CS-250

Professor Iles

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Final Project

In retrospect to the SNHU Travel Project, all team members contributed in a manner that produced a final deliverable of good quality. The Product Owner kept great communication between the team and the client as well as keeping the product backlog well groomed. For instance, when the client needed to change the focus to wellness vacation spots, the Product Owner effectively worked with the team to redirect and execute what was needed for delivery in a respectful and timely manner. As Scrum Master, I worked with the team to keep everyone on track with an effective sprint calendar. Also, daily 15-minute meetings were held to review what we have done, state our goals for the day, and highlight any lessons learned to help all team members grow. Our developers produced excellent, clear-written code and quickly adapted to the changing needs of the client. All portions of the final deliverable (slides, images, and descriptions) were expertly executed with minimal confusion or miscommunication. Testers contributed by testing the program to make sure all functionality was normal and expected. This included minor details with major significance, such as directional button functionality, scroll bar functionality, link redirection, and proper detail alignment between slides.

The Scrum-Agile approach to the SDLC helped each user story come to completion through its leniency to structure. The Agile approach is cyclical whereas the traditional Waterfall method is rigid. Because of its cyclical nature, any need or redirection was handled and carried out with ease. In our User Stories for the project, our team focused on what was most important first, followed by important, then least important needs. These were ranked with special characters (S, M, L) and were each broken down into their own details. This provided direction and expectations for our development team as well as a status update for me, the Scrum Master, and the Product Owner. As development continued, the Product Owner continually groomed the User Stories to ensure that the workload was not convoluted with unnecessary additions. To illustrate, one of the User Stories of large importance was the ability to click on a link and receive a customized list of travel destinations. The acceptance criteria of this User Story provided the Developers with the exact criteria needed for the project (i.e. ability to click a link that takes the user to a page displaying customized list of travel destinations, ordered list based on similarity of previous destinations, and each destination will have the following criteria listed: destination Name, short description, picture, text embedded with link to take user to travel package) while also giving critical information to the testers on what needs to be checked.

During development, SNHU Travel requested a change in the product. They shifted their focus to high-market vacation spots which were specifically Wellness packages and vacations. The Agile methodology allowed for convenient redirection by its cyclical nature. The Product Owner met with the team for a quick briefing on the change. Fortunately, all work completed up to that point did not need to be deleted. The Scrum Master created some user stories for the developers and testers to use and the necessary change was completed within the same allocated sprint time. This quick change went through the cycle that is agile: Plan, Design, Develop, Test, Deploy.

Communication is nonnegotiable when it comes to the Agile method of SDLC. To ensure that every team member was on the same page and there was no confusion, daily 15-minute stand-up meetings (formally called “Daily Scrums”) were held to start our workday. We each discussed what we had accomplished the previous day, what we would accomplish that day, and one thing we were either struggling with or a lesson learned. By doing so, all team members were updated as to where everyone stood in the development process. Everyone stated their goals for the day, so all team members were set with expectations for the next workday. Finally, if any team members had experience with an issue that another team member faced, help was quickly available to establish understanding and rid the hiccups in development. After each sprint, we held a review to go over what was achieved, what lessons were learned, and what to expect in the next sprint of the project.

The Principles of Scrum allowed us to be successful by defining core values that the team needed to follow. The team had to: have control over the empirical process, be self-organized, collaborative, be understanding of value-based prioritization, efficient at time-boxing/scheduling, and develop iteratively. By following these six principles, the team was able to plan, design, develop, and test a product during the designated Sprint before deploying a great product to the client. Time was saved and the budget was met.

In assessment of the Agile Methodology, there are some pros and cons. I’ve found that development happens quicker in Agile, allowing a timely delivery of a final product which in turn produces a satisfied client. Also, Agile is more adaptable than Waterfall. The cyclical nature of Agile allows changes and redirections to happen without having to give in to time or budget constraints. Another great thing about Agile is how transparent can be. Daily Scrum meetings help team members be completely transparent about the development process and this allows the Product Owner to update the client on the progress of the project. However, Agile is unfortunately less predictable. Because changes can occur at any time during development, predictions on delivery and budget are hard to estimate. Also, it may be difficult to keep a “Goal Focus”. It is easy to get developers of the team caught up with one particular goal instead of the project as a whole. It’s important to delegate high-priority and mid-priority user stories before assigning the team to one specific user story. With this being said, I do recommend the transfer from Waterfall to Agile methodology. In my experience with it, I can firmly account for the success and ease it brought when working through the many aspects and facets of the project.

Cites:

*The Pros and Cons of Agile Methodologies*. (n.d.). https://www.qualium-systems.com/blog/business/the-pros-and-cons-of-agile-methodologies/