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CS 250 Final Project

Scrum Review and Retrospective: SNHU Travel Project

The various roles on our Scrum-agile team greatly contributed to the success of the SNHU travel project in many ways. From the start of the project, the Product Owner and Scrum Master met with the client directly to determine the goal of the project and begin identifying items to be managed into the product backlog. This interaction ensured that our team and the client’s goals aligned and created an environment of understanding and clarity between the members. Our Scrum Master was able to assemble the agile team of Product Owner, Tester, and Developer. The product owner began with creating and prioritizing the product backlog, which detailed specific tasks that needed to be achieved to complete the project. They also met with the users of the travel website to come up with user stories for the travel project that helped the developers get an idea of what the software should do. One example of a user story is “As an end user, I would like to be able to filter destinations based on price, so that I can find a travel destination based on my budget.” Breaking down the client’s needs into user stories in this way gave a clear goal to the developers and testers that the project needed to include a price filter, and it was implemented into one of the sprints. The Scrum Master scheduled the sprints and daily scrum meeting with the entire team. This greatly assisted the team in keeping organized and on-track to meet the deliverable deadline of five weeks, because each sprint pulled tasks directly from the product backlog and all sprint tasks were completed weekly by the end of the sprint. The developers actively participated in the daily scrums and completed the designated product backlog items for each weekly sprint, while maintaining communication with the rest of the team on what obstacles they had so that the Scrum Master and Product Owner could work to resolve them and keep everyone on track to meet the five-week deadline. The testers were able to test the travel project during each sprint, making it possible to address any bugs/issues in the project at the time they were detected. The testers contributed to developing the best possible version of the product for the client. The Scrum team members had their individual roles, but it was ultimately how the team worked together using an agile approach that led to the project’s success.

The Scrum-agile approach to the Software Development Life Cycle helped each of the user stories come to completion because the product backlog was designed and managed around the needs of the client derived from the user stories. The developers were able to view the user stories to determine what features should be implemented to accommodate user’s needs. In the price filter example, it was determined that features such as taking user input as a price cap and displaying the travel packages that were cheaper than that input to screen should be added to the product backlog. The Scrum Master determined which sprint this feature would be created in, the developers developed the feature during that sprint, and the testers were able to test to make sure that the feature worked as intended and met the criteria for the user’s needs. This agile process was repeated for each user story until all of them were completed for the SNHU travel project.

In the middle of the SNHU travel project, the needs of the client shifted to focus the types of travel to detox/wellness travel. Using the Scrum-agile approach, the Scrum team was able to make adjustments to support product completion in the same timeframe, while still meeting the client’s needs. The Product Owner altered and prioritized the product backlog and gave updated requirements to the developers. The developers were able to make changes to the existing code to display the specific types of travel, detox/wellness, as requested by the client and Product Owner, and continue their sprints with the updated product backlog items. The Scrum-agile approach allowed for flexibility in the software development life cycle that did not impact the deliverable date.

The Scrum team thrived on effective communication. During the daily scrum meetings, the team reviewed what they accomplished the day prior, what they were going to accomplish that day, and brought any obstacles to the attention of the Scrum Master. The meetings encouraged the team to collaborate and work through the items of each sprint to ensure that the sprint was successful and allowed for team members to ask for and provide assistance to one another when necessary. The Product Owner was in communication with the client and was able to identify when the features of the project needed to be altered. After the Product Owner discovered that the client wanted to focus the types of travel primarily on detox/wellness travel, they immediately called a meeting with the other team members to convey this information and began prioritizing and changing the product backlog. Once changes were made, the developers were notified of what needed to be updated in their existing code, the testers could test the new code, and the team could move forward addressing the updated product backlog items in future sprints in their Scrum Meetings. This is a prime example of the team’s ability to communicate and adapt effectively.

The organization tools and Scrum-agile principles that helped the SNHU Travel Project team be successful were effective communication and Kanban boards. The daily scrum was a testament to effective communication, and minutes from the scrum were emailed to each team member every day. The Scrum team and project were small enough to be able to use Kanban boards, where the team utilized sticky notes on a board to organize and track tasks during the daily scrum. The boards were organized based on each sprint, and all items would need to be complete prior to the end of the sprint. If the team or the project had been larger, it would have been more effective to use a tool such as VersionOne or JIRA, but the tools used for this smaller product were sufficient and effective enough to make the project successful.

The Scrum-agile approach had several pros during the project. One pro is that the team was able to begin the project without extensive planning because in agile decisions are made in real-time based on prior events. Another pro is that there is regular, open communication between all team members through the daily scrum and regular communication between the Product Owner and the users to produce the best possible product. The testers were able to test product features during each sprint, making debugging much easier as well. The biggest pro to the Scrum-agile approach for the SNHU Travel Project is the flexibility. It was much easier to make changes to the product to align with the client’s needs using agile than it would be using waterfall, and the team did not have to start the project from the beginning. Cons presented during the project were that when determining user stories for the project, it was slightly difficult to separate user wants from user needs. Scrum-agile was the best approach for the SNHU Travel development project, and I would recommend using this approach for future projects.