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Module 7

Sprint Review

Welcome to the end of the sprint, transitioning from waterfall to agile has been challenging for all roles but it already helped us realign with our customers demands when they switched up a key focus a few weeks ago. I think it is relatively clear that the Scrum-agile approach was the best option for the SNHU-Travel project. This retrospective will take into account the processes and changes that have occurred through out the first sprint.

Looking at each role individually we can start with the Developers. Having to change up the project based on customer needs especially after being a few weeks into it would have crippled customer satisfaction if we were still using waterfall method of development. This is because of the rigidity of the waterfall system. Had we been out of development stage or if the change was not within scope of the dev teams abilities cycling back is costly and time consuming putting other teams out of step with project timelines. Fortunately, it was more of a design choice and one that did not really affect how the code was written. Instead, it was just the content that the customer wanted to focus on displaying. With the Scrum events being daily meetups, the Product owner was able to pass this along quickly to the development team and the changes were easily implemented. Agile teams mean that all teams are active at the same time as well. This allows for active and ongoing testing while the code is being written. That also allows for developers and testers to work together the moment a bug pops up. With the testing stage and the development stage happening simultaneously. It allows for the testers to be in direct contact with the development team, this helps the devs better define the testing restraints and answer questions testers may have quickly instead of waiting for development stage in a waterfall cycle to be over.

Scrum Masters heading up the initiatives to help with the transitioning into agile may seem like a sideline job but they are more than just a cheerleader here. The Scrum Master’s job for the SNHU-Travel project was one of securing the resources and helping the team adjust to the agile method. They would provide the team with the tools to stay in touch and up to date with current sprint. The Product Owner would be the one going to bat for the whole team when it comes to customer relations and helping define what was possible within the confines of the current sprint. Managing the backlog and setting priorities take a large load off the developers allowing them to able to focus their time on actually coding. Good communication helps them really focus and nail what the customer is looking for without the guess work or waiting out a whole waterfall cycle to get proper feedback.

User Stories were easy to complete to the customer’s requirements in the agile environment. This is due to the direct line of communication with the product owner who was in touch with the customers. When one of the stories changed so that the customers wanted more representation for detox vacations the Product Owner was able to quickly reprioritize the user stories to better align with the customer needs and shift development direction. The developers initially hesitant were reassured that the changes were within the scope of the current sprint all because of the core value of communication fundamental throughout all of the agile environment.

Acting as Scrum Master I was able to communicate with the developers and testers on the team freely. I Reached out and attempted to bring them closer by including them in the process of choosing which digital tools they would like to use to help facilitate cross team communications. Their biggest concern seemed to be how communications were going to be handled. So, I broke down how scrum events like the daily meeting will be handled in a manner that does not impede their daily work while putting them in touch with those that they needed to update. Some of the tools I mention are the use of Kanban and Scrum boards to help organize into an actual visual piece, the project and all its parts. These visualization pieces were put in place to help all members of the team. At a glance they should be organized in a manner that is easily discernable to all parties involved helping clarify questions of backlog status as well as representing priority updates. The Scrum meeting is a valuable tool that I intend to use to further all communications. My goal is to take sort of a moderator position, as Scrum Master, during the actual meetings and take the issues that will need full attention offline in separate one on ones to accommodate them while allowing all voices are heard during these brief daily events. This ensures that the developers, Testers and Product Owners get their updates out to each other while not bloating their days with meetings. The Scrum meetings combined with visualization boards and communications software will allow the team to streamline any communications and keep pace with each other during the sprint like pacing that agile development can feel like.

It actually boggles my mind how the waterfall method was/has been/is implemented for so long in the software development life cycle. Its like looking at a global manufacturing company try and run its business using methods from the 1950’s instead of lean manufacturing values. The only technicality I can see with this project is that maybe the change in vacation direction to detox locals, would have happened before any code was even written so it still wouldn’t have been a problem if using the waterfall method. However, that only because development of actual product doesn’t happen until the later stages of waterfall. Agile is still the better approach because of the pace of the competition rapidly changes when it comes to web development. I really didn’t see any cons. I can see potential for cons if the product owner and scrum master do not step up to fully support their developers and testers.