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CS 250

Final Project

In this paper, I, as a Scrum Master, will run through and discuss the results of our team’s sprint review and retrospective. Our team was originally chosen, by ChadaTech, to pilot the adoption of the agile process, with the goal to eventually push the process firm-wide. The task was to upgrade the SNHU Travel application so that it creates more traffic and user engagement. The team comprised of a Product Owner, a Developer, a Tester, and myself as the Scrum Master. As will be discussed, we will see how the agile process allowed for a smooth and efficient workflow, where the team was able to quickly shift based on change of priorities. A sprint review was held at the end of each sprint to showcase what was built. Also, sprint retrospectives were held to allow the team to express their concerns and achievements. Below I will go more into detail about our most recent events.

As Scrum Master, it was my duty to ensure that scrum events were being held and were staying within the scope of the event. At the heart of the process was the sprint. We assigned and divvied up work based on a two-week sprint. Our daily standups were held, in front of the scrum board, to allow the team to give updates on their process of each story. These events allowed for the team to sync up and know what everyone was working on. It also allowed the team to know what a particular developer or tester was struggling with and potentially blocked from moving forward.

Our Product Owner played a major role in the focusing of the direction of the project. Prior to our refinement sessions, our Product Owner would have meetings with management and stakeholders to get a clearer idea of what was wanted as far as the final product was concerned. Based on that info, our Product Owner continuously updated and added stories accordingly. Our Product Owner had the final say and thus made any important decisions on the direction of our project. As a result, the team was encouraged to seek direction when needed. The Developers and Testers reached out during several scrum events as well as asked for clarification via email. Accessibility and the prompt response by the Product Owner allowed for clarification and effective teamwork.

Our backlog refinement and sprint planning sessions allowed the entire team to have input on specific stories and allocate workload accordingly. As discussed earlier, our Product Owner had a major role in project direction, which included maintaining a healthy backlog. During our refinement sessions, the Product Owner organized and opened the refinement of stories based on priority. Our Product Owner made clear which stories are of the highest priority by putting them at the top of the backlog and by starting our sessions with the highest priority stories. Questions were encouraged by the team to clarify any uncertainties. Once the objective of the story was made clear and all requirements were added and agreed upon, the story was then estimated by the team according to its perceived complexity. Our team used the in-house ChadaTech poker estimation tool, which proved to be of great benefit in terms of ease and efficiency, to determine agreed-upon points for each story. We combined the use of the Fibonacci sequence, to determine complexity. Stories pointed at 1 were considered easy and increased to 2, 3, or 5 for a more complex story. Any stories pointed higher, such as an 8 or 13 for example, were further broken up to have a max point of 5 per story. Prior to the start of the next sprint and after the stories for the upcoming sprint were fully refined, which included the pointing, a Sprint Planning session was assigned. Here our team chose the workload based on expected capacity. Again, the highest priority stories were to be chosen first.

In this sprint review, our team presented the changes made that showcased detox and wellness trips, as this was the focus of our sprint. Most of the features, for this sprint, had already been signed off and moved to done by the Product Owner. The developers showcased the application by showcasing various filters, including the max price filter which had previously been completed. The testers confirmed that the top-recommended trips were always under the detox/wellness category. They also confirmed that the slide feature presented by developers was fully and accurately functional based on the story requirements. Our Product Owner requested we confirm by clicking on the slider’s next and previous buttons several times to confirm its functionality as well as noting that each slide had the required image, title, and description. Once viewed and confirmed, the Product Owner mentioned they were impressed and provided final signoffs for the remaining stories that were in “Ready for Review” status.

After completion of our Sprint, I had the team complete a Sprint Retrospective. I encouraged the team to be fully open and transparent. I also asked the team to reflect on what they thought went well and what they felt needed improvement. The most obvious concern and sense of resentment was that the team had to switch their priority to the detox and wellness trips. They were concerned that all the previous work they had done was no longer needed. I explained to the team that this was part of the agile process, which allows for a rapid pivot rather than a strict one-way road to the end product. Also, along with the input of the Product Owner, assured the team that their previous work was not taken for granted. All the work that they have done has created a higher quality product, that has more user engagement and is making the stakeholders very happy. The team also noted, that their ability to quickly pivot and provide the newly prioritized features was a great accomplishment.

Given that the project was near completion, I mentioned to the team that the Retrospective would be slightly longer than the rest and allotted time in the calendar accordingly. I then asked the team to reflect on the project as a whole as well as what they thought about the agile process. Based on the feedback received, I can confidently suggest to the ChadaTech management that they pursue the move to a firm-wide adoption of the agile process. With proper planning, the team felt their talents were fully utilized over a given sprint and no team member was overworked. Story Refinement sessions allowed for the team to clarify and understand what is expected to be completed. The team expressed their concerns about the rapid pivot of work but overall understood that this type of flexibility is good in the long run.

In conclusion, I fully endorse the move towards the firmwide adoption of the agile methodology. It was the best course for our SNHU Travel project as it allowed for the rapid pivot of priorities in the final push to promote detox and wellness trips. The scrum events promote team health and cohesion. It has been a thrill and honor to have worked on this project.