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CS-250

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**Sprint Review and Retrospective**

Throughout the weeks in this class, we have had the opportunity to visualize and interact with the software development process by taking on different roles in a Scrum-agile Team. As we have taken the time to understand the roles and responsibilities of each team member, we have also been able to practice these roles in a sample development process. This has helped to create a more in-depth understanding of the Scrum Team and agile methodology in the development lifecycle. In this review and retrospective, I will reflect on various topics that we have visited throughout the class including team roles, user stories, adjusting to customer feedback, communication, evaluation of Scrum-agile tools, and the overall effectiveness of the Scrum-agile approach.

Every role in the Scrum Team has multiple, essential purposes that allow the team to function effectively in an agile environment. The first role that we looked at as a class was the Scrum master. As the Scrum master, we were responsible for organizing Scrum events and making sure that our team had everything they needed to be successful. A Scrum master is essential for open communication among the team, as well as playing an important role in the scheduling and planning process. The Scrum master is essentially responsible for providing the best possible conditions for the team to succeed. Whether this was through the organization of Scrum events, making sure the team has access to the tools and resources it needs, or by providing additional support wherever they are able to, the Scrum master ensures that the team is able to function the best that it can.

The next role that we took an in-depth look at was the product owner. As the product owner, we were the primary contact for the customer, and we were responsible for relaying important information to the team to help with development. We were responsible for establishing the requirements for the product, creating a product backlog, and writing user stories. By gathering this information, we were able to successfully articulate the ideas that the customer had to the Scrum Team. This allowed them to move forward with the development process knowing what needs to be done, and what the final product should be like. We also created the product backlog, which was an important tool in visualizing the size and importance of each of the features requested by the customer. Finally, by conversing with potential future customers, we were able to gather more ideas about important features that many would be looking for in our final product. As the product owner, we were responsible for gathering the information needed to successfully create the project.

The following week, we were able to look at the tester role in a Scrum Team. The tester is responsible for ensuring that every part of the program functions the way that it is supposed to. The tester is also able to make recommendations for improving the project, since they inevitably spend much of their time using it while making sure that it runs smoothly. As a tester, we analyzed the user stories that our product owner had given us to make sure that the program functioned as they intended it to. As the tester, we also ask questions to clarify certain details of the product to make sure that nothing was overlooked. As a tester, we made sure that the finished product worked as intended.

Finally, we assumed the role of a developer on the Scrum Team. As the developer, we were responsible for the overall design and development of the final product. We would take the initial information given to us by the product owner and begin our first sprint. During the sprint, each developer would have a number of milestones or tasks to get finished before the end of the time period. As with any project, there may be issues or roadblocks along the way. This is why the flexibility of the agile method can be extremely important. As developers in a Scrum Team, we are supposed to be able to respond to feedback or be able to adjust our original plan due to other circumstances. We had to practice this as part of module 5 in class. The customer reported a change in plans where we now had to adjust our initial program to meet the needs of the new customer request. Since agile focuses only on short-term plans, this allowed us to quickly readjust and meet the needs of the customer. As the developer on the team, we were responsible for the overall code and functionality of the product.

By utilizing the Scrum-agile approach, our team was able to help the user stories become implemented in our final project. The initial user stories were gathered by the product owner, who then created a product backlog which had the main features listed on it that were requested by the users. This helped the team to identify the main features that would need to be developed. By looking at the product backlog, the developer was then able to start creating the product with those features in mind. Following the development of each of these features, the tester would then go through and ensure that each feature was functional based on the user story. Following this, with a Scrum-agile approach, these features would then be analyzed by the customer, so that they could provide feedback and our team could continue product development. The Scrum-agile approach ensured that each user story feature was implemented and tested along the development process.

The Scrum-agile approach also supported project completion, even when the project changed direction due to customer feedback. Because a Scrum Team is flexible and plans only for short-term development, we were able to quickly identify the features that needed to be changed and adjust our schedule. By doing this, we were also able to maintain most of the project that we had already created by just modifying an existing part of it. Once the product owner had received feedback from the customer, the team was able to quickly meet and decide how to best handle the situation. From there, we were able to quickly respond and change our original design to meet the customer’s needs. Utilization of the Scrum-agile principles helped our team make this adjustment quickly and with little change to our overall timeline.

Many of the tools and practices used by the Scrum Team helped in our success. First off, the daily Scrum meetings ensured constant communication among our team and helped us provide necessary feedback as well as introduce important information. Next, the product backlog created by the product owner helped our development and testing team identify key features that were addressed by using user stories. This helped to create a picture of the final product, and what each member would need to be working on throughout this process. Finally, the Scrum-agile principle of flexibility and short-term planning helped the team respond to changes when needed to. This allowed us to successfully implement customer feedback without drastic changes to our development timeline. These tools and practices helped our team achieve success during our software development process.

I believe that the Scrum-agile approach was extremely effective for the development of the SNHU Travel project. There were many benefits, but I will address a few of the cons first. One potential con of the Scrum-agile approach is pulling people that could be spending more time developing products and putting them in different roles. While I think this is largely beneficial for most projects, for smaller and simpler projects, this could lead to the project taking more time. Another potential con of the Scrum-agile approach is that if members are not utilizing the approach successfully, it could lead to more wasted time and non-useful positions. While this is a problem with any method, the Scrum-agile approach does add many more moving parts to the equation. This means that if people are not using the approach as intended, more time could be wasted in the long run. With the cons being addressed, there are many pros to this approach as well. As a counterpoint to an earlier con, if the approach is used as intended, the roles and responsibilities of each member allow the team to be extremely flexible and tackle challenges effectively as they come. The approach also allows for much more open communication, which is imperative in a team setting. I believe the agile approach also allows for a much smoother design and development process since it encourages team coordination and collaboration. Overall, I believe that the agile approach was much better suited for the SNHU Travel project. There are numerous reasons that I believe this, one of the biggest reasons was the customer and end-user feedback implementation throughout the project. I think that this approach helped the team create a much better project that delivered on what the customer wanted and was specifically tailored towards the end-user.