**SNHU Travel Sprint Review**

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CS-250: Software Development Lifecycle

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February 21, 2021

SNHU Travel came to ChadaTech looking for a tool to be developed that their clients could use, which would increase business and customer satisfaction. Since then, the team has taken many steps throughout this sprint to plan, develop, and test aspects of the new tool. In this review, I will go over the work that has been done by the Product Owner, Developer(s), Tester(s), and myself, the Scrum Master.

Much of the early stages of the Agile framework include the Product Owner. We can think of the Product Owner as the “go-between” for the client and development team. In this project the Product Owner met with the client and pieced together the product they’re looking for. This process also included meeting with our client’s customers to get a different perspective to how the tool would be used. The Product Owner then took their notes and developed user stories. These user stories are simple to understand, although their implementation may not be, and the team can prioritize each story and implement them in the sprints. To keep track of all of the user stories the Product Owner creates a Product Backlog. The Product Owner adds each user story to this backlog, and ensures the backlog is groomed. Lastly, when the development team had any questions the Product Owner either answered them or go to the client to get the answers.

Developers met with the rest of the team and chose which user stories should be prioritized. After adding the user stories to current sprint, the developers did some planning and research before starting to develop the application. As the developers worked throughout the sprint, they met at the daily standups and made sure to mention any issues or questions, as well as their accomplishments from the previous day. This increased communications with the team, which in-turn increased the efficiency of the team. At one point, a few user stories were changed per the client’s request. The developers spoke with the Product Owner to get the updates and changed their course appropriately. The developers were able to adapt rather than stay set on their current sprint objectives. They also didn’t lose hours of time planning out a “perfect” sprint. After completing a new piece of the puzzle, the testers were able to do their part.

The testers work closely with the rest of the team to understand the user stories, which they use to create test cases. For example, one of the user stories was to build a user profile. It allows the new users to register and set up a user profile that stores their information. The testers created pass/fail cases for each part of the story, and they vigorously test those cases. Once passed, the team can mark that story as completed. Otherwise, the team may have to fix the issues in the current sprint or add them to the next. Much of the time, the testers need to follow up for more information from the Product Owner or other members of the team.

Lastly, the Scrum Master must teach each member Scrum theory and ensure that they fully grasp it. The Scrum Master works closely with each role of the team to make sure each member is happy and able to do the work that they need to. On this project the Scrum Master held daily meetings each morning which allowed each team member to state their accomplishments, plans, and issues that they’ve had. This allows the team to create a high value product and increases happiness among co-workers. The Scrum Master also keeps the meeting on-track and can communicate with clients with the Product Owner.

In this project, the Scrum-agile approach allowed a flexible, efficient way to handle the user stories. In this sprint we identified multiple user stories and selected 3 to implement. Because there wasn’t an excessive amount of planning, we were able to focus more on implementation of the stories. The developers implemented user stories based on the information from the Product Owner. After the developers finished their work, the testers created their pass/fail cases for each. During this time, the Product Owner updated some information, which changed a few aspects of the project. The client initially wanted to create a tool for their travel agency, which allowed their customers to view the top travelled destinations and view various packages. The client wanted to make a change and instead focus on vacation packages based around relaxation. The developers didn’t lose out on too much time because they didn’t spend much time on planning every detail. The team quickly adapted to these changes, implemented the changes, and tested. With another approach to this project, these changes could’ve created a large setback. Hours of planning could’ve been lost, and frustrations could’ve arrived from the team. The Scrum Master ensures the team knows that flexibility is at the core of Agile, which helps the team expect and accept change.

During this project our team was assigned the task of switching from a traditional approach to a more Agile approach. This difficult task was met with nervousness and excitement, but the team was able to adapt. The first part of switching to Agile was communicating our roles, the changes we think need to happen to those roles, and our opinions on the other roles. Our team was able to effectively communicate through these adaptations. While implementing the user stories the developers and testers also reached out to the Product Owner for more information on specific tasks. The Product Owner was able to answer these questions right away or get the information from the customer so that the team could proceed. This type of communication was made possible due to the practical approach that Agile and Scrum bring to the team.

Agile and Scrum bring many organizational tools that allow teams to thrive when working on projects. Working to reduce uncertainty is a priority for any project, but instead of unrealistically planning around uncertainty, Agile attempts to recognize, manage, and reduce uncertainty as the project progresses. As stated before, Agile is all about flexibility. The Agile framework accepts failure as a necessary part of success. The organization must learn from the failure and change their methods accordingly. As the project progresses teams must adapt to changes in real-time and communicate successes every day.

Altogether, using a Scrum-agile approach for SNHU Travel’s project was a resounding success. The team was able to overcome changes and develop a tool that can be used by SNHU Travel’s customers. A few pros to using Agile during this project are increased flexibility, team morale, product quality, visibility for management, communication between all parties, and reduced overall risk when failures occur. One could argue that a con to Agile when compared to waterfall is a lack of planning. In certain projects more planning upfront may be best, but for the most part projects will do best under a Scrum-agile approach. Because there is relatively little uncertainty for this project, and the client is aware of what their result should be, the Scrum-agile approach is likely the best approach for the SNHU Travel project.

Resources

Cobb, C. G. (2015). *The project manager's guide to mastering agile: Principles and practices for an adaptive approach*. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley.

Scrum phases and processes. (n.d.). Retrieved February 22, 2021, from https://www.scrumstudy.com/whyscrum/scrum-phases-and-processes