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CS-250

Final Project

12-7-24

**Scrum-Agile Team Roles**

While working with Chada Tech on the software development of SNHU Travel, a company who had recently transitioned from a traditional waterfall methodology to the more flexible agile methodology, the team was tasked with increasing the website with new functionality that met client requests. As a member of the Scrum-Agile Team working on SNHU Travel for Chada Tech, I have been able to experience multiple roles throughout the process including product owner, scrum master, developer, and tester.

The product owner is the liaison between the client and the development team, prioritizes and catalogues the product backlog, and ensures the overall quality of the final project. The product owner will meet with the client on semi-regular basis to receive feedback and assess the client’s priorities throughout the project. The SNHU Travel product owner was responsible for checking in throughout the project with Chada Tech to gain a firm understanding of their needs and relay this to development team and be available for any follow-up questions they might have. This allows the product owner to prioritize tasks in the product backlog and keep the flow of the project moving forward.

The scrum master is responsible for ensuring that team members understand the levels of importance in the product backlog, follows the agile methodology, and facilitates the scrum events for the team. The scrum master plays a large role of communication between the product owner and the development team. The scrum master for this project was responsible for leading the daily scrum meetings, which were about 15 minutes long, and ensuring that the team stayed on the topic of discussion and accurately described their progress and problems. The scrum meetings played an important role in the project as the entire team was able to meet and get on the same page regarding their goals and adjust as necessary to any changes from the client regarding the project. The scrum master made sure that everything ran smoothly and that the project was efficient in its processes.

The developers and testers share some responsibilities as they are the primary force driving the actual creation of the project forward. The testers then try out the completed projects and provide relevant feedback for the developers. The developers of the SNHU Travel team were responsible for meeting the objectives and tasks designated in the product backlog. This was then tried out by the testers on the team who provided helpful feedback on the features for the client before it was ultimately presented to the product owner for review and feedback. The developer also follows up on any questions that arise and are responsible for reaching out to the product owner for clarification. The testers’ primary objective is the quality of the product and make useful suggestions about the various tasks throughout the project. The testers for this project created test cases that would accurately convey scenarios that were outlined in the user stories by the product owner. The test cases provide feedback on whether the task requires more work or is ready for presentation to the product owner.

**User Stories**

The agile approach allowed for a more flexible approach to user stories, but still called for well-developed process at the onset of the project. The user stories developed for the SNHU Travel project were defined based on the needs of real-life users as mentioned by Chada Tech in the initial client meeting. This defined the parameters for the teams to meet and set clear goals. One example of this was the sort by budget functionality that was user requested. This was then broken out into acceptable criteria for the team to meet.

**Handling Interruptions**

The agile methodology allows for a flexible, adaptive approach to a project which enables team members to pivot when issues arise, or client needs change. With this in mind, the team does not need to clearly define the requirements for the project and allows for client involvement throughout the process. The SNHU Travel project benefited from this approach throughout the project as the parameters of the project changed. The original request for a list of popular destinations was adjusted based on Chada Tech’s need for a PowerPoint presentation list that was more interactive for users. Without an agile approach, this new direction would not have been defined early in the process and the team would have wasted valuable time on a requirement that is not actually needed. The Product Owner was able to provide feedback from Chada Tech leadership and they were then able to adjust the goals for the development team and testers.

**Communication**

Communication is one of largest and most important factors in agile methodology as the team meets daily for updates and stays in touch the client and stakeholders. Thanks to the constant flow of communication, the development team was able to receive clarification from the product owner on the design and layout of the project. This ensured valuable time was not wasted on unnecessary developments. The email was as follows:

Email to the Product Owner and Tester

To: Jesse and Dean

Subject: Request for Further Project Details

*Good morning Jesse and Dean,*

*I am reviewing the recent requirement changes we made to the SNHU Travel software, and I have a few questions that have come up in regards to the client’s wants/needs.*

*Jesse, can you please provide me with any details you may have on the design and layout that the client has requested? Did they have a specific placement for the filter in mind or any additional vacation types that should be added? Any direction you can provide would be helpful in developing a product that meets their needs.*

*Dean, can you provide me with the most recent test cases based on the new requirements? This will help me to develop the most accurate functionality for the software.*

*If you would like any further details or would prefer to discuss this in person, please let me know and we can schedule a meeting.*

*Thank you,*

*Danielle McNeill*

If the email had not provided the necessary details or required further communication, then the development team could schedule a meeting with the Product Owner to discuss the details. This would ensure that clear, concise information is provided to all parties which benefits the entire team.

**Organizational Tools**

JIRA is a project management tool that uses Agile methodology to organize tasks, link goal to other team members’ tasks, create workflows, and get valuable insights on team performance. This helps the team to save time on the planning process which is more efficient. It also helps the team to see the bigger picture by showing the entire project in one place within the context of the whole. It can also be tailored to individual team products which is beneficial for different types of projects.

**Evaluating the Agile Process**

The agile approach was very effective for the SNHU Travel project, however; every approach has its positives and negatives. One con for this project was the difficulty in estimating the length of the project since the adaptive approach makes timing flexible. When feedback is provided by the Product Owner from the client, the development team needs to adjust to those changing needs, which does save wasted time, but can also drag out a project. On the other hand, the pros were that the team was able to make adjustments on the fly to avoid that waste of effort and ultimately make the client happier with the PowerPoint approach, improving overall project success. The ongoing communication that is built into the agile approach through daily standups was also beneficial as the team was able to brainstorm together to work through issues and changes as a whole. The breakdown of the product backlog and team collaboration made for a better project than one might see with a waterfall approach since the parameters of the project are set early on with no room for changes which can be frustrating for the client. Overall, I think the pros of the agile method far outweighed the cons and was the right choice for this project.