CS-250: Sprint Review and Retrospective

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Each of the different roles in the Scrum-agile team played a significant role in the success for SNHU Travel project. First and foremost, as Scrum Master, I was able to successfully facilitate all Scrum events from Sprint Planning to the daily Scrum meeting. Sprint planning allowed for the project to be set up for a positive outcome, pending actual development. The daily scrum meetings helped the team identify and roadblocks, how we as a team could overcome them, and what we have and will accomplish them. The simple three questions that helped the team were as follows: “What did I do yesterday to help meet the Sprint Goal?”, “What will I do today to help meet the Sprint Goal?” and “What impedes me from accomplishing the Sprint Goal?”. These questions, when asked at each daily scrum meeting, helped the team realize where one another was in terms of progress or inhibition, and actively work as a team to overcome any obstacles.  
 Secondly, as a Product Owner, it is important to have open lines of communication with stakeholders and the team. The main job, to detail requirements and define the product backlog, as well as help develop user stories dependent on the requirements. For instance, the feature to click a link of a top destination list will help future customers of SNHU Travel easily find fantastic vacations by recommendation of most popular places to visit. Another interesting user story based upon the consumer interview was, “I want to set a price limit so that I can see top vacation packages within the price limit”. This simple user story which was provided in the interview with users of SNHU Travel helped define a certain criterion that most customers would like to see. User stories can be crafted relatively well when paired with a focus group interview. Creating user stories was very useful and helped developers and testers really understand the feature that was trying to be created.

Next, testers helped developers bring the project into a real focus. Using the few user stories along with the program created, the testers brought in “if I do this, this should happen” for each included feature. Even for user stories that had not been included yet, the testers did a wonderful job creating test cases. As mentioned earlier, one of the user stories was to essentially create a price filter. The testers put together a fantastic test case for this, in which each step was broken down paired with the expected result of each step. Also, they made sure to include when the program changed from a list to a slideshow in the revisions of the test cases. These test cases went a long way, especially when helping the developers write the code for the program.

Last, the developers of the team put in a lot of hard and extensive work bringing the program to life. The developers started with a clickable list of destinations, but when the customer changed their minds to a slideshow – they were able to correctly change up the program and meet the week deadline. As for the locations, the product owner had learned from SNHU Travel that wellness/detox vacations were going to be the upcoming hot ticket in the travel sector, so the team was able to change some destinations around to include this genre of vacation.

The Scrum-agile approach to the software development lifecycle helped each of the user stories come to completion but using an iterative approach paired with a strong teamwork environment. One of the main user stories, the top destination list (later a slide show), was successfully completed from the beginning. This was done by prioritizing it, as it was essentially the base for the program, where each other user story could possibly build upon it. Each user story has the ability to act as its own iteration, which will allow for the team to tackle each feature as they come. Although the whole team will not work on the same user story simultaneously, each user story is a new minor version of the program. The team works together to solve any problems that one another may have to help complete the sprint goal, even if it means pair programming to learn from one another and create wider skillsets.

The project was still completed even though there were changes in direction, all able to be done because of the Scrum-agile approach. The scrum-agile approach allowed for the team to have a meeting whenever the Product Owner learned of a new requirement from SNHU Travel, and this allowed the team to immediately get to work on solving this new problem. For instance, one of the largest changes was to wellness/detox vacation destinations. The Product Owner had come back from a meeting with SNHU Travel management in which there was a discussion about an industry report citing wellness and detox vacation packages. This new information prompted for the team to change from seemingly random vacation packages to now a certain type. The team was able to roll with this and adjust the program accordingly.

With any relationship, communication is a very important building block that can not be ignored, especially within a team. This past week, communicating with my peers seemed to be very helpful and insightful(when replies were received). We worked together to the best of our abilities and asked one another some thought provoking questions. I had suggested the use of Code Reviews in hoping to be approved by my peers, but it seemed to only take with two of three of those who responded. In my initial post I had said, “Code reviews should be looked at positively and a time to educate ourselves and one another. These will help the development hone their skills and help the idea of learning from one another”. By saying this I was exemplifying how code reviews could positively impact the team. My opinion here was up for debate and although not explicitly stated – was my main talking point. Code reviews being looked at in a positive light would help with the idea of discussion and working together to accept the practice. If it was brought in about a negative way, it would more likely be rejected whereas that is not what I wanted. Personally, I feel code reviews can be very helpful and insightful – especially for beginning developers such as myself.

One of the most important Agile principle throughout this project was the “

Welcome changing requirements, even late in development. Agile processes harness change for the customer’s competitive advantage” (Agile Alliance, 2021). This came into play when SNHU Travel wished to change vacation package types. Although a minor change, it is all the same. This small change was to help SNHU Travel stay on top with the latest trend, “the customer’s competitive advantage”. This single principle is what sticks out to me the most. Also, the practice of User Stories and Test Cases helped me realize as a developer the goals I was trying to achieve. These stories and cases help break down the overall project into chunks that were easily doable. If these were paired with a code review, then this would really be where the education factor would come through, in terms of programming.

The Scrum-agile approach used for the SNHU Travel project was a no brainer. The iterative approach made it vey palatable amongst the team and helped calm nerves of one ultimate deadline. Although the team had to deal with multiple deadlines throughout the project such as Sprint Goals, it was much easier because each feature was broken up into different “user stories” to be completed. These seemingly small steps built up into the overall project, which helped make the project a success. The one downside to the Scrum-agile approach was how the team was somewhat allowed to take their time with each “deadline”. In future projects, this may lead to too much time being taken up because of no definite deadline.

For this project, the Scrum-agile approach was the best way to tackle it. The way this framework can create a team environment in which everyone helps one another, communicates, and gives their all to deliver a sound, put together product. It helps ensure quality by holding the whole team accountable, not just one person. Everyone must go down with the ship, if need be, but thankfully this was not the case with the SNHU Travel project.

References

* *12 principles behind the Agile Manifesto: Agile Alliance*. Agile Alliance |. (2021, October 8). Retrieved December 6, 2021, from https://www.agilealliance.org/agile101/12-principles-behind-the-agile-manifesto/.