**CS 250 Sprint Review and Retrospective**

**Applying Roles**

In our Scrum implementation for the SNHU Travel project, we had distinct roles that guided the team’s collaboration and progress. The **Scrum Master** played a crucial role in facilitating the Scrum ceremonies and ensuring the team adhered to Scrum practices. For instance, the Scrum Master organized daily standups, facilitated Sprint Planning, and addressed any problems the team encountered. This ensured that the team remained focused and productive.

The **Product Owner** was responsible for managing the product backlog and ensuring that the team worked on the highest-priority tasks. The Product Owner’s role was important in ensuring that the backlog reflected the needs of the stakeholders and that the team focused on the most valuable features for the project. They regularly communicated with stakeholders to gather feedback and reprioritize items based on emerging needs.

The **Development Team** was made up of cross-functional members responsible for executing the work. Throughout the sprint, the team collaborated closely to define and complete user stories. For example, when working on features for hotel search functionality, developers worked together to ensure that the feature met the defined acceptance criteria.

**Stakeholders**, such as project sponsors and other interested parties, were actively involved in Sprint Reviews, where they provided feedback on the product increment. Their input helped refine future iterations and ensured that the project remained aligned with business goals.

These roles ensured clear responsibility allocation, effective communication, and alignment on the project's priorities, which were key to the project's success.

**Completing User Stories**

Agile methodology, specifically Scrum, helped us manage and complete user stories in a focused and incremental manner. User stories were defined in collaboration between the Product Owner and the Development Team. For instance, one of the user stories was “As a user, I want to search for hotels by location so that I can find the best options for my trip.” The team refined this story and created detailed acceptance criteria that defined what success looked like for the feature.

Throughout the sprint, the team focused on breaking down user stories into smaller, manageable tasks, which were completed incrementally. This iterative process enabled us to consistently deliver valuable functionality. The regular Sprint Reviews allowed presenting completed stories and gathering feedback, ensuring that we remained aligned with the stakeholders.

**Handling Interruptions**

One of the key benefits of using Scrum for the SNHU Travel project was its adaptability in handling interruptions and changes in direction. During the project, there were several instances when new priorities emerged due to shifts in stakeholder needs or feedback.

For example, mid-sprint, the Product Owner received new feedback that users wanted to see options based on their budget or other preferences, which required prioritizing features that addressed these needs. In response, we held an Emergency Sprint Planning session where the team quickly reassessed the backlog and adjusted priorities.

The **Daily Standups** were also essential in addressing these interruptions. Team members would quickly identify if they were blocked by changes in scope and bring them to the Scrum Master’s attention, who would help find solutions. This allowed the team to adapt swiftly and stay on track.

**Communication**

Clear and open communication was vital to the success of the SNHU Travel project. The Scrum framework facilitated ongoing communication through multiple channels. Mandatory meetings were held every morning to allow team members to share updates on what they were working on, any blockers they faced, and what they would do next. This transparency ensured that everyone remained aligned on the project’s progress.

We also used **Jira** as a tool for tracking progress, where the team updated their tasks as they completed user stories. The Product Owner communicated any changes to priorities directly through Jira, ensuring that everyone on the team was immediately aware of new or modified tasks.

During **Sprint Retrospectives**, the team reflected on what went well and what could be improved. This feedback practice allowed us to continuously improve our processes and address any communication challenges we faced.

**Organizational Tools**

We leveraged several organizational tools to help the team stay on track and ensure smooth execution of Scrum ceremonies. As already mentioned, **Jira** was our primary tool for tracking user stories, managing the backlog, and visualizing progress through **Kanban boards**. The ability to prioritize tasks and assign them to specific team members helped us remain organized and focused on delivering the most important features first.

In addition to Jira, the team used **Confluence** for documenting key decisions, sprint reviews, and retrospectives. This allowed us to have a shared repository of information that the team could refer to during the project.

The combination of these tools ensured that everyone had access to up-to-date information, improving communication and enabling us to make data-driven decisions throughout the project.

**Evaluating Agile Process**

Reflecting on the use of Scrum for the SNHU Travel project, there were several benefits and challenges to consider. One of the key benefits was the flexibility Scrum provided, allowing the team to quickly adapt to changes in requirements or priorities. For instance, after receiving stakeholder feedback during Sprint Reviews, we were able to adjust the scope of the next sprint to better align with user needs. Additionally, the iterative development process allowed the team to deliver work in smaller, incremental pieces, enabling us to receive frequent feedback and make necessary adjustments as we went along.

Scrum also fostered a strong sense of collaboration between the Product Owner, Development Team, and Stakeholders. Regular communication using the described techniques helped resolve issues quickly and ensured that everyone stayed aligned on the project goals.

However, there were some challenges. Coordination between multiple team members and ensuring that all user stories were completed on time occasionally proved difficult. The team had to continuously adjust based on shifting priorities and available resources. Moreover, maintaining a well-prioritized backlog required constant effort, and there were times when backlog refinement sessions took longer than expected, especially when new feedback emerged mid-sprint.

Overall, Scrum proved to be a valuable framework for managing the SNHU Travel project. While challenges in coordination and backlog management did arise, the flexibility and iterative nature of Scrum enabled the team to stay on track and consistently deliver valuable features.

**References**

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