Chada Tech

SNHU Travel Project: Sprint Review and Retrospective

Southern New Hampshire University

CS-250: Software Development Lifecycle

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**Review and Retrospective: Applying Roles**

Throughout the development process I was able to dive into the different roles that make up the scrum team. The team was transitioning from a waterfall approach to an Agile approach to develop an application for the customer SNHU Travel. The guidance of other successful companies and corporations such as Amazon helped provide good steppingstones on how the team could accomplish this transition to the agile development method. The team consisted of a Product Owner, Scrum Master, developers, and testers. All members of the scrum team have their own roles to play in the development of the SNHU travel package. Communication in the Agile process is very important for the overall development process.

**Product Owner**

The role Product owner is a direct link between the client and the Development Team. As the Product owner during this project the biggest two take away’s for the development with this project specifically were listening and determining what the client wants, and backlog refinement. The specific scenario that came to mind was the changes the development team had to make when approaching competition of an iteration. The product owner had to communicate these changes to the team and make sure that the team focused their efforts on those changes. Another responsibility of the product owner was to define the requirements of how the project would be implemented. Part of the requirements came directly from the client while other input was collected from a focus group that was conducted with various end-users. I was responsible for creating and prioritizing User Stories to add to the Product Backlog. These User Stories would subsequently shape the way the Development Team would approach the project from start to finish.

**Scrum Master**

The Scrum master was an interesting role that I enjoyed because it brought value to team success in a unique way. I was tasked with supporting the Product Owner with Backlog creation and maintenance while ensuring total transparency at all levels within the Scrum team. I was the liaison between the Development Team and Product Owner. Once the Product Owner defined the User Stories, I would facilitate a Sprint Planning session to review each of the User Stories that would get accepted into the first Sprint. During the Sprint Planning session, we implemented the planning poker estimation technique. This technique helped the team to define the level of effort required for each User Story. Once the Backlog items were defined, project development began. I facilitated daily scrum meetings which were quick meetings to go over the day’s activities. The benefit of these meetings was that it helped facilitate communication throughout the team and set goals for the day to help development and track development. My goal as Scrum Master was to be a resource for the team and to provide guidance and organization in the Agile process and also to help the team remain on track during the development process.

**Development Team**

As a developer, I was given creative freedom to structure my code as I see fit using industry best practices. I had to update the code to fit the what the client wanted based on the user stories we had been given. I also had to update the code when the client changed their mind and decided to incorporate wellness retreats to follow current trends. As a Tester, my responsibility was to be able to collaborate with all members of the team to create test cases in order to identify any bugs that may be introduced. In this role I had to develop these test cases with specific instructions and pass and fail criteria to ensure the system is doing what we want it to do. If it isn’t then we need to correct these bugs. This role is very important in the agile process especially if you are incorporating test driven development. A lot of the test cases produced were ensuring the different filter functions the system requires based on user stories work. As well as users being able to create an account and navigate its features appropriately.

**Review and Retrospective: Completing User Stories**

The Scrum-Agile approach to the SDLC, really helps to isolate critical functionality within a project. Software planning can be very complex if not executed properly. Having the ability to break down complex tasks into smaller increments is key to a successful deployment. With the SNHU Travel project we were able to collect user stories and incorporate test driven development and iterative development practices to fulfill these functional requirements. These User Stories defined the functionality of these requirements. User Stories are meant to be short but descriptive enough to be understood by both users and developers. The standard practice for User stories is to state the requirement and isolate the functionality and its purpose. A User Story consists of the who, what and why. The “who” represents the intended user, the “what” represents what the user needs to accomplish in order to complete a task and the “why” represents the reason behind the functionality which adds value to the requirement.

**Review and Retrospective: Handling Interruptions**

Agile by definition means “flexible” and “responsive” and by that very definition is not immune to changes. Agile projects are expected to have some level of uncertainty. For example, the change in direction for the SNHU Travel project to focus on detox/wellness travel allowed us to take what was already developed and revise the code to support the new requirement.

**Review and Retrospective: Communication**

With the SNHU Travel project, the requested changes sparked questions regarding the functionality of the existing code base. As the developer, we must mitigate redundancy while being mindful not to introduce new bugs. This mindfulness was evident in the communication to the Product Owner and Tester through an email I sent. The email was concise yet to the point, it restated the requirement, then asks for clarification from the Product Owner. I then ask the Tester to provide additional testing requirements so that I can implement them in my code so I can remain proactive with the project. Depending on the Product Owner’s response, the Tester may also want to create new test cases based on the requested information and submit them to me. I think this communication helps with transparency and collaboration. The product owner-maintained communication as well with the changes of the project and backlogs.

**Review and Retrospective: Organizational Tools**

The Scrum team used a few tools to help with organization and timelines of the project. For the SNHU Travel project, the tools utilized were Azure DevOps and JIRA. Azure DevOps helped the team by facilitating the transition into an Agile environment. The tool allowed the team to develop the project by creating a Product Backlog, User Stories and Sprints. We used JIRA to manage individual tasks and maintain a communication that way as well. Both of these tools were a great way to maintain transparency and keep the team focused on what is done and what still needs to be done. Our daily Scrum meetings were also conducted remotely with the use of video conferencing tools such as Webex and Skype. These tools provide an alternative to traditional information radiators. They provide a convenient visual representation of the project and its activities in real-time.

**Review and Retrospective: Evaluating Agile Process**

I think the implementation of Agile method in this project had its benefits, but it also had some drawbacks. The SNHU Travel project was also difficult to predict. Without a way to control the scope of the project, it can easily go off-track and over budget. Scope expansion is almost inevitable in an Agile project as the needs of the customer can change at any given moment, especially if they are taking advantage of the market through trends. The upside to the lack of predictability is that while requirements may change, the quality of the product increases.

Overall, I think the implementation of Agile process to the SNHU Travel project was a great choice because it allowed for greater transparency and more flexibility. We also decreased the risk of having missed a critical requirement of the customer. In the end, a quality product was delivered that satisfied both the development team and customer.

# References

Charles G. Cobb. (2015). *The Project Manager’s Guide*

*to Mastering Agile : Principles and Practices for an Adaptive Approach*. Wiley.