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CS-250

Module 7 Final Project – Sprint Review & Retrospective

Throughout this SNHU Travel project, we relied on the Scrum-agile approach to accomplish our sprint goals to deliver client requests in a timely manner. The Scrum team consisted of Product Owner, Scrum Master, Developer, and Tester. Each role contributed specific areas of expertise to the project. The Product Owner was responsible for communicating directly with the client and working with the Scrum master to create a product backlog consisting of user stories for the rest of the team. This process began with meeting with all the stakeholders, including customers that would be the end users of the product. After meeting with this focus group, the Product Owner took those recommendations in conjunction with the client’s needs and created user stories and a product backlog. In the case of SNHU Travel, the Product Owner contributed to the success of the project by creating user stories based on the input from the focus group and the client to create a product that users would want to use for travel planning. The Scrum Master took the user stories and product backlog to the rest of the team to begin developing the product itself. From this point, it was the Scrum Master’s job to work with the developer and tester to develop each sprint for the project and make the team as efficient as possible. The Scrum Master contributed to the success of the project by conducting Sprint Planning meetings and helping the team stay on track by supporting their needs and removing distractions. Next, we took on the role of the Tester. Taking the user stories from the Product Owner and converting them into test cases that would walk through the process of achieving the goals laid out in the user stories was the Tester’s job. Creating the initial test cases would help to get the development of the project moving, but there was an instance where the Tester needed more clarification from the Product Owner about what the client wanted to see. After receiving an example from the Product Owner, the Tester went back to revise any affected test cases. The Tester contributed to the success of the project by making sure that the test cases were up to date as changes to the product backlog were made, which is bound to happen in any agile project. Finally, we worked as the Developer of the project. We took on this role at the onset of a change that was made by the client, in which they wanted the site to focus on detox/wellness packages. While this sounded like a big change, the Developer was able to deal with the changes in a professional manner by asking the Product Owner to clarify the size of the change, which turned out to not be that big. The Developer ultimately takes on a large chunk of building the product, so its success was driven in large part by the Developer.

The Scrum-agile approach to the SDLC was very helpful in completing each of the user stories for this project. After the Product Owner and Scrum Master met with the client, the Product Owner met with a focus group of customers to get their input on what they would want to see from the final product. This helped the Product Owner create user stories and product backlog in which they could prioritize the backlog and determine the size of each user story. The Scrum-agile approach would help to determine whether the level of priority and size of each user story made sense in the actual development of the booking tool. Agile allows the team to make changes as the development progresses, something that the waterfall approach does not do very well. As time went on during this project, changes were made to the product backlog and user stories based on new requirements that were given to the team by the client. Since we were using the agile approach, we were able to re-prioritize the product backlog to keep the delivery date unchanged.

When it comes to agile vs. waterfall, agile allows the team to adapt to change more effectively, whereas the waterfall approach will lock the team into one plan with very little ability to make changes. This project demonstrated how a Scrum team operates in an agile environment by showing how each team member would adapt to changes in the needs of the client as the sprints progressed. To begin with, we were initially developing a booking tool that would offer niche vacation packages, but it then turned into a product that would be more personalized for the end user based on their profile and travel history. It changed again when the client wanted to focus on detox/wellness packages. It was at this point that the Scrum Master asked the Product Owner if the delivery date would be moved back to accommodate these changes. Since we have been working in agile, the Product Owner said that we would keep the same delivery date but re-prioritize the product backlog to make this happen.

Our Scrum team was able to accomplish our sprint goals with the help of solid communication between the team members. Communication is everything when it comes to agile and project management, so we made sure to follow the Scrum guide by beginning with a Sprint Planning meeting to determine what was going to need to be accomplished during that given week. During the actual sprint, we would hold daily scrum “standing” meetings in which every team member would go over what they achieved yesterday, what they planned to achieve today, and what roadblocks they were running into. These meetings would last no longer than 15 minutes and were meant to keep everyone in the loop about the progress everyone else on the team was making as well as encourage collaboration where it was needed. For instance, if one developer did not feel comfortable working on a piece of programming on their own, one solution could be “pair programming” where one person does the coding while another person watches what they are doing and offers recommendations or corrections. We are now in the sprint review and retrospective phase that allows the team to go over what happened during the last sprint, issues that came up, how they were addressed, and how we will do things differently in future sprints. One communication issue that came up when I took on the role of Tester. I learned that the client wanted to have a slideshow format for search results. This would have been good to know going into the sprint rather than during the sprint, but we were able to manage it.

For this project, the team organized the key pieces of the scrum process with spreadsheets. The Product Owner created a product backlog and user stories and organized them in a spreadsheet so that the tester could then create test cases. The test cases were written in the form of “I want to do this, so that this happens.” Organizing test cases in this manner gave the developer clear instructions on how they should build the booking tool. While we did not use them for the project thus far, I would recommend using an information radiator and Kanban boards to keep track of where each task is in the development cycle for future projects. This would allow everyone on the team to keep track of their own work and see the progress others are making. The whole agile process should be as transparent as possible.

The Scrum-agile approach proved to be very effective for the SNHU Travel Project. Had our team used the waterfall approach, I am skeptical that we would have been able to deal with the changes that came up very well. Since the Scrum-agile method is designed to allow and expect changes to occur, we were able to handle changing user stories and product backlog changes. I think it could be argued that there is such thing as allowing too many changes to occur in the development lifecycle, but in this case, I do not think we had that kind of experience. Since we needed to deal with the changes that came up easily, I think that the Scrum-agile approach was the best method to developing this product for SNHU Travel.