Sprint Review and Retrospective

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With the SNHU Travel Project an Agile approach to completing the final product was used. There are various ways to implement an Agile methodology to the project. Chada Tech utilizes Scrum in their implementation. In Scrum the project team consists of three roles: the Product Owner, the Scrum Master, and Developers. Each role has different key responsibilities in ensuring the success of the project.

***Product Owner***

The Product Owner is the member of the Scrum Team that serves as bridge between the client and the Scrum Team. The Product Owner is responsible for ensuring the Development Team understands the needs and desires of the client. The Product Owner is also responsible for the Product Backlog, the list of key items, also known as user stories, that need to be completed in order to produce a successful product. (Cobb, 2015) They must rank the items by order of priority and ensure they are clearly defined. This is very important, due to the user stories are what the Development Team uses to plan their Sprints going forward.

The Development Team may assist in maintaining the Product Backlog and this occurs during a Scrum Event called the Product Backlog Refinement. During the SNHU Travel project’s Product backlog Refinement the Product Owner used information gained from SNHU Travel’s initial request for a new updated website, one that contained niche travel packages, as well as information from interviews with the end user, SNHU Travel’s customers. Using the “Who am I? What do I want? What do I hope to achieve from it?” approach of listing the role of the requester, what the request is, and what that request should accomplish, the Product Owner created user stories to be worked on.

***Scrum Master***

The Scrum Master is a servant-leader of the Scrum Team. They are the person that fills the role of the subject matter expert with respect to Scrum implementation. The Scrum Master assists the Product Owner in maintaining the Product Backlog, helps ensure the Development Team understands the Product Owner’s vision for the user stories, guides the Development Team in Scrum, and facilitates any Scrum Events as necessary. The Scrum Master also helps improve Scrum implementation as an organization. (Cobb, 2015)

In the SNHU Travel project the Scrum Master assisted the Product Owner with the Product Backlog and helped facilitate the different Scrum Events. The Scrum Events were the Daily Scrum, a brief daily meeting to go over what the Development Team worked on the day before, what they planned on working on that day and any potential setbacks that may occur, Sprint Planning, the event where the Development Team used the Product Backlog’s user stories to plan the work for their Sprint, the Sprint Review, where the Development Team, Product Owner, and stakeholders go over the Sprint deliverables to give final approval and call them finished, and the Sprint Retrospective, where the Development Team goes over how effective the Sprint was and discuss any roadblocks or ways to improve. During Sprint Planning T-shirt sizes to estimate the amount of work each user story was used to ensure the Development Team did not overload their Sprint.

***Developer***

While Developer is colloquially used to mean software developer, in Scrum Developer means any member of the Scrum Team that will be producing the product over the course of the project. With the SNHU Travel project there were both Developers that fit the role of software developer and tester in the traditional waterfall approach to project management.

During the project the Developers assisted with the Product Backlog Refinement, took part in the various Scrum Events, planned the Sprints, and worked with the Scrum Master to follow Scrum and Agile methodology. One way that this was accomplished was with the software developer and tester working together to ensure proper use of Test-Driven Development. Test-Driven Development follows the mindset of test early, test often with the software developer creating test cases for each part of code and then coding to those cases. This reduces rework and backtracking.

During the project the client, SNHU Travel, had requested a change of focus from niche travel packages to packages that focused on detox/wellness. Also, the Product Owner changed the requirements for the output formatting of the destinations from a list to a slide show. Due to the adaptability of Agile and the transparency of communications, the team was able to modify the work to meet these requirements. Using a Scrum Agile approach minimized the impact to the schedule and level of work required, due to Sprints goal to produce a useable product at its completion and Test-Driven Development integrating testing into each phase of the project. In the traditional waterfall approach the development team would potentially have to not only rework the list, but any items that relied on that list and then wait until testing was implemented near the end of the project timeline to ensure the rework was completed correctly.

Over the course of the project various communication methods were used by the Scrum Team. These methods were information radiators, the Product Backlog or Scrum Board are examples of this, face-to-face communications, the various Scrum Events are good examples of this, and written correspondence, emails are an example for this. These various methods provided transparency not only to the Scrum Team, but the stakeholders and other members of the Chada Tech organization. These items were successful in ensuring the Development Team understood the Product Owner’s vision and success in producing a functional product.

The following is an example of an email sent by the Tester to the Product Owner:

Sample Email

To: [christy@projectowner.com](mailto:christy@projectowner.com)

From: [brian@tester.com](mailto:brian@tester.com)

Subject: Testing Clarifications

Christy,

Upon looking at the User Stories Value statements and the acceptance criteria there are some areas that I need clarity on.

User Story 3:

The Preferred Travel Type will be implemented through a user profile setting and a search filter. Should this filter be available for use by guest users or editable by registered users on the search page itself?

If a registered user who has no preferred travel type selected in their profile selects the filter should the results be blank, an error message come up, or default to the overall Top 5 Destinations?

General:

What web browsers or mobile devices should the User Stories be compatible with?

What is the expected overall design/formatting output for each page?

Thank you for your time,

Brian

Overall, the Scrum Agile approach was successful in completing SNHU Travel’s product. Due to the size of the project and the timeframe, I feel that either Scrum Agile or Waterfall would have been appropriate to use. Had the project been larger in scale or schedule, I would not recommend the Waterfall approach due to the scope changes experienced and other potential changes that could occur.

***Pros:***

* Adaptable to sudden changes
* Time and cost effective.
* Builds well rounded team members through promoting cross discipline knowledge (the use of TDD)

***Cons:***

* The potential for a change of scope is higher due to Sprint Reviews
* Leadership structure may lead to conflict while bringing in new team members not used to Scrum. (A senior dev may feel like they hold authority over another team member or a junior developer may automatically concede to a Product Owner or Stakeholder’s request)

References

Cobb, C (2015). *The Project Manager’s Guide to Mastering Agile : Principles and Practices for an Adaptive Approach*. Wiley.