ChadaTech:

Sprint Review and Retrospective

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CS-250-R3250 Software Development Lifecycle

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The Agile Scrum Methodology is a framework for project development and management. The framework focuses on teamwork, collaboration, and quick stages of development. Agile Scrum was first introduced in the early 1990s, fast forward thirty plus years, and it has become the standard practice across the Information and Technology world. With that being said, my team has been tasked with developing an application for SNHU Travel using the Scrum-agile framework. Throughout the past eight weeks my team and I have had the opportunity to learn about the framework, ceremonies, and processes in place. The team has concluded the first sprint and would like to take the time to conduct a Sprint Review to share what has been learned over the past eight weeks.

The Scrum methodology is at the top of the pyramid when it comes to project management and development frameworks. A typical Agile Scrum Team consists of a Product Owner, Development Team, Scrum Master, and sometimes a Systems Analyst. The Product Owner collects requirements from customers, and prioritizes the backlog based on the return on investment. The Scrum Master removes blockers, is the facilitator, and works with the team to ensure that the Scrum principles are being followed. The Dev Team is a self-organizing and cross functional team of developers, testers, and designers. The Systems Analyst works with the Product Owner to define the requirements and is a technical resource for the team. Scrum consists of five events, Sprint Planning, Daily Scrum, Backlog Refinement, Sprint Review and Sprint Retrospective. Sprint Planning is the first ceremony of every sprint. During Sprint Planning the team plans the upcoming sprint based on the priorities of the stories in the backlog. Daily Scrum is a daily standup meeting where the team discusses plan of the day, blockers, and progress. Backlog Refinement is a meeting that is typically held mid-sprint with a purpose of cleaning up the backlog, scoring stories, and discussing needs for the next sprint. Sprint Review is held at the end of each sprint. The team uses this time to demo the work completed during the sprint to the customers/stakeholders and receive feedback from the customers or answer questions. The last ceremony is the Sprint Retrospective. The Sprint Retrospective is a time for the team to talk about what went well and what went bad during the last sprint and what improvements can be made in the upcoming sprint. Now that the team has had a chance to explain the basis of the Scrum methodology, we will share experiences throughout the last eight weeks.

The Scrum Team member each played a vital role in the success of the implementation of Scrum-agile and the development of SNHU’s travel request. To start, the Scrum Master setup a team meeting for the team to discuss objectives, roles and responsibilities, and discuss the importance of the Scrum Ceremonies. The team then developed a definition of done, which outlined the tasks that needed to be completed for a story to be deemed done. Lastly, we discussed the length of the sprint, and good times to meet. The next step was for the Product Owner and Scrum Master to meet with customers to discuss SNHU Travel’s request for enhancements. The Product Owner then spent time with the customers discussing/collecting requirements and prioritizing the user stories. During this time, the Product Owner learned that defining a process for engaging with customers is important. The Product Owner is a busy role and having a process in place ensures that time is not wasted. The Product Owner decided that the best way to collect requirements was an in-person meeting, and the form of communication would be through email and phone calls. Lastly the Product Owner relayed the importance of involvement from the customers/stakeholders. The Product Owner returned with the requirements and the team wrote up the stories and estimated the effort for each story. The team learned how to write a user story following the template of, “As a, I want, So that”. In estimating the stories, the team learned about techniques used for estimation. Such as a game of ‘poker’ to decide the level of effort required. Once this was completed the Scrum Master setup the first Sprint Planning session and facilitated discussion. The Sprint was planned and started. Now it was time for the developers and testers to shine.

Teamwork is important in any work environment, but it is especially important in Scrum. The team quickly learned that communication is key to being successful. The testers had to work with the developers on a regular basis to test the code as it was developed to ensure that there were no bugs or errors present. The developers had to communicate any blockers/impediments to the Scrum Master to ensure that they could stay on track with development and the Scrum Master had to communicate the expectations to the team and work with them to ensure that all parties were doing their roles. These are the reasons why it is important for all team members to be present in Daily Scrum and communicate with the team. Just as the team got into the groove of things and they were starting to understand the Scrum framework, the customers had a request that they wanted to see implemented. The request from SNHU Travel was that they wanted the types of travel and vacations to focus on detox/wellness travel. The change caused the developers to become upset, but the Product Owner reassured them that the work they had already completed was not to be scrapped, just adjusted. The Scrum Master had concerns about the deadlines, but since the team follows agile, the deadlines would stay the same and Product Owner would re-prioritize the backlog. The team then had to write and estimate new stories and hold another Sprint Planning meeting to adjust the focus/goals of the current sprint. The team had to undergo a lot of growing pains through the first sprint.

The growing pains that the team underwent only made the team stronger, the team had to really focus on communication to ensure that deadlines would be met and everyone involved had the correct information they needed. For example, one of the testers needed clarification from the Product Owner to write the test cases. The email correspondence reads as:

Hi [Product Owner],

I am reaching out in hopes of gaining clarification on the user stories in the current sprint. As the Product Tester, I have been tasked with testing the implementation and functionality the application prior to a Production Release and I want to ensure that my test cases are written to match the customers’ requirements. The user stories and my questions are below.

* Story 1: Customizable Profile
  + Do the filterable options need to be in a specific order? For example, is one more popular than the other, or in alphabetical order?
* Story 2: Price Range Filter
  + Does the sliding tab start at a certain price point, or does it start at 0?
  + Does the application need two spots for the user to set a Price Range?
    - This may cause confusion on the user side.

Please let me know if you have any questions or concerns.

Thank You,

Jonathan C. Sanchez

In addition to the Tester needing more clarification a developer reached out with asks of the team. The email that was sent reads as:

Email: To: Product Owner & Tester

Hi There,

The team has been following the Agile Methodology for a couple of sprints and I can already see an increase in team collaboration and efficiency. However, I do have a couple asks of the team that I would like to see implemented in the upcoming sprints. These asks are not anything set in stone, but I want to bring them up so we can start discussions and potentially become stronger as a team.

(Product Owner Name), in the future I would like to have the “bigger picture” of the Epic prior to discussing stories. Although the customer gives us specific requirements to follow, having an explanation of the product expectations will allow the developers to strategize on how we can best implement the requirements so that future enhancements can be done easily. In addition to having a bigger picture, I ask that we discuss implementation dates. Such as when are the expected production releases, is development for the current ask going to take multiple sprints or just one, those types of discussions. My last ask, is that you keep the number of stories in our backlog in mind when talking with the customers about future work, and when setting priorities. Although we follow agile, changing priorities and requirements regularly can heavily impact development and schedules.

(Tester Name), my ask for you is that we communicate on a regular basis. I want to ensure that we are testing regularly, and that we have enough time during the sprint to document and fix any findings. I also ask that you beat on the application and do everything you can to break it, and if you do break it, please document the steps taken. I want our users to have a strong application.

* As I mentioned above, these asks are simply asks, and any feedback or ideas is greatly appreciated.

Please let me know if there are any questions or concerns.

Thank You,

Jonathan C. Sanchez

Having such great communication from the team during Daily Scrum and throughout the sprint helped us get to where we needed to be. Additionally, the Scrum-agile Software Development Life Cycle played a major role during the sprint.

The Software Development Life Cycle is the infrastructure that Scrum was built on. Below is an image of the Agile Scrum SDLC, and it is visible how the team used this to aid them through the first sprint.

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| --- | --- |
| Your Guide To Agile Software Development Life Cycles | Easy Agile | 1. Requirements Gathering |
| 1. Design |
| 1. Development |
| 1. Testing |
| 1. Deployment |
| 1. Review |
| 1. Launch & (M&O) |

The team had to undergo all the steps of the SDLC in order to present the customers with a strong application.

In conclusion, I think the team did a great job working through impediments this sprint and learning about the Agile Methodology. I personally think Scrum-agile a great methodology and framework. However, one thing that I dislike or would call a con, is the ability to re-prioritize stories. This throws the entire teams flow off and can negatively impact sprints. With that being said, I think Scrum-agile was a good tool for the SNHU Travel project, and it allowed the team to grow and learn.