**SNHU Travel Project: Sprint Review and Retrospective**

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As the Scrum Master, it is my responsibility to coordinate the Sprint Review and Retrospective as we conclude the SNHU Travel Project. Although the specifications for the product changed multiple times throughout our work, the team always did a wonderful job adapting and accommodating. A lot of effort went into this project and each member of the team contributed something that was unique to their role and ability. This retrospective will analyze the work done by the team with respect to the application of the Scrum-Agile methodology implemented.

The Product Owner meticulously managed the Product Backlog so that the priorities and progress of the project were always evident to both the client and the team. The information they brought to us from the User Focus Group in the form of User Stories was especially helpful. From there, we were able to add features and tools such as setting a price range on vacation packages, which were above and beyond the client’s expectations. They also did a great job coordinating with the Tester.

Without the Tester’s ability to pin-point acceptable criteria in the software, the Developers would have had a much more difficult time creating a product that was true to the client’s expectations. The Tester recognized issues of ambiguity and over-generalization in the initial User Stories, and worked closely with the Product Owner to resolve those issues. The creative liberties the Developer took with elements of the project -- such as images, background color, and font -- really expedited the completion of the sprint and never overstepped the requirements as laid out in the Test Cases and User Stories.

Coordinating meetings between the team and the stakeholders was my department. I did my best to make sure everyone had the support they needed to complete their tasks on schedule. When the Developer needed to have a face to face meeting with the Product Owner and Tester about specifications for the price-range setting, I moderated and kept it within a reasonable time-box. I also helped to re-prioritize the backlog and sprints when the client decided to change their package focus to detox and wellness.

The Scrum-agile approach was paramount to completing the User Stories for this project. Through organized and focused sprints, daily scrums, and collaboration with the client, we were able to meet the requirements set forth by each of the User Stories. Because we had this framework, it was easy to re-calibrate the sprint and our priorities when the client decided they wanted a slide-show of the top five destinations instead of a list. If we had been using a traditional waterfall method, we may not have heard the client’s preference until we reached the User Acceptance Testing. Not only would our client be disappointed, but we would have had to go all the way back to the drawing board -- wasting time and money.

When the client decided they wanted to change direction with the project to focus on detox and wellness vacations, our team was able to immediately begin remodeling the list of vacations without pause in work from any department. After the Product Owner and I told the team about this decision, we discussed how this would change the User Stories, the current Sprint, and the Product Backlog. Then the Developer began editing the code right away, while the Tester updated and relayed the acceptance criteria. Agile allows us room to improvise, adapt, and react to unexpected shifts in the trajectory of the project.

Overall, I think our team did an exceptional job communicating with each other and the client throughout the project. Both the Tester and the Developer emailed myself and the Product Owner to troubleshoot issues they were having. The Product Owner was able to resolve some clarity issues the Tester was having around the User Stories just through email. Our Developer had more questions about the creation of the user-instantiated search settings than they thought was appropriate for just an email, so I coordinating a face to face meeting for the team to discuss specifics. I kept a time-box, took notes, and sent a follow up email detailing the conclusion of the meeting. This ultimately saved us a lot of time in the end that would have been spent re-planning, re-testing, and re-writing had the lines of communication not been open.

We started with an affinity group to size up all the tasks for the sprint, then estimated the time necessary to complete them through referencing their story points. This gave the team an idea of the work ahead and allowed them to gauge the complexity of those tasks for themselves. We kept a burn-down chart next to the information radiator in the room where we met for the daily scrum, so that any plateaus would not go undetected throughout the sprint. We were able to deliver a product in a timely fashion that exceeded the client’s expectations, because we genuinely embraced the principles of agile; most notably: co-location and face to face communication, adaptive and responsive strategies and tactics, an empowered and autonomous team, and most importantly, keeping our primary focus on the customer need and experience.

The Scrum-agile approach was incredibly successful when implemented for the SNHU Travel project. I saw no cons to using this methodology over others such as the more traditional Waterfall method. It allowed us to begin work quickly, it included the client and user base throughout the project, we were easily able to adapt to changes in the project specifications, the work load was organized, everyone’s input was valued and heard, and no one felt that they shouldered more of the project than the rest -- we really worked as a team! I would highly recommend that anyone working in software development seriously consider the Scrum-agile framework. I myself look forward to exploring it’s intricacies and nuances as I apply it towards future projects.