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**Sprint Review and Retrospective**

The goal of the SNHU Travel Project was to deliver a travel booking platform that was both responsive as well as modern through cutting edge user feature offerings. The platform was to offer targeted or niche vacation packages and allow users to find deals and book vacations based on their interest. Late in our project it was decided to hone in on the rising popularity of wellness vacations. The team pivoted to deliver a wellness retreat focused travel platform through this sprint. This Sprint Review and Retrospective will evaluate the contributions of each team member's role, the completion of user stories, and our ability to handle project interruptions and maintain efficiency and effectiveness both in our execution as well as organization and communication. Finally, I will assess whether Scrum was the best approach for this project.

**Applying Roles**

Having designated roles created clear responsibilities and focus within our team. Having job duties laid out in a clear and concise way allowed our team to excel at focusing on resolving role specific tasks. Through our daily stand ups and good communication the team was able to stay thoroughly informed on pertinent information.

Each team member provided value, for example: The Product Owner ensured that backlog clarity and our acceptance criteria (particularly during the scope change) was clear and objective. The Scrum Master (myself) was able to facilitate sprint planning, our daily scrums, and keep the team focused and moving by removing impediments. The developers repurposed our already existing functionality quickly to the new project requirements and ensured we stayed within our timeline. Our tester ensured that our software was working as intended, and that new functionality successfully fulfilled the story without side effects.

While those are just a few of the many great examples on how our team came together to succeed through this sprint, I found that each role demonstrated exceptional collaboration that allowed us to stay aligned and productive.

**Completing User Stories**

User stories were critical to our team's success. Scrum-Agile methods helped the user stories reach completion through our strategic planning and continuous refinement of the backlog. While the user stories may focus on what the end-user experiences, they also told our team what needed to happen behind the scenes. Using this information we derived objective test cases that would denote if we successfully completed a task and if it was ready for production. Having clarity on what needed to be done, and how it needs to be done, also gave our Product Owner clarity on how to prioritize the tasks. Regular refinement ensured our stories were well defined, and had clear acceptance criteria. I found it noteworthy that during the scope shift, having clear user stories allowed our developers to quickly identify how to repurpose our existing codebase to meet the user’s needs.

**Handling Interruptions**

The project experienced what many would consider a significant interruption. Late into our project, our scope shifted toward detox and wellness travel packages. This moved us away from our more generalized user interest driven travel platform. Our team had already been developing functionality to allow users to receive custom feeds of travel data through various means. We had to move quickly to pivot our codebase as there would be no project deadline extension. By using the Agile principles, the team was able to quickly adjust by revisiting our current functionality, our old backlog, priorities, and acceptance criteria. It quickly became clear that we needed more information, and we needed it ASAP. Our team was able to rally. The Product Owner, Developers, and Testers were able to start instant communication and hash out new acceptance criteria the same day. What otherwise could have been a huge project derailment, the flexibility and tools built within Agile allowed our team to recalibrate near instantly.

**Communication**

Effective communication was the keystone to our team's success. Our ability to collaborate allowed us to extinguish road blocks in a quick manner. It also allowed us to relay information instantaneously between any combination of team members. Our excellent communication was centered around a daily Scrum stand up at 9:15 AM. Our standups were essential in keeping the team up to speed as well as allowing team members to quickly address important issues or impediments. We kept a sidebar list during our stand ups, this allowed team members to follow up in deeper conversations as needed. As a team we made great use of Slack and Jira to allow for instant communication and thorough project task management through information radiators. Here is a highlight of our teams communication from slack:

*“Developer: @PO Could you please clarify the acceptance criteria for the scope change per this morning's meeting?*

*Tester: @PO Could you provide feedback on test results for the new user behavior?*

*Product Owner: “Thanks for bringing this to my attention. Moving forward, all destinations on the platform should be Wellness and Detox only. We can display locations in similar ways, but we only highlight these wellness type locations moving forward.”*

This type of clear, direct communication ensured that any impediments were removed quickly, allowing the team to maintain momentum and good cohesion.

**Organizational Tools**

Our team's success was supported by really great organizational and Scrum-Agile tools. We utilized Jira’s Kanban boards to keep the team updated in real time, and ensured that our information radiators always reflected current task progress. Utilizing Scrum specific tools: our backlog refinement ensured the team’s work remained aligned with the priorities set by our Product Owner. Our team also looks forward to utilizing Sprint Reviews and Retrospectives to continue to refine our system to improve our results for future sprints

**Evaluating Agile Process**

We found the Scrum-Agile framework had both advantages and challenges for the SNHU Travel project. Having flexibility and adaptability, increased collaboration, and strong communication allowed the team to succeed in this sprint. This was not without some Agile specific challenges. We found the tight timeline and scope creep to be very concerning, it really relied on the full team to be moving efficiently and we were fortunate to be able to pivot so gracefully. In the future, scope creep and late project timeline changes could be potentially disastrous for our team.

Despite the challenges, Agile was the best approach for this project. Its flexibility really allowed our team to deliver a functional product even though we had some interruptions.

**Conclusion**

The Sprint Review and Retrospective revealed how Scrum roles, events, and tools supported the project success for the SNHU Travel project. Agile’s ability to adapt to scope changes, foster good communication, and refine a team's processes each sprint really can contribute to success. While our project certainly faced risks due to timeline constraints and shifting priorities, the Agile approach ultimately provided the flexibility and structure needed for our team to meet goals. I’d recommend in future sprints we work to refine acceptance criteria earlier and potentially allocate more buffer time for unexpected changes. Overall, Scrum proved to be a very effective framework.