Scrum Review & Retrospective

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# Scrum Review & Retrospective

Our Product Owner Christy was instrumental in meeting with the client SNHU Travel and determining our course of direction on this project. Not only did she meet directly with the client, but she also met with some of their users to get an idea about what was important to them. Meeting with the client’s users was necessary to develop an understanding of what was important to them. The product backlog was developed through these interviews with SNHU’s users.

Ron, our Scrum Master initialized the rest of our Agile team. Ron called our Sprint Planning meeting to discuss all the elements needed to establish our Agile Team Charter and establish the customs and rules that we would adhere to while we worked together. Ron did a great job of helping the rest of us understand and adhere to Agile principles. Ron was able to keep the meetings focused by utilizing practices like listing any sidebar issues on the board to be planned to deal with in a later meeting or to discuss after the scheduled Daily Scrum meetings so that the true focus of the Daily Scrum meetings would be accomplished.

When we look back at developing our User Story acceptance criteria, Brian was invaluable as our tester. He made sure that our development team had a clear “Definition of Done” on each User Story. Also, at times a User Story may initially lack a sufficient level of details, but utilizing an Agile approach allowed Brian to be involved from start to finish and have access to anyone that he needed to in order to clarify any requirement details. Brian being involved in the total development process allowed us to catch any errors as soon as they occurred which helped us develop a high-quality solution.

Nicky, the developer on this project, was able to deliver exactly what the client wanted. Even when the requirements changed in the middle of the project, Nicky was able to adjust her approach and deliver. Instead of focusing on any niche vacation destinations, SNHU Travel determined that it would be best for their business to serve their customers by specializing in Spa and Wellness vacation packages. Situations like this, however, are the strength of the Agile framework. Since Agile is designed to be adaptive the proposed changes were quickly communicated to Nicky, and after a little clarification our team was able to refocus and give the client what they wanted.

One of the main concepts of Agile is working in a cross-functional team environment. This is in contrast to working in a more departmental approach when utilizing a more plan-driven project management methodology. Having a variety of skill sets on the same team working on the same User Story makes it much easier to respond to changes. For example, during the development of this project, there was a significant change in the focus of the information that was going to be displayed to the users. Instead of there being many different types of niche vacation packages SNHU Travel decided to offer only Wellness packages. The Agile framework allowed the team to quickly change course in the middle of the project and react to the new information that was provided.

The main advantage of Agile is the speed of communication. When the client decided that they wanted to change direction there were not many channels or levels of management or middlemen the client had to go through in order to communicate the changes to the development team working on their project. Also, when clarification needs to be made between various development disciplines, such as the developer and the tester, or developer and the Product Owner that communication can happen quickly and effectively. For example, the following is a communication between Brian and Christy during the project seeking a deeper understanding of exactly what the User Story Brian was working on was asking for.

Email:

To: Christy

CC: Brian

Subject: Requesting Additional Info About the New Requirements

Hello,

I am writing to get a little additional information about the new requirements that we discussed in the last meeting.

1. What 5 luxury vacation locations should be featured on the new booking site?
2. How should the destinations be ordered in the slide show?

I look forward to your responses so that I can get going on working on these new assignments.

Regards,

Nicky

The main Agile principle that I noticed through this project is the obvious one. We have already discussed it multiple times in this assignment, “ welcome changing requirements, even late in development. Agile processes harness change for the customer’s competitive advantage.” The most important Scrum events throughout this project were the meetings, client-Product Owner meeting, and Daily Scrums. Really nailing down what the client is looking for is of the utmost importance, one of the most inefficient practices ever is overloading software with tools the user will never need. Also, the Daily Scrums were used to announce a major change of focus during this project which was vital in providing the client with a satisfactory solution.