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The SNHU Travel project was designed to offer consumers a booking software dedicated to presenting the best destinations for the user’s preferences. In this case, we started by filtering the “Top 5” Destinations and transitioned to providing the “Top 5 Detox and Wellness” destinations, upon the Client’s request. Since we used a Scrum-agile approach to this project, there were various roles that contributed greatly to our success. Christy, our Product Owner, did a great job in identifying the interest of the client and relaying that information to the Scrum Master and the rest of the team, along with keeping the product backlog groomed. As Scrum Master, I was responsible for facilitating the Scrum events, such as our Sprint Planning, Daily Scrum’s, and Sprint Review’s. My purpose was to ensure our Developing team stayed on track and understood the client’s vision fully. Our Developer, Nicole, was responsible for the design and coding portion of the project. She and Brian, our tester, were able to work together throughout the production of the software and not only met the goals of the client, but also produced software that was fully functional with little to no bugs. Brian was able to collaborate with Nicole and write the test codes before Nicole wrote her portion. This streamlined the process and created useable code more efficiently.

The benefits of a Scrum-agile approach to the Software Development Life Cycle are more noticeable when a project encounters change in the initial plan. During the initial Spring Planning, Christy and the rest of the team worked together in organizing the Product Backlog and deciding which user stories were able to be completed in each Sprint. Christy then kept the backlog groomed in accordance with the projects most valued stories. By using the technique, we were able to show the client our progress and provide them with quicker completed stories that they valued more than others. On top of that, when the clients decided they wanted to pivot from the “Top 5” destinations to the “Top 5 Detox and Wellness” destinations, we were able to move those user stories to the top of the backlog and adjust the code as needed. Changes were more swiftly implemented and easier to handle with this approach.

As mentioned previously, the Scrum-agile approach is most useful in complex and changing environments. When the client decided they wanted to pivot their audience, Christy held a meeting with myself and the rest of the team to detail the changes in the client’s vision. Each member of the team then evaluated what the changes would require of their role and reported back to the Product Owner. The user stories were adjusted to reflect the changes, and certain user stories were pushed to the top of the backlog for quicker completion. Without prolonging the project, the team was able to easily adjust to the new requirements and keep the project on track. In contrast, in a traditional waterfall approach to this project, we would have already fully completed the software before the changes from the client would have been discussed. We would likely have to alter a lot of the code and perform new test to accommodate. The agile approach is then much cheaper to produce and more efficient for all parties involved.

As a primary relay between Christy and the Developing team, it was my responsibility to make a line of communication between the Product Owner and the Developing team for the sake of the Client. To do this, I held multiple Scrum events for the purpose of communication and organization. In particular, our Daily Scrums were used as a quick meeting every morning to discuss the progress we made the day before, what we planned to complete that day, and what obstacles were in our way. I could then communicate these obstacles with the Product Owner to assist in maximizing the deliverable value and eliminating anything that could reduce that.

In this project, a major challenge for us was overcoming the shock of the pivot in the Client’s direction. Initially, the Developing team was concerned with the changes and needed to be reminded of the purpose of working in an agile environment. Agile promotes variability and uncertainty, where embracing change is easier to adapt to due to the iterative approach of development. Even large changes to the project may only require subtle changes in code and can be worked out as a team. The use of the Daily Scrum was beneficial in our adaptation to these changes and helped by communicating daily with the team to keep up with continued adjustments, so that no one on the team was left in the dark. On a longer scale, we used the Spring Review as a time to present the completed Spring results to the Product Owner to be sure we were up to date with the Client’s vision after changes have been implemented. To keep the team organized, the product backlog was the primary tool we used. This let the team know what the most important goals were and when they needed to be done. In a more complex project, I would be inclined to use an online information radiator, which is updated throughout each day and reflects the progress of the team and can be customized to fit any team need. This creates transparency from the Developing team all the way to the Client.

Where this specific project was not overly complex and could have been completed with a waterfall approach, it would not have been able to adjust to the Client’s needs as efficiently. We would have completed the project before we found out about the pivot in audience, and although we could have made the changes to the code, it would have required more time before launch. The agile approach is best suited for this project due to its level of uncertainty. Dealing with the subject of “Best Destinations” can often be an environment effected by weather, trends, or even political climate. This level of uncertainty is tough to handle under a waterfall approach and is much more likely to present challenges within. The agile approach offers multiple points of iterative re-evaluation throughout the process with the unique feedback of the Client or Consumer. This approach is also cheaper and typically promotes a higher level of execution. Finally, the agile methodology is incredibly beneficial when dealing with new markets, where the project can not be fully planned appropriately. For SNHU Travel to dive into a new market, such as Detox and Wellness Destinations, this would be the best approach available.