SNHU Travel Retrospective

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# Agile Roles

The product owner’s role is to speak to the clients, stakeholders, and customers to get an idea of what they were looking for in the software, creating a product backlog based on the ideas pitched, and relay that and any later changes to the development team, allowing the team to create the best product they can. The developer uses the information provided by the product owner to build the code for the software and add changes when necessary. An example of this is when the client requested that the software show the top five spa resorts, as opposed to the top five vacations across the board. The developer had to return to the code to update the information provided in the list. The tester tests the code to make sure the code works, and all requirements are met. Finally, as the Scrum Master it was my job to organize meetings for the team and facilitate communication. Leading meetings and keeping everyone on track, allowing for efficient sharing of information. I also was tasked with assisting the development team when they hit any roadblocks, an example being speaking to the product owner on behalf of the team to clear up any misunderstandings or gather additional information that the team needs.

## Benefits of Scrum-Agile

The Scrum approach to the Software Development Life Cycle (SDLC) helped to complete user stories in a few ways. Scrum provides a structured approach to completing a project without sacrificing adaptability. Scrum encourages team members from all levels to participate in the planning process, allowing people to incorporate methods and ideas that will help team members do their best work. Having a clear yet flexible plan and good communication makes the team more efficient. Knowing what stories are included in a sprint, what others are working on, and what still needs to be done makes work go faster, as all team members are on the same page about who is doing what, reducing confusion and redundancies.

The Scrum approach to project management is useful because of its flexibility. An example of this is when the requirements for the top destination list changed. At first, the client wanted a list of the top five vacation destinations that the company offered. Partway through the project, the client changed their request to the top five wellness spa resorts. At that point, the developer had already completed the code for the top five list and moved on. As such, the developer had to double back and tweak the code to fit the new requirements. In a non-agile project, that would not have been possible to do, as other approaches, such as waterfall, do not allow the team to return to previous stages of the development process.

Communication and Organization Tools

Communication was best facilitated by emails and daily standups. Emails made it quick and easy to get information without having to wait for or call a meeting of the whole team when it was not necessary. Daily standups are daily meetings where each team member answers the questions “What did I do yesterday?”, “What will I do today?”, and “What obstacles impede my progress?”. This meeting allows the team as a whole to keep each other updated, plan for the day, and receive assistance with any problems. Another form of communication that was important was user meetings, where the product owner met with SNHU Travel’s customers to brainstorm ideas for the software. This led to the organizational tool the team found most useful, user stories. User stories are short summaries of different features requested, including who is asking for them and why. This made prioritizing features easier, as the team knew why each feature was being requested, who was asking, and why it was important.

Scrum-Agile Effectiveness

The Scrum approach to the project was a resounding success. The flexibility and inclusivity of the approach made it ideal for this project. Scrum’s adaptability made it possible to make changes to the software as needed, even when that stage of development was considered “done.” The approach also encouraged input from the team, instead of leaving all the planning to myself and the product owner. As the development team is doing the coding, it is imperative that they be consulted during planning, as they know what they are capable of better than we do. The only downside I can think of is how different it is from previous methods. While that may be good for productivity in the long run, it is going to take some time for the company to adjust, meaning that productivity might suffer until everyone has gotten used to the changes. I do, however, believe that Scrum was the best approach to the project and will be for future ones. The project was too big and too uncertain for approaches like waterfall, which would not have been able to be adapted to fit changing circumstances.