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ChadaTech’s Transition to Scrum-Agile: A Sprint Review and Retrospective on the SNHU Travel Project

ChadaTech has long been recognized for its robust software solutions, tailored to meet both domestic and international client needs. Traditionally utilizing a waterfall development model, the company recently initiated a strategic pilot to transition one of its teams to the Scrum-Agile methodology. This document presents a comprehensive overview of this pilot project, highlighting how the adoption of Scrum-Agile methodologies impacted the development of a new application for SNHU Travel. This transition is part of ChadaTech's broader aim to enhance product development processes and foster a more dynamic and responsive corporate culture.

In the Scrum-Agile framework, clarity and execution of roles are pivotal. The Product Owner played a critical role by ensuring that the team always had a clear backlog which aligned with SNHU Travel's strategic goals and user needs. This role's effectiveness was particularly evident when prioritizing features that offered the highest value to the client, thereby optimizing the return on investment for each development sprint.

The Scrum Master role, which I undertook, involved coordinating daily stand-ups, sprint planning, and retrospectives. This role was crucial in mitigating impediments and facilitating a smooth workflow, ensuring that the team remained focused and efficient under the new operational dynamics. The Development Team, consisting of designers, developers, and testers, showcased remarkable adaptability and technical expertise. By working in cross-functional capacities, they were able to address complex tasks more holistically, reducing the cycle time from concept to deployment.

Our Scrum-Agile approach significantly enhanced our ability to manage and complete user stories effectively. For example, one user story involved integrating a real-time currency converter into the SNHU Travel booking platform. This feature was initially challenging due to fluctuating API response times. However, through iterative testing and feedback during sprint reviews, the team was able to optimize the feature's performance significantly by the project's end.

Adaptability is a core strength of the Scrum-Agile methodology. Midway through the project, SNHU Travel requested the inclusion of a multi-language support feature, which was not in the original scope. Thanks to our agile environment, the team was able to integrate this new requirement swiftly into the ongoing sprint, demonstrating the framework's flexibility. The ability to reprioritize the product backlog and reallocate resources on the fly was instrumental in accommodating this significant change without derailing the project timeline.

Effective communication was instrumental in the success of this project. The daily stand-ups enabled the team to report on their progress, articulate blockers, and outline their next steps, which was essential for keeping the project on track. Additionally, our use of Slack channels dedicated to specific topics like API integration, front-end design, and user testing facilitated targeted discussions that enhanced problem resolution speed.

JIRA was invaluable in tracking the progress of sprints and managing the product backlog. The Scrum board provided by JIRA offered a visual representation of the project's current state, which helped in quickly identifying bottlenecks and understanding task progress. Furthermore, the use of Confluence as a knowledge-sharing tool ensured that all documentation was centrally accessible, enhancing the team’s ability to perform their roles effectively.

The transition to Scrum-Agile brought numerous benefits. There was a noticeable improvement in stakeholder engagement, as SNHU Travel was more involved in the development process, providing feedback that was immediately incorporated into the project. This iterative approach led to a high level of satisfaction with the final product. However, the team also faced challenges such as managing frequent scope changes and ensuring all team members were up to speed with agile practices. Despite these challenges, the Scrum-Agile methodology proved highly effective, particularly in managing complex, evolving projects like that of SNHU Travel.

The pilot project not only met its objectives but also provided valuable insights into how ChadaTech might scale Scrum-Agile practices across its operations. The benefits observed during this project underscore the potential for increased agility, enhanced team collaboration, and improved client satisfaction.

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