Raphael Coloma

CS-250-T6588 Software Development Lifecycle

August 9, 2022

Final Sprint Review and Retrospective

These past eight weeks, the team and I have been working with SNHU Travel to develop a web application that allows their customers to select vacation packages and suggestions destinations based on the customers’ past trips and preferences. Despite production shifts, we successfully created a quality product that satisfied the client's requirements. Had it not been for the strength of our team and the flexibility of working with an agile methodology, we would have had to scrap the project halfway through. The Scrum framework allowed for a collaborative effort with both the team and the client through communication, iteration, and understanding.

Our Product Owner, Christy, was the bridge to the client and worked with them to understand their requirements for the product and share them with the team. She was also instrumental in developing the user stories by meeting with users of the SNHU Travel site to get their feedback and suggestions. As the Scrum master, I worked with Christy to help organize the team and their assignments. Together we were able to build the product backlog from the client requests and the user stories. While Christy worked with the client, I, in turn, worked with the rest of the team to ensure they understood the items of the backlog and addressed any issues that impeded the team flow. Brian, the Product Tester, developed test cases based on the user stories. He also helped clarify user expectations by creating tests to run with Nicole, our Developer. With pass or fail outcomes, we knew when an item was completed and ready for review. Nicole was the MVP in all this. Though we all took ownership of the project and sought to ensure quality was constant throughout, Nicole brought the client requests to fruition. She took feedback from the team and developed clean and efficient code. She was also vital in estimating the items in the product backlog, which helped to maintain a steady velocity throughout the project.

The user stories were essential to understanding the functionality expected from the product. As mentioned earlier, Christy was able to develop the user stories from her interactions with previous SNHU Travel customers. They expressed things they wanted to see in the application, and we incorporated those ideas as features in the final product. The user stories were structured as concise goals to provide value to the product and helped the team understand what the user wanted. Many users expressed the wantonness to customize vacation packages, so Christy prioritized that higher on the Product Backlog. Users also liked the idea of having profile preferences that affected the travel destinations suggested to them. Since this required more effort to implement, the user story size was set to large. A small subset of users wanted to be offered vacation package deals. This piggybacked off another user story, making it easier to accomplish, so the story size was set to small. It was also lower priority on the product backlog because not everyone wanted it.

The Agile Manifesto states, "Business people and developers must work together daily throughout the project." Christy made sure we were in constant communication with the client. I relayed all information back to the team, and we adjusted accordingly. Halfway into the project, the client wanted to shift the focus to detox/wellness vacations because an industry report showed that they were going to be "the next big travel sector". We called for a Scrum meeting and discussed the changes. Understandably the team was upset, but because we adopted a Scrum-agile approach, we were able to rework the product with minimal productivity lost. Brian updated the test cases to accommodate the changes, and Nicole revised the code to meet the new client requirements. To ensure we maintained the original time boxes, the Product Owner altered the item priorities in the Product Backlog. By keeping the lines of communication open with the client and having working software, we were able to maneuver the project around what potentially would have been a devastating setback.

A team that can communicate effectively with one another has the best chance for success. It was important that everyone was on the same page and understood what was expected of them. Christy and I ensured that information was constantly flowing from the client to the team, and back to the client. We held daily Scrum meetings to discuss the progress of the project and to check in with the team members. Though there is no official templet on how a SCRUM meeting should be, I liked having the team members answer the following questions:

* What did I do yesterday to help meet the Sprint Goal?
* What will I do today to help meet the Sprint Goal?
* What impedes me from meeting the Sprint Goal?

This allowed the team to be accountable for one another and take responsibility for their assignments. It encouraged ownership and promoted collaboration by allowing the team to voice their thoughts and opinions. It also allowed the team to communicate what issues they might have been struggling with. We also conducted Sprint Reviews and Sprint Retrospectives after each sprint to assess our progress. We would discuss what worked, what did not work, and what we needed to address. We would also present the client with the results of our work: journals, reports, and the working product for feedback and adjustments. Still, it was more than just a presentation. Together we would collaborate on how the team would move forward. We would calculate our velocity in preparation for the next sprint and reassess the Product Backlog. The Scrum-agile principles have been beneficial to the success of this project. The iterative cycles of the sprints and the constant flow of communication allowed the team to learn and improve the product. With each iteration, the team got valuable feedback that decreased uncertainty and helped execute a plan for progress. Sprint durations were kept minimal to ensure we were meeting the client's requirements and to reflect on our effectiveness. The team was motivated to take ownership of the project and instill their work with quality. Despite our disappointment, the production change was welcomed. We were able to adapt and meet the expectation of our client. Our success was in the strength of our team and our ability to communicate. We grew as a team through our Scrum meetings, sprint reviews, and sprint retrospectives. Each allowed for greater understanding and benefited the team by providing insight and guidance.

We produced an application that satisfied the client’s requirements with an approach that allowed flexibility and adaptiveness. The agile methodology proved to be very powerful and effective. With each iteration, by having a working product to show the client, we were able to develop their wants and needs for the application. In a market that is constantly changing, agile keeps up and allows for change. There are very few cons, if any, with our Scrum-agile approach for this project. Had it been a team that was less motivated and unwilling to work with one another, there would have been issues. Also, the project would have failed if the agile approach was not adopted by all parties. This project could have supported a waterfall model, but given the shift in mid-production, it would have failed. Granted, had this been a waterfall model, contracts and agreements would have been determined earlier in development, and a shift like that would probably not be allowed. I may be biased, but I cannot see how we would have made the product deadlines had it not been for the agile approach. I believe that the Scrum-agile approach allowed for the best outcome for the SNHU development project.

Reference

Agile Alliance. (2022, August 4). *Agile Manifesto*. Agile Alliance |. Retrieved August 6, 2022, from https://www.agilealliance.org/

Schwaber, K., & Sutherland, J. (2020, November). *The Scrum Guide*. Scrum Guides. Retrieved July 9, 2022, from https://scrumguides.org/