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Sprint Review and Retrospective: SNHU Travel Project

While working on the SNHU travel project I assumed many roles within the Scrum Agile framework, each of which were invaluable to the overall project’s success. As a Developer, my job was to focus on designing and implementing a Java-based program that showed the top travel locations and incorporated elements such as desired mode or travel and price restrictions for vacations. I collaborated closely with the Product Owner and Tester on several points to update and pivot development to better suit the needs of the client; including when we made the switch from an overall travel destination site to focus more on wellness type travel rather than just travel overall. As the Tester, I developed initial and revised test cases that aligned with our user stories making sure all features were in alignment with our acceptance criteria. Lastly as the Scrum Master, I lead sprint planning, fostered daily communications as well as lead the sprint review and retrospective. These role transitions helped enhance my understanding of Agile practices while also simulating the collaborative environment essential for real-world software teams (Cobb, 2023).

While completing user stories, I learned that Agile approach allows for incremental development based on clear user stories. For example, one user story needed the application to cycle through top destinations, using this story we created a slideshow which allowed users to navigate between the top destinations via the next and previous buttons each of which contained information and images of these locations. The Scrum framework broke down the development of this program into manageable sprints which helped facilitate steady progress towards meeting users’ expectations. With regular check-ins, the team were able to address roadblocks early on, leading to the stories being completed prior to moving on to the next step. Due to the Scrum structure, we were able to adapt to emerging needs and refine the application continuously as changes arose.

One major interruption our team experienced while working on the SNHU Travel project was when the Product owner communicated a shift in client requirement. Initially, we were to build a travel booking website that focused on the top vacation destinations based on user preferences. However, midway through the development, the Product owner informed us that the client no longer wanted a generic travel booking site but wanted one that would be more focused on booking detox/wellness type travel. The flexibility of the Scrum-Agile approach allowed the team to adapt quickly without having to scrap the entire project. During the following sprint planning session, we reprioritized the product backlog to reflect the new focus, adjusted existing user stories, and created new ones to align with the detox/wellness theme. These changes could have severely delayed the project in traditional Waterfall model. However, Agile allowed us to embrace change, continue momentum, and continue delivering value to the client regardless of the unexpected change.

Communication was maintained through simulated Agile events like stand-up meetings and email updates. For example, as a developer I wrote an email to the Product Owner and Tester requesting clarification about the new implementation plan and prompted them for a timely response to avoid delays. This proactive communication ensured alignment and helped finalize the components like navigation of the slides and the images that were used. This type of effective communication encouraged collaboration and ensured all team members we aligned, which are pillars for Agile success. In addition, the team’s ownership of the development cycle was reinforced, improving coordination and decision making, which was pivotal to our success.

The organizational tools we used for this project were the user stories spreadsheet and updated test cases documents, both of which were invaluable for tracking our progress and managing evolving expectations. Additionally, Scrum events like Sprint planning, Daily Scrum and Sprint reviews kept everyone aligned with the vision as well as maintaining structure and accountability. These tools promoted transparency and allowed the teams to put their energy into deliverables that were outlined for each sprint. Additionally, the ability to revise the test case in response to our email feedback mimicked how real Agile teams use tools such as JIRA or Azure DevOps to revise and document changes collaboratively. Platforms like these help better coordinate teams by making tasks visible, manageable and aligned with user needs (Microsoft, n.d.).

In terms of evaluating the Scrum-Agile process, I would say there were several advantages for the SNHU Travel Project.

Pros:

* Flexibility and adaptability: Agile allowed them to quickly respond when the client changed their focus from general travel booking to wellness and detox booking.
* Iterative Progress: Sprint-based development helped us deliver working features and allowed us to assess progress regularly.
* Improved Team Communication: Daly Stand-ups, sprint reviews and retrospectives promotes ownership and consistent collaboration.
* Customer Centric Development: Close communication with the Product Owner ensured that client feedback was incorporated in all aspects of the development process.

Cons:

* Demands for consistent Engagement: Agile requires consistent participation from all team members to succeed which can at times be difficult to maintain with so many moving pieces.
* Ambiguity with Changing Requirements: While Agile promotes flexibility to adapt to these changes, sometimes these changing requirements cause uncertainty and require extra clarification slowing down the development process.

Despite these challenges the benefits of the Scrum-Agile approach far outweighed the drawbacks. This approach focuses on collaboration, flexibility and adaptability which made it the best possible fit for the SNHU Travel project. It allowed our team to manage the unexpected changes while maintaining progress and delivering a product that aligned with the client’s vision.

In conclusion, the transition to a Scrum-Agile approach enabled the SNHU travel project to thrive in an ever-changing development environment. It allowed for clear role ownership, responsive collaboration and structured progress which was achieved through sprint planning and retrospectives. Based on the outcome of this pilot project I would recommend that ChadaTech adopt the Scrum-Agile methodology company wide to improve team communication, flexibility and quality of all their future software development efforts.

**References**

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