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CS-250

Southern New Hampshire University

Sprint Review and Retrospective

Now that this course in development is coming to a close it is time to analyze the work we accomplished and make decisions and draw conclusions. In order to properly implement strategies that worked, and avoid making mistakes twice, we need analyze past development courses to optimize future development projects. There are various roles within our scrum team who specifically contributed to our success with the SNHU travel project.

As the scrum master for this project I think my biggest success throughout this specific project was communicating the mission, vision, risks, and end goals of this project with our entire team from the very beginning of the development process. While our planning structure is still agile these characteristics establishes early on rarely change and help keep the core values of the project in the forefront of the teams mind helping the team stay on track. Our product owner directly contributed with the success of our project by communicating with the scrum master and the client frequently and effectively. By doing so the team was able to have a better grasp on client expectations even as they evolved through the course of development. This resulted in an end product that is already compatible with market trends and further revenue opportunities for SNHU Travel. Our tester directly contributed to this projects success by creating test cases that accurately communicate user needs as well as client expectations. Any one on the scrum team wether they were new or already acclimated to the project was able to view these stories and understand them. Our developers biggest success would have to be their flexibility and effective communication styles. Our developers were not afraid to ask further questions or ask for clarification on certain aspects of the project. The developers were able to point out features and or miscommunications that other roles on the team would never come across. Our developers were also extremely flexible and open to making any changes requested by the client.

An agile approach to the software development lifecycle helps our user stories come to completion in a few ways. Because the approach is agile the user stories are less about recording and documenting various requirements in detail, and more about writing some brief characteristics about a features and focussing on the discussion. User stories could be anything from Epics that are broken down into multiple smaller user stories that are very detailed, to very small and extremely general user stories. This structure works best for an agile planning system where user stories may be subject to change based off of market trends and or the needs of our users. During this project we also saw some interruptions and changes to our current course of action, because of our agile planning system were able to effectively communicate new expectations and making the appropriate changes where needed. Our SNHU travel project did experience some interruptions and changes throughout the development process, but because our planning system is agile we were able to make changes to only the user stories that were affected and still manage to stay on time and budget. If we were using a waterfall planning system these changes could force a halt in the entire project or perhaps even to go back to the drawing board completely to redefine project requirements and incorporate any new changes into the plan.

Effective and collaborative communication was a crucial theme throughout the development of this project. It was imperative that no one decision was made by one or two people without outside collaboration. A great example of trying to achieve a more collaborative decision making and communication standard is the following email from the scrum master to the product owner:

To: \*Product Owner\*

Subject: User Story Specificity

The user stories derived from the focus group have been an excellent starting point for the development team. I would like to schedule a half hour meeting with our scrum team and brainstorm some questions to be asked in future questionnaires and focus groups. So far some developers have raised the need for more specific inquiries about what how users prefer their search results displayed and what are some of the first things a user needs to know before booking a package. This quick brainstorm meeting could have potential for making the most out of our user interactions.

Thanks,

Abby

As stated in the email, a focus group for the SNHU travel project got us to a great jumping off point. After this focus group everyone had a better understanding of what the users wishes and needs were at that time. In order to achieve results that would be most useful to our testers and developers, we should make the prep for our focus groups and other research tasks a collaborative effort.

It seems as if the theme of all of our success’s within this project is effective communication in collaboration. This explains why any scrum events that focus on collaboration were our biggest asset in developing. For example, implementing short daily scrum meetings ensured that our team started off every day on the right foot having any questions or concerns addressed first thing. These meetings also gave team members a chance to collaborate and/or learn something new. Developers have the opportunity to team up, lend a helping hand, express interest, and/or make corrections during these meetings and these small opportunities played a huge roll in the success of our development project. Another event that was a big success for our team was our time estimation process planning poker. Using planning poker estimation practice everyone on the team was able to contribute their thoughts and opinions on how long a certain task within the project may take then we take an average of everyones contribution. The end results of planning poker were more or less accurate, however this practice is sure to get more and more accurate. The more this system is used the team will have better and better estimation for how long something should take.

Overall using a scrum agile planning approach for the SNHU travel project was extremely beneficial, in hindsight if we were to develop this product with a waterfall planning approach there would have either been many opportunities left on the table and/or the project may have taken a long time to complete. The scrum-agile approach allowed for us to incorporate features into the product that highlighted certain market trends in real time, something that is much more of an obstacle in waterfall planning.