Andre Freitas

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CS250

7-2: Final Project

One of the most important parts of the Agile system and sprints happens at the end of the project. When we, as a team, reflect on the project. What we could have done better, what we could have done differently. In this case, reviewing how we made the change from waterfall to Agile. As the Scrum Master, I watched the team of developers, testers, the product owner, and myself use agile to improve and continue to work on the SNHU travel site. When they asked for specialized travel packages and more specific methods of searching, we formed a development team and had daily scrum meetings to meet with the team and began out sprints. I made sure to keep in touch with the product owner and the product backlog, and through this we found partway through that the customer wanted us to change the direction of the project. They wanted us to add a new focus on the website, a focus on wellness and detoxification vacations. After meeting with the team again, we remade out sprint plans and moved forward with the updated direction. User stories were made, the testers were asked to confirm if the systems worked, and when our end goal was changed, our team used the Agile Methodology to adapt to it.

The user stories were integral to making sure out product worked. When the direction of the project changed at around the mid point of our predicted timeline, the user stories were changed to reflect this as well. While our original stories focused on making sure that the specific parameters of a search were adhered to or that the profile’s set preferences were used when customers made a search, they quickly shifted to our new focus on detox and wellness. By focusing on those specific parameters, our team was able to make sure that they were functional and still able to hit our initial deadline. Agile was integral to this. Under the old waterfall method, our change would have taken much longer or our teams would have had to seriously crunch their time to get our results. Under Waterfall, before we could begin to change our project’s focus, we would have had to wait for every sprint goal to be finished before we could shift ourselves to our customer’s new desire. Agile lets us change midway through with very little difficulty or slowdown. Since we didn’t need to wait, and because the change to the project didn’t affect the website as a whole, we could continue to work on the parts of the site that were not affected even while changing our focus to wellness and detox.

Communication was key to this project as well. As the Scrum Master, it was my responsibility to ensure that efficient communication and easy to find updates were available when needed. Our daily scrum was a good starting point: a fifteen minute meeting that let our team go over broad strokes of what needed to be done, has been done, and any issues that were hit. This info was sent back to the product owner and client as well to keep them in the loop. I also used an information radiator, a message board in JIRA. It was an excellent place to keep our development updates as we worked towards the end of the sprint. The board was available to the whole team, from tester to product owner, and made it easy for any status checks to be done and for the team to communicate to one another regarding any difficulties that may have occurred. It was also nice to see the congratulations the team gave when a goal was met.

I believe that the ease of communication our team had was integral to the success of our SNHU Travel website. Particularly with our focus on working on a single platform rather than using three or four and losing track of who said what to who. The JIRA board was a one-stop shop to find everything that was needed. When an update was made, it was placed there. There was nowhere for it to get lost. The flexibility of sprint planning also let us succeed when we had a sudden shift in direction midway through the project. When the customer suddenly decided that we should focus on detox and wellness, we adapted almost instantly. Under the old waterfall method, as mentioned before, we would have had to wait for all sprint goals to be finished before changing, but that increased flexibility let us change what we were doing almost right away.

Now, at the end of the project, I believe that changing from waterfall to sprint was the correct choice. I prefer for things to be structured and linear. It makes things easier for me to follow. But I fully admit that it would have been a blow to us when the project changed gears partway through under the old method. The shift to agile let our team adapt, work simultaneously on different parts of the product, and stay in open and easy communication with one another the entire way through the product. As the scrum master, it was easier than ever to keep the team updated on the status of the project. Tracking user stories was also less of a hassle. There aren’t many downsides to using agile for this project. Even with Agile, the change in direction still caused a small amount of confusion during the shift in focus, but after a few emails everything was sorted out. Agile kept out team focused on the project and we managed to finish it on time.