Make changes to your release plan: Case study

Scenario

You and your Scrum team at Office Green have conducted a test run, created a Sprint Plan, and mitigated project issues. Your team has completed the first of three releases for Virtual Verde, and now you're coming up on the second!

As the second and third project releases approach, you receive three emails that could lead to changes in the release plan. Your team needs to evaluate each email to understand how (or if) it requires changes to the release plan. If you think it does, you will write an email to the Scrum Team updating them on the situation and proposing possible solutions.

Virtual Verde release plan emails

Consider your options and make a plan:

Q. Does the update require your team to take action? If so, what are some possible options to address the update?

- No

Q. Do you need to consult anyone to make a decision? If so, who?

- No

Q. Do you need additional information to help reach a decision? If so, what do you need to know?

- No

If you think a change to the release plan is needed, write an email to the Scrum team:

The first seasonal care emails won't be sent until June, so no changes to the release plan are necessary.

Email 2:

From: vendor_manager@officegreen.com
Date: April 10
Subject: New vendor management system issues

Dear Scrum Master,

Just wanted to flag for you: The new vendor management system/database the team created in an earlier Sprint is having some major technical issues. We're getting our orders in, but for some reason the stock in the database isn't matching what's actually in the warehouse. And I'm losing invoices. Since things are up-and-running with customers, I'm concerned this is going to cause supply chain issues, as well as relationship issues with our vendors. Can you give me an estimate of when we can get it fixed?

Thanks,
Vendor Manager

Consider your options and make a plan:

Q. Does the update require your team to take action? If so, what are some possible options to address the update?

- Yes:
    - We need IT to fix the glitches as soon as possible.
    - If the fix takes too long, we could go back to the old software temporarily.
    - We could also consider manual tracking until the software is fixed.

Q. Do you need to consult anyone to make a decision? If so, who?

- Yes:
    - The Vendor Manager, to ask follow-up questions about the issues.
    - Software Developers and the IT department, to fix the software
    - The Warehouse Operations Manager, who may need their team to count inventory manually.

Q. Do you need additional information to help reach a decision? If so, what do you need to know?

- Yes:
    - How long it will take IT to fix the software.
    - How many invoices are missing and how long it would take to calibrate the orders and the on-hand inventory.

If you think a change to the release plan is needed, write an email to the Scrum team:

To: scrum_team@officegreen.com
From: scrum_master@officegreen.com

Subject: Vendor database issues—brief disruption to shipments

Hi Team,

Our Vendor Manager just alerted me that our vendor database, which tracks our orders and current stock, is malfunctioning and returning the wrong information. Because this affects how we deliver our products, we need to get it fixed as soon as possible. Developers, can you coordinate with IT to start working on this problem? Once we know how long the fix will take, we can decide whether to do a manual count of each product or if we need to go back to the old software for a while. This may derail us for a few days as we get things working again, but I don't anticipate any major impact to the release plan.

I'll keep everyone updated on this issue, and let you know when it's fixed.

Best,
Scrum Master

Email 3:

From: vendor_manager@officegreen.com
Date: June 9
Subject: We lost our Bonsai supplier

Dear Scrum Master,

I just got a call that our Bonsai tree supplier will stop carrying Bonsai trees at the end of this month. They're willing to replace our Bonsai orders with different plants, but I'm not sure what kind. I know that we're only a few weeks away from the July release and that the Bonsai trees are an important part of that release. What are your thoughts?

Best,
Vendor Manager

Consider your options and make a plan:

Q. Does the update require your team to take action? If so, what are some possible options to address the update?

- Yes:
  - We could try to source Bonsai trees elsewhere.
  - We could remove Bonsai trees from the website until we find a new vendor.
  - We could substitute different plants.

Q. Do you need to consult anyone to make a decision? If so, who?

- Yes:
  - The Product Owner, who will make the final decision.
  - The Vendor Manager, to follow up on the substitute plants and discuss finding another Bonsai supplier.
  - The Development Team, to find out what we'd need to change on the website if we can't offer Bonsai trees.

Q. Do you need additional information to help reach a decision? If so, what do you need to know?

- Yes:
  - Are there any other Bonsai tree vendors who can fill our orders?
  - If so, at what additional cost?
  - If so, how quickly can we get them?
  - What type of plants is the Bonsai vendor offering instead?
  - What changes would we need to make to the website if we can't get Bonsais?

If you think a change to the release plan is needed, write an email to the Scrum team:

To: scrum_team@officegreen.com
From: scrum_master@officegreen.com
Subject: Change of plans for release 3?

Hi Team,

We found out today that our Bonsai tree supplier will stop carrying Bonsai trees at the end of this month. Since Bonsai trees are a big part of our third release, we may need to reassess our plan. We've got a few options to address the issue: 1) we could try to find a new Bonsai vendor before our July release, 2) we could substitute a different kind of specialty plant, 3) or, if we can't find a new vendor, we could launch the third release without Bonsai trees.

I'd like to discuss these options (or others) at our next team meeting, but I'm doubtful we can find another vendor in time (and within our budget). So we may need to think about a change to our July release and launch with vegetables and gardening supplies only. Then, once we find a vendor who fits our budget and supply chain, we can plan to offer them in a later release.

Thanks so much for your flexibility, and I'm interested to hear your thoughts.

Best,
Scrum Master