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**Final Project: Sprint Review and Retrospective**

Working on SNHU Travel has been a great experience and has taught the team a lot about how agile methodologies are more efficient and overall better than traditional approaches. During the sprint it was my job as the Scrum Master to coordinate with the Product Owner, the development team, and the SNHU Travel organization to help teach and guide everyone into incorporating an agile management style. The Product Owner is ultimately responsible for delivering a working final product, as agreed upon during planning and analysis stage of the software development lifecycle. During the initial meetings with the customer, it’s important for the Product Owner to be very clear and precise when discussing what is expected to be delivered. When meeting with SNHU Travel, the customer’s description of what was expected was a little vague and would need to be clarified in a real-world situation. However, for the purpose of the Sprint Review, when conducting these initial meetings with the customer, the Product Owner was transparent about what could be delivered without overpromising. Once the customer provided the initial framework for how the project should proceed, the Product Owner began creating the product backlog using user stories. Taking a holistic perspective, the SNHU Travel project needs a website to put the top-5 destinations on, so there should be future user stories that would accomplish this task. For this sprint however, it was the team’s job to deliver the top-5 destinations GUI that when clicked, showed an image of the resort, a small description of it, and the ability to select next or previous to move between destinations.

In order to create the user stories that accomplished these tasks, the developers and testers met with the Product Owner and Scrum Master to discuss what could be accomplished during the sprint by “playing” planning poker. The developers gave insight as to what could be accomplished during the sprint and collaborated with the team on what a story point would look like. The testers collaborated with the team on what the testing criteria should be in order to turn each user story into a deliverable product. Together, the team decides on what the definition of done is and once on the same page, the Sprint Planning phase ends. Working as the developer was my favorite role of the scrum team, but it’s critical to stay open to change and not to get too attached to code. The developers were able to create a working GUI that displayed the top-5 resort destinations in a list, however the customers were not happy with the final product and decided to pursue a niche market of wellness resorts. They also wanted the app/ GUI to only display a single location at a time and be able to move between resorts. The development team was able to role with these changes very fluidly and created a working model, but this meant that a new team meeting was required to change the user stories. Clearly, the whole team has to stay open to change as it’s everyone’s responsibility to deliver the final product. Meeting in person can be hard though, so the tester probably communicates with the team using emails in order to clarify what is needed for testing criteria.

A scrum-agile approach to the software development lifecycle helped each user story come to completion by ensuring that every member of the team knew exactly what was expected of them, and gave them a way to communicate about any issues. The daily scrum is a great example of how each developer and tester communicated and collaborated to deliver a working final product. Each member described what they accomplished the day before, what they planned on accomplishing that day, and what obstacles stood in their way (Cobb, 2015). Opening this communication channel, along with the organization of a Kanban board, allowed the team to feel more organized and confident on where to turn to if an issue arises.

As described above, a scrum-agile approach supported project completion when the project was interrupted and changed directions. As Scrum Master, I worked very hard to help all team members understand the changes needed and helped remove any bottlenecks or roadblocks that stood in the way of the development team. Traditional management styles would struggle to accommodate the change from a list of destinations to the individual resorts displayed. However, an agile approach simply required another meeting between the team to discuss the changes and decide on how to implement them. The team handled these changes during the sprint when normally nothing is supposed to change during the sprint, but by adapting to change our team was able to satisfy SNHU Travel and delivered the product they desired.

Communicating effectively is essential to the scrum-agile development methodologies. Two agile values are openness and transparency, which would be impossible to achieve without proper communication. In addition to the daily scrum described above, other forms of communication would include the first level of communication between the customer(s) and Product Owner, information radiators, and Kanban boards. Having a hub of communication for any member of the team to turn to and be able to see what others are doing or be able to give input allows for flow within the team. Face to face communication is great, but the world is progressing to an online environment so it distributed teams are a great solution. Communication in this environment include video conferencing or other meeting environments and information radiators, which are necessary to remain a truly agile organization. Along those same lines, it may be important for the upper management team of SNHU Travel to transition to an agile format as well.

Some organizational tools and scrum-agile principles that helped the team be focused were the product backlog, user stories, timeboxing, and poker planning. These tools were most utilized during the Sprint planning stage, but continued to affect the overall production so it’s important to be as detailed as possible while also waiting until the last responsible moment to make decisions. The daily scrum, Sprint Review, and Sprint Retrospective all rely on the product backlog and sprint backlog, which were used to create the deliverable product.

The pros of SNHU Travel incorporating an agile approach would include efficiency within the organization and better moral amongst employees. The company would see a better return on investments caused by an increase of production and customers would be happier with the final product. The cons of incorporating an agile approach would include an initial change period and might require bringing in an agile coach to help all the teams transition from traditional approaches. If the company doesn’t invest in the upfront cost of transitioning with a firm commitment to it, SNHU Travel could get “stuck” into a situation where they believe they’re an agile organization, but actually are not. This could lead to a loss of production and increased stress on employees. However, I still believe the transition to agile is absolutely worth the cost of investment, especially now before SNHU Travel is fully launched.

Cobb, C. G. (2015a). *The Project Manager’s Guide to Mastering Agile: Principles and Practices for an Adaptive Approach*. O’Reilly Online Learning. https://www.oreilly.com/library/view/the-project-managers/9781118991046/00\_cover.html