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Chada Tech Sprint Review and Retrospective

Until now, Chada Tech has used the waterfall development model to outline the development process for their software. Chada Tech has decided to transition from the waterfall method to a more dynamic and flexible approach, known as the agile method, using my small team. My team’s first task under the new agile methodology was to develop an application for our client, SNHU Travel. In this paper I would like to give a review and retrospective on my team’s work, and how the new methodology impacted our success.

First, I would like to demonstrate how each team member played a role in the success of our project. My team had the following roles: the product owner, the scrum master, the developer, and the tester. The product owner played a significant role in providing direction to the rest of the team, prioritizing what work to do next, and maximizing the value of the project. The scrum master excelled at managing the product backlog, removing challenges that the developer was stuck on, and facilitating the scrum events. The tester played a crucial role by creating test cases, clarifying ambiguity within code or user stories, executing test cases, and working with the rest of the team to resolve various issues. The developer made a positive impact by developing code according to industry standards, participating in peer reviews, and collaborating with the rest of the team.

Now, I would like to explain how the agile approach helped us complete each of the user stories. One way the agile approach helped the team complete the user stories was through the method’s high focus on communication. Communication, with the team, and the customer, is very important when using the agile methodology. Placing a high priority on communication better enabled the team to truly understand what the customer wanted, and lessened the likelihood of misinterpretation. Another aspect of the agile approach that helped the team complete the user stories is the focus on customer-centricity. This customer first mindset allows the team to put themselves in the customer’s shoes, and see the project from a different point of view.

Another benefit of the new methodology is how it supports project completion through a change of direction, or plan. The agile methodology specializes in flexibility and adapting to change. This is great for when a new feature is requested, or an existing feature needs to be changed. One example of this in the SNHU Travel project is when management decided to shift focus towards detox/wellness vacations. In this example each of the various roles made changes to their plans in order to commit to the new focus. The tester updated their test cases to reflect the new requirements, the product owner reprioritized their product backlog, the developer looked over the software to better understand what would be needed, and the scrum master verified the impact on the schedule. These sort of changes would not have been possible under the waterfall methodology.

The project also greatly benefitted from the effective communication brought about by the agile methodology. One example of effective communication is when I emailed the product owner for clarifying questions regarding the user stories. In this email, I asked questions like “Would you like the sort functionality to be in ascending order, descending order, or both interchangeably?”. These clarifying questions are important to ensure all aspects of the user story are properly implemented. Another example of effective communication was when I reached out to the product owner, and product tester, to make a couple of requests. One request I made was, “I would also like to ask the product owner to consider implementing some sort of relative scoring system using story points. This can be done by assigning a value of importance to each task. This will help the development team determine how to prioritize each task.”. These suggestions were helpful ideas that helped not only the product owner and tester, but the entire team.

There were also a plethora of organizational tools, and scrum-agile principles, that helped our team achieve success. One of the agile principles that improved our team’s success was the use of daily scrum meetings. These were used to help the team in a number of ways. One way it did this was by ensuring effective communication amongst the team. Another way it helped the team was by giving the members of the team the chance to properly gauge where they are at, versus where they should be. Another agile principle that improved the team’s success was the use of backlog refinement. Backlog refinement is critical in prioritizing the importance of pending tasks. This helped the team better manage the time they had to complete the remaining tasks.

Overall, the agile methodology proved to be a highly effective approach for the SNHU Travel project. Some pros of the agile approach include: flexibility (changes can be made to the project at any point in its lifecycle), communication (emphasis is placed on communication within the team, and the customers / stakeholders), continuous testing (testing can be conducted at any point, unlike the waterfall model), and smaller focused teams (teams are small, and focus on more specific aspects of the project). The only con of the agile methodology is that it may not bring the same level of structure as many people are used to with the waterfall model. In the end, I have no doubt that the agile methodology was the best approach for the SNHU Travel project.