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Sprint Retro

In the last sprint, we used the scrum agile system to complete our travel project. The scrum master was able to conduct and put together meetings daily to check in on the progress of the entire team, as well as organizing and hosting meetings for mid sprint check in, and sprint planning. During these meetings, the team would go over user stories, which are put together by the product owner. The product owner maintains these stories, which all go onto a storyboard which is used as a tool to conduct team meetings and is a visual aid to see how progress is being made on the project. The product owner and scrum master also used these meetings to check in on individual stories to make sure they were updated. The developers and QA analysts are responsible for updating the status and comments on the user stories. The product owner would check with these developers and QA analysts to make sure the stories stayed up to date. The developers and QA analysts would also work together on any outstanding bugs or issues with the project, and the daily standup meetings are a way for those analysts to easily connect. Finally, the stakeholders listened in on some meetings, and provided input and feedback on the continually developed project.

Each individual user story was helped to come to completion by the scrum agile process. First, the product owner and stakeholders could get together and develop user stories and features that matched expectations of the product. This first step in the scrum agile system already is helping to get user stories and features detailed and ready for developers while still having stakeholders in the conversation. Once the user stories are detailed, they are sent to the developers, who used the detailed instructions in the user stories to create the changes to the product needed. Because the user story has detailed instructions, the developer knows what to do in order to get that piece of the product together. After the changes are made that the user story calls for, the developer can send the user story to the QA analyst who will then look over the changes for any issues. Having the user story present allows for the QA analyst to be easily briefed on what changes they are looking for, and what the expected behavior is. User stories also allow for tracking of code changes, as well as conversations about issues and bugs, which the QA analysts can start if an issue is found. The product owner can monitor the user stories, which allows them to get a better view and estimate of the time needed for each individual change.

When the project was changed or interrupted, the scrum agile process helped to keep the project alive and continually developing. The biggest change that happened during the course of our work was changing the focus of the website to Wellness travel. Because the team was using the scrum agile method, we were able to keep developing with the new change of focus and continue to use what we had already developed for the old focus of the site. Thanks to user stories, all the changes that were needed were simply updated in the stories that were applicable, and any ongoing work that was interrupted could be adapted to changes in the currently active user stories.

The scrum agile process also encourages good communication practices between members of the team. During the daily standup meetings, we have an easy direct communication with every member of the team. That allows everyone from product owner to developer to QA analyst to ask questions and be informed of where the product is and how individual work is going. Things to work being split out into individual stories, conversations around details related to specific features can be held in the comments of said user story. This encourages conversations to be happening for every feature going into the product, as the conversations can happen asynchronously and are sorted by user story. The act of passing a story between development and QA also highly encourages conversations between team members as multiple members are needed to get a user story across the finish line.

The biggest organizational tool that the scrum agile process benefits from is the story board. The story board is a board of all the user stories active, completed, or waiting for development, and gives an easy insight on where both individual work and the work of the team are at. It's also fundamental in helping run the daily standup meeting, as during each team members briefing, the user story board can be referenced along with what each member is saying to get a good understanding of how the work is going, or if there are any issues. The individual scrum events are also very useful for our team, as the continual conversations happening between team members encourages collaboration and idea sharing.

For the SNHU travel project, the scrum agile approach was the best approach to take for the SDLC. This became readily apparent when the change of focus happened during the second half of development. Without the help of agile and scrum, the team wouldn't have been able to easily switch focus to a Wellness based travel website. Agile also heavily encouraged talk between QA and development, which heavily reduced the number of issues that cropped up after development work was finished. The pros of using agile for this project include having a presentable project to the shareholders early in the development lifecycle, easily changeable requirements and expectations for the end product, and a highly collaborative environment of development. The only real big downside from using agile was the lack of a concrete understanding of cost.