us to collaborate efficiently. Another con is that if a member of the team were to leave in the middle of the project, it could hurt the timeline as every member is already actively working on something. I think a solution to this issue may be to try pair programming in future sprints. Ultimately though, this new development model is working, and I think it was the best approach to completing the first iteration of the SNHU Travel project. I look forward to future sprints.

Sources:

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