Sprint Review and Retrospective

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Sprint Review

The Product Owner provided project requirements to the team in the form of user stories. For the SNHU Travel project the Product Owner met with potential users to discuss what features to include in the final product. The Product Owner then turned these requests into user stories, providing a “who, what, and why” explanation of each feature to the team. The Product Owner also ranked the priority of each user story in order to dictate what the team would work on in this sprint. In particular when the shift to a detox/wellness focus was announced the Product Owner adjusted the priority of the user stories. The user stories were essential for giving the development team goals and direction during the sprint.

The Scrum Master facilitated the Scrum events and acted as a mediator between the development team and the Product Owner. The Scrum Master organized the Daily Scrum as well as the Sprint Review and Retrospective. In this project the Scrum Master advocated on behalf of the development team when project requirements were changed. The Scrum Master suggested that project deadlines be pushed back to allow time for the changes and this eventually resulted in some user stories being deprioritized to keep the development team’s workload realistic.

Developer

The Developer was responsible for creating deliverable code that would meet the test cases provided. For this project the Developer initially created a “Top Five Destinations” list and then revised it into a slideshow, and finally into a “Top Five Detox/Wellness Destinations” slideshow. The developer was able to complete these user stories because of the guidelines provided by the Tester and Product Owner and by communicating with them to clarify requirements.

The Tester developed test cases for each user story in the SNHU Travel project. The test cases provided the developers with a framework of how the features should be implemented. While it is up to the Developers to determine how to create a feature the Tester gives the team an idea of what it should look like when complete. For example, in the “Top Five Destinations List” user story the tester listed the steps the user would have to take to access the list and how the results should be presented. In this case the Tester specified that each destination should include an image and a description and that the list should open in a new window. These specifications were instrumental in determining how the feature would be built.

One way that Scrum methods helped us to complete user stories was through use of a Product Backlog. For the SNHU Travel project it was important to have the booking system operational in time for customers to begin booking for the upcoming travel season. The feature that was determined to be most important was the ability to display a “Top Five Destinations” list and by maintaining a Product Backlog the team was able to prioritize the necessary work to deliver this feature. Another way that Scrum methods benefitted this project was through the use of Daily Scrum meetings that allowed the team to collaborate and coordinate their work in order to rapidly complete user stories.

How Scrum Helped Handle Changes

Several changes were made to the project requirements throughout this sprint. By far the most significant change was the shift in focus from niche vacations to detox and wellness travel. Scrum’s incremental approach to planning prevented too much planning time from being wasted. By only planning out the work for the current sprint, less hours of work were lost when the end goal was changed. Using a Scrum methodology also helped the team handle the changes through it’s encouragement of open and frequent communication. This ensured that team members were able to seek clarification when requirements changed. Instead of starting from scratch a lot of the team’s work was able to be modified to fit the new test cases.

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# Sprint Retrospective

Product Owner,

In order to move forward with the new changes I will need some clarifications:

Now that the focus of the booking system is on wellness vacations, how will destinations be categorized? In order to allow users receive suggested destinations we must break the trips down into different types. What will these categories be?

One of our user stories is for filtering vacation packages by price. What parts of the wellness vacation should be included in the filtered price? Travel and lodging make sense but should meals and activities also be included in the price the filter uses?

Thank you for your assistance,

Mitchell

Above is a sample piece of internal communication from the team during the previous sprint. This communication is effective because it asks specific questions. Rather than saying “What should I do now?” the developer asked for specific pieces of information that he needed in order to continue making progress. This way the Product Owner was able to communicate with the stakeholders and get the clarifications needed quickly. Vague questions may go unanswered or not return the needed information. The Developer also stated why the information was needed to continue. Just like in a user story the “why” provides important context in a succinct way.

Our team made use of an “information radiator” updated each day during the Daily Scrum. This, along with the Daily Scrum itself was important to keeping the whole team up to date and in the loop in such a rapidly changing project. Another Scrum aspect that proved to be essential to this project was Backlog Refinement. This event made sure that even as requirements changed the team was focused on the most important tasks.

I think that using a Scrum methodology for this project was the correct choice. In this situation the most important thing was to get a deliverable booking system to the client in time to book the upcoming travel season. This means that the priority was on delivering working code as early in the project as possible. This is one of the primary advantages of Scrum and makes it a great choice for this project. The SNHU Travel project also turned out to have a high degree of uncertainty involved. Using a Scrum methodology allowed the team to adapt to requirement changes with less wasted work and still deliver usable code to the client. Because of these reasons I believe hiring a Scrum team was the right choice for SNHU Travel.