Our SNHU Travel project has been a major milestone for ChadaTech. Not only has it been an important project, but it marks the first project during our transition to an Agile methodology. This Sprint Review and Retrospective will help capture our team’s experience as we navigated this transition. We will examine our process, changes, and achievements so that we can reflect and learn from them for future projects.

Throughout this project, we relied on team members in several different roles in order to adhere to Agile and Scrum methodology. The product owner, who was in charge of defining and prioritizing the product backlog. They also ensured clear communication between the team and the stakeholders so everyone was on the same page for the project vision and requirements. “The scrum master is the role responsible for gluing everything together and ensuring that scrum is being done well.” (West, n.d.) We were able to accomplish this by holding daily scrum meetings while the scrum master focused on facilitating communication and removing obstacles. They helped coach the team in Agile practices. The tester is in charge of taking user stories and breaking them down into tests that developers can test against. The developer’s job is to execute the user stories while using the tester’s test to implement features.

The Scrum-Agile approach is built around user stories. Creating user stories from the product owner’s interactions with stakeholders helped us prioritize which features to work on. We broke down complex requirements into manageable user stories that we could then develop tests for. This helped us implement continuous feedback and refinement. For example, we were able to quickly create a user story based on the customized results that end users were looking for. We were able to create acceptance criteria that help demonstrate the scope of the work necessary to complete the feature.

Agile methodology is built around the ability to make changes mid-project. We saw this firsthand when we had to adapt to both a new focus on wellness and detox vacation types that were beginning to grow in popularity. We were able to reuse a lot of the work done previously and just update the destinations to fit this trend. We also changed how the results changed during the development from a list on a page to clickable multiple-page results similar to a slide deck. An Agile approach and feedback during the daily scrum really helped the team recalibrate and helped with problem-solving how these changes fit into the current project.

Communication is at the backbone of an Agile approach to development. Throughout development we used daily scrums to stay up to date on what other team members were doing and offered to help where we could. Our daily scrum focused on what was completed yesterday, what work was planned for today and also bringing up any issues that we are running into.

Organizational and project management tools play a key role in keeping the team on the same page and on track. Project management software like Jira can be a one stop location to track changes in code develop and share user stories and otherwise work on managing the project overall. It can be a great place to have a central location where all team members can see the backlog. Utilizing these tools is a great way to demonstrate and work on transparency.

Overall, the move to Agile has been successful. There are pros and cons to the approach that we found while working on this project. Scrum-Agile pros we found when comparing with our previous waterfall approach are increased flexibility and the ability to rapidly iterate and incorporate feedback in the middle of the project. This was especially helpful when we had to incorporate changes from stakeholders. This would have been much more challenging and taken a lot more coordination with a waterfall approach. We also found that the Scrum-Agile approach enhanced team collaboration and also allowed us to better align the end product with changing user needs.

Some cons when comparing Scrum-Agile to the traditional waterfall approach are that it requires a high level of buy-in from all members of the team. It is most effective when the entirety of the team commits to the approach. There is also potential for scope creep. While we remained very focused on what changes we could make without affecting the timeline of the project, it could be easy to say yes to all features and end up with an end product that feels unfinished. Scrum-Agile also requires a robust communication infrastructure. I feel like we navigated this challenge well but it could be a bigger challenge for teams that are dispersed geographically.

Overall, the Scrum-Agile approach was highly effective for the SNHU Travel project. It helped us deliver a high-quality product on a tight timeline. By breaking the project into manageable sprints built around user stories, it allowed us to stay flexible and responsive to the changing needs of SNHU Travel. It also helped ensure a collaborative team environment where teammates can help each other overcome challenges and learn from each other.

References

West, D. (n.d.). Scrum roles. Atlassian. Retrieved December 14, 2024, from <https://www.atlassian.com/agile/scrum/roles>