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CS 250 Final Project

Sprint Review and Retrospective

Throughout the development of the SNHU Travel project I took on the roles of each member of a Scrum-agile Team, that being the Product Owner, the Scrum Master, the Developer, and the Tester, each being critical in contributing to the success of the project. The Product Owner role provided a much-needed relationship between the potential customer and the development team, general desires and expectations were taken from an interview with a customer group and passed to the team to establish a foundation of where the project should go, which did eventually pivot to a more specific approach of detox/wellness style travel destinations. Throughout the development, as the Product Owner, I sought to provide the team with planned tasks and priorities by organizing the backlog and by providing the team with helpful User Stories. As the Scrum Master, I mainly sought to support the Product Owner and team with communication and collaboration by ensuring complete transparency. I also focused on providing the team with effective Scrum Events to better enable them to provide a quality product. Aiding the team in awareness of the backlog provided by the Product Owner and helping the team in Sprint Planning, Review, and Retrospective is an essential part of the Scrum Masters contribution. I even tried some specific Sprint Planning such as Planning Poker and Affinity Grouping, both helped to properly pace and organize the estimation of the project. As the Developer, I was responsible for the code. I sought to meet the industry standards and to meet the expectations establishes by the Product Owner and User Stories. The code itself underwent a few changes throughout development, shifting from overall best destinations to a more specific search, but with the agile approach this change was quickly applied without impeding the overall project. As the Tester I organized the User Stories into Test Cases that would be used to ensure the project was functional for all intended purposes. I also collaborated with the Product Owner to better understand the customers more specific interests and requests so the development team could provide the best possible quality.

A Scrum-agile approach to the SDLC helped each of the user stories come to completion by allowing and encouraging flexibility and adaptation to the extended tasks. By breaking up the User Stories into estimated effort required and even breaking certain functionalities into multiple tasks, the User Stories were more efficiently completed. The User Stories were integral to the development of the project, by providing insight into the expected functionalities and why the user might want them and how they would want to go about reaching them. By approaching these Stories with a Scrum-agile approach the team was able to begin constructing the product from these User Stories while still being able to pivot toward a more successful end product, as well as add or alter present features.

The Scrum-agile approach effectively supported project completion when the project was interrupted and changed direction by anticipating change. The team was able to approach the project with the mindset that nothing was set in stone. The team could develop the product in a general sense with functionalities that would be in the product either way while pacing the development of the more nuanced aspects, such as the pivot to detox/wellness travel destinations. The team was able to quickly alter the already established code to better suit the Product Vision without overwhelming effort of redoing past development. The Scrum-agile approach aided in eliminating redundant effort and promoted better workflow that would ultimately see the product completed with more functionalities and of a higher quality.

In this project, communication was key. As the Product Owner, I conducted interviews with customers to develop User Stories that would be instrumental throughout the development of the project. I feel this was an effective effort as the User Stories were quite detailed given the brevity of the interviews. As the Scrum Master, communication is the center of my efforts, I conducted daily Scrum meetings to better encourage inter team collaboration. I feel this was effective because without Scrum the team would lack essential transparency and could effectively lose track of the Product Vision. As the Developer I openly communicated with the Product Owner to ensure more detailed User Stories so that I could implement more functionalities into the product. While the initial User Stories were helpful in the foundation of the product, follow ups with the customers would ensure the product more accurately meets expectations. As the Tester I also communicated with the Product Owner about the User Stories in order to prepare Test Cases for each. I sent an email to seek better clarification about certain elements to better provide more effective Test Cases. That email is sampled below.

To: Product Owner

Subject: User Story Clarifications

Dear Product Owner,

I have examined your provided user stories and am preparing test cases for each feature in order to clarify if they are successful additions to the product. The provided user stories are an excellent source of insight into what the user wants to see in the final product, but I would appreciate more specific details into how they would like these features to ultimately be implemented. Would you be able to follow up with these users as the product is developed? I would like to know how they would like to access the features requested, what would be the most convenient or the most appealing method of reaching these features, and whether the features have implemented in a way that they find satisfactory to use.

Thanks,

Trevor

The team utilized JIRA as an organizational tool. JIRA is an agile project-management tool that significantly improved efficiency and aided in coordination amongst the team. Throughout Scrum Events the presence of JIRA provided convenient tools and functions that aided in development during sprints, and improved workflow and helped the team members see the state of a task quickly and easily as well as the overall project. From planning to scrums to sprint; JIRA provided real time reports that any team member could provide input and support to with comments. It also provided a clear link between tasks, to help better organize during scrums. With aided planning, scrums, and sprints, JIRA was a helpful and collaborative organizational tool that fostered an effective work environment.

The Scrum-agile approach for the SNHU Travel project was undoubtedly the most effective approach. As this product was dependent on customer satisfaction the Scrum-agile approach facilitated its success. It allowed immediate action on all unforeseen changes without significant effort or derailment, and it fostered a communal and collaborative work ethic amongst the team as every member was essential in development. The only drawback in this scenario is the unknown nature of the finished product, while being able to adapt quickly is an advantage, never knowing when the team can say the product is ‘done’ is not. Customers can be fickle and change their minds constantly, without a well-defined finished state the project could drag on as more functionalities are requested during development when they could be added on post launch. Despite this possible issue, a Scrum-agile approach was the best approach for the SNHU Travel development project. Transparency, flexibility, and team cohesion simply cannot be overlooked and are simply not immediately viable in a waterfall method approach. While not every project needs to be undertaken through agile methodology, in this case it was the best decision. By the requirements of the project and the approach needed to complete it, agile provided the most effective development.