**Sprint Review and Retrospective**

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As part of this class, I had the opportunity to participate in a mock Scrum-Agile project called the SNHU Travel Project. This allowed me to apply the theoretical concepts of Scrum to a simulated software development process. In this essay, I will reflect on the roles within the Scrum team, the process of completing user stories, handling issues, communication practices, and the use of organizational tools. I will also evaluate the pros and cons of the Scrum-Agile methodology and discuss whether it was the best approach for this particular project.

In the Scrum-Agile team, the roles were crucial in ensuring the success of SNHU Travel. Learning the roles and responsibilities of each team member provided a valuable learning experience. Christy, as the Product Owner, was responsible for prioritizing the Product Backlog based on business goals and customer needs. Her role was to ensure that the most important features were tackled first, such as focusing on wellness and detox vacation destinations. Her role highlighted the importance of understanding the customer and ensuring that the product aligned with their needs.

As the Scrum Master in this simulated project, my primary responsibility was to facilitate the Scrum events, including daily stand-ups, sprint planning, and retrospectives. I also had the role of removing obstacles that could slow down the team. In the context of this project, one challenge we faced was unclear feedback from our pretend client, Amanda. As the Scrum Master, I worked to address this issue by ensuring that the team received timely and clear feedback to maintain progress.

The developers, represented by Nicole in this exercise, were responsible for bringing Christy’s vision to life. Nicole worked on developing features such as the dynamic slideshow to showcase travel destinations. She collaborated closely with Brian, our tester, to ensure that the features were of high quality and free of critical bugs. Brian's role was essential, as his thorough testing helped identify performance issues, such as slow transitions in the slideshow, which were fixed before the product was deployed.

Amanda, the client, played an important role in this exercise by providing feedback during Sprint Reviews. Her insights allowed us to refine the product and implement additional features, such as mobile optimization. Although this was a pretend project, the interaction with the client through feedback sessions emphasized the importance of client involvement in the development process.e

One of the key learning experiences in this project was how to complete user stories using the Scrum-Agile methodology. In our simulated project, user stories were broken down into smaller, actionable tasks. For example, one user story we worked on was, “As a traveler, I want to view a slideshow of wellness destinations so that I can easily explore my options.” This user story was divided into several tasks, including designing the user interface, implementing the slideshow functionality, and optimizing the performance. The Scrum approach allowed us to work on these tasks iteratively, which meant we could build, test, and refine the feature over several sprints. By the end of the sprint, we had completed the user story, and the feature was functional and met the needs of the pretend users.

The iterative nature of Scrum proved to be an effective way to manage the development process. By focusing on small, incremental improvements, we were able to deliver a high-quality product that met the user’s needs and exceeded the client’s expectations.

In a real-world Scrum project, interruptions are inevitable, and the flexibility of Scrum allows teams to handle them effectively. During this simulated project, we experienced an interruption when Amanda requested a new feature to include eco-friendly retreat options. While this change was outside the original scope of the project, Scrum’s flexibility allowed us to add this feature to the Product Backlog and adjust our priorities. This approach ensured that the team could stay focused on the current sprint goals while also planning for the new feature in upcoming sprints. By handling interruptions in an organized manner, we were able to avoid delays and keep the project on track.

This experience highlighted the importance of being adaptable in a fast-paced development environment. It also showed me how Scrum helps teams remain focused on the most important tasks while remaining flexible enough to accommodate changes.

Effective communication was crucial to the success of the simulated project. One of the most valuable communication practices was our daily stand-up meetings. These meetings allowed team members to share their progress, raise concerns, and align on tasks for the day. For instance, during one stand-up, Brian raised concerns about the slideshow’s performance on mobile devices. This prompted Nicole to prioritize optimizing the slideshow’s performance, ensuring that the feature worked seamlessly across all devices.

In addition to the stand-up meetings, email communication was also essential. I sent emails to Christy and Amanda requesting clarification on the wellness slideshow feature. For example, I asked for input on which types of destinations to feature in the slideshow. This email was effective because it provided clear context and included a deadline for feedback, which encouraged timely collaboration. Through this communication, we were able to ensure that the development work aligned with the client’s expectations.

The organizational tools used in Scrum, such as Jira and Burndown Charts, played a significant role in the success of the simulated project. Jira allowed us to track tasks visually, providing transparency into the progress of the project. By updating tasks in real time, the team was able to see how work was progressing and identify any blockers. The Burndown Chart was another helpful tool, as it showed the remaining work in the sprint, helping the team stay focused on completing the tasks at hand.

Sprint planning was another important event that ensured the team understood the scope of work and could allocate tasks based on capacity. During the planning session, we made key decisions, such as prioritizing the slideshow functionality, to ensure alignment with the project’s goals. Retrospectives were also helpful for reflecting on the sprint and identifying areas for improvement. In one retrospective, we discussed communication delays with Amanda and decided to implement more frequent feedback sessions to ensure alignment moving forward.

Throughout this project, I was able to see the advantages and challenges of using Scrum-Agile. The flexibility, transparency, and continuous feedback provided by Scrum were beneficial for the success of the project. Scrum allowed us to adapt to changing requirements, such as the addition of the eco-friendly retreat feature, without derailing the timeline. Tools like Jira kept the team informed and helped track progress effectively.

However, there were some challenges as well. For example, transitioning from a traditional waterfall model to Scrum required time for the team to adjust to the new methodology. Additionally, Scrum events, such as daily stand-ups and retrospectives, took time away from actual development work, which sometimes slowed progress. Despite these challenges, the benefits of Scrum far outweighed the drawbacks.

In conclusion, the Scrum-Agile methodology proved to be the ideal approach for the SNHU Travel project. The iterative development process, along with the emphasis on collaboration and communication, allowed the team to deliver a high-quality product that met evolving client needs. The lessons learned from this simulated project will serve as a foundation for future projects, and Scrum-Agile will remain a valuable methodology in my software development toolkit.