Jeremy Redgrift

CS-250 Prof. Hodde

Final Project: Sprint Review and Retrospective

The sprint is complete, and the entire team performed exceptionally. It is time for a review and retrospective.

Each team member excelled at the performance of their roles. This greatly contributed to the success of the SNHU Travel Project.

The Scrum Master was able to be the perfect “servant leader” to the team. This was exemplified by the many daily standups that took place. Herr facilitation of these meetings helped improve team productivity. They led the meetings by starting them and giving the team an example of what is expected in a meeting. They encouraged the team to be open with their communication, specifically with what impediments they may be experiencing. They were quick to address concerns of the team members, like the concern some members shared with the Product Owner not being present at the meeting. Also, they strictly observed the time limit for the standup, ending the meeting at the 15-minute mark keeping the meeting short as to not disrupt the productivity of the team. All these examples came from a daily standup, and they are the same way they led each day’s standup.

The Product Owner’s performance was performed well. They were able to effectively communicate with the clients and create User Stories that enabled the developers to add the appropriate functionality to the product. A specific example of this was the first meeting she had with the clients. She diligently listened to their requests and recorded every detail. From this she was able to create equally detailed User Stories for the development team to use. She also was able to remain agile when the clients wanted a change in direction of the product. This will be discussed in detail further into this review.

The testers also performed their role exceptionally. They took pride in trying to “break” the software created by the developers. They did this by being exceptionally detailed in their test case creation. A specific example is an email that was sent from a tester to the Product Owner. In this email, the tester asked for more clarification on specific User Stories that he was creating test cases for. This attention to detail ensured that the test cases created were thorough enough to find any bugs in the software.

The developers played a pivotal role in the product development. They performed their role well. Besides creating the product itself, their willingness to embrace agile methodologies was key to their productivity. Their openness of communication, willingness to work as a team, and desire for the product to deliver maximum user value were just a few ways they helped contribute to the project’s success.

The agile approach was necessary for the successful completion of the User Stories. The stories themselves are aspects of agile product development, so an agile approach is necessary for them to be completed. Each User Story was written in such a way to maximize the efficiency of the development team. An example of this was the stories that the Product Owner created. The open, transparent communication that is emphasize by agile methodologies was instrumental in the communication between the testers and Product Owners. As described above, the testers required more clarification of the User Stories, and they were able to effectively communicate these questions to the Product Owner – something that might have been more challenging in a traditional/waterfall style approach.

The Scrum-agile approach was all but necessary with regards to the direction changed experienced by the team this Sprint. The clients wished to change the direction of their product to deliver detox/wellness retreats as the primary vacation type offered by their product. This meant changing the direction of the project’s development. An agile approach was perfect for this as the team is ready to welcome change. The Product Owner exemplified this by having a meeting with the clients mid-sprint to see if they had any changes to their requirements. The Product Owner was able to change the User Stories to match these changes, giving the developers new instructions on how to develop the product.

My ability to communicate with the team was on par with the ability of the rest of the team. An example of this was the discussions we had as a team regarding our roles in said team. As the Product Owner, I was able to clearly communicate what I was going to do with regards to managing User Stores and the Product Backlog. I also accepted feedback from the team and was able to provide them with my own. Another thing I am proud of myself for was “saying no” to another teammate. The other teammate was trying to take on tasking outside of their area of responsibility, namely, they wanted to be involved with the management of the Backlog. This is not their responsibility, nor should it be since they are not directly communicating with the clients as the Product Owner is. We agreed that the team can provide feedback on things like prioritization of User Stores, but the Backlog itself will be managed by me.

The Scrum-agile principle that was most important to our team’s success this sprint, in my opinion, was clear, open communication. As demonstrated in the above paragraph, communication is very important. The team was able to come to a resolution on a potential conflict, and this was made possible by communication. This was not the only example of how communication helped. This review has given examples of other times that communication has positively affected the product’s outcome: the tester’s email, the Product Owner’s meeting with the clients, and the Scrum Master’s facilitation of daily standups.

The organizational tool that helped the team be successful was Jira – a Jira Board to be specific. The team was able to update their taskings in real-time for everyone to see. This greatly helped when team members were remotely working and unable to attend an in-person standup - SHNU Travel uses a hybrid working schedule with 2 days a week spent teleworking.

The Scrum-agile approach used by SNHU Travel aided greatly in the completion of this project. The team’s willingness to communicate, ability to respond to change, and cooperation in completing a common goal were instrumental in completing the project. If a problem was encountered, the team was encouraged to communicate this at all levels. When changes were made to the project’s direction, the team was ready and able to pivot to this new direction. Finally, each team member was personally invested in the success of the project with each of them being held accountable for the successful execution of their role in the project.

There were not too many cons with using a Scrum-agile approach. The main challenge the team faced was with adopting the approach. After so many years of using a more traditional project management style, it was challenging to break old habits, but once they were broken, the team flourished. Another con was the challenge in planning and estimating timelines. Since the team was new to this approach, it was difficult to estimate how much time a given User Story would take to implement making it challenging to plan the Sprint. Now that the team has a Sprint under their belt, it will be much easier to estimate this – and it will only get easier from there.