As the Scrum Master of the team developing the SNHU Travel Application, I conducted the Sprint Planning by setting up a meeting with the developers and Product Owner once per sprint and identifying the work that the team should focus on. This has helped us in having a clear objective of the sprint, track our product backlog items and assign the appropriate tasks to each team member. The Sprint Review that I am holding right now will give us an opportunity to show the work done by the team and receive any feedback from the stakeholders. Lastly, I am also holding the Sprint Retrospective which will be attended by the Scrum team. Here the team will be provided with a safe space to speak about their experience on the previous sprint, what they were pleased to accomplish, what did they not like about the sprint and how we can avoid the problems and hurdles faced by the team going forward.

The Product Owner has helped in stakeholders and business communicate their needs and requests to the development team. By engaging with users or stakeholders, the PO has listened to their requests and requirements firsthand. It also gives the PO chance to clarify any abstract requests and refine them into stories so the agile team can follow them easily. The PO has also played a major role in creating stories for the team and refining them for better understanding.

The tester team was responsible for ensuring the product that was in development met the expectations of the stakeholders and facilitated communications between the development team and the product owners in terms of stories. Testers went through test cases and reported any failed tests or ineffective practices that may impact product acceptance criteria. They also wrote bug reports during testing so the development team would have a clear view of what they would need to fix. Product Owners also contributed to writing test cases by being available for communication and respond with clear and concise acceptance criteria. Some of the user stories would fail to mention if they wanted a filter/choice be a set value or a range and having those be clarified in a timely manner by the PO has been very helpful in writing the test cases.

The developers from the SNHU Travel Application team have adapted and kept up with many changing requests for features that must be incorporated into the development cycles of the app. Their main responsibility was to coordinate with the other team members and deliver a working application that met all acceptance criteria as well as passing all code tests and having code coverage that is acceptable by our company standards. I believe the developers have been an essential part of our agile team, where every single action they took has impacted the iteration cycle and the final product. The Dev Team be in constant communication with the Product Owner and me, and we have provided and received regular updates to and from business stakeholders so we could ensure the dev team do not dive too far into a feature that business would rather change later, thus saving valuable time and resources.

By turning business requirements into user stories, the scrum team can view the tasks from a user point of view as opposed to a simple list of requirements. This allows us to breakdown complex tasks into smaller features that can be quicky implemented by the development team. User stories also help enhance and foster collaboration between the stakeholders and the development team in a way which is easy for everyone to understand and participate in. The PO has constructed the stories that reflect the requests and demands of the user in a way that benefits the development team with clear understanding of each request.

The Scrum team has handled changes in vision and direction very well. For example when business wanted to shift towards a more detox/wellness focused destinations in the top destinations page, the shift was brought to the attention of the team in a timely manner where the PO delivered the news at DSU, and provided reasons for the shift, and ensured the team that their work up to that point was still all valid, but they just needed to prioritize this particular feature first. The PO and testers also communicated with the developers on the acceptance criteria and test cases which helped the developers not feel like they must start from scratch, but everyone around them was working together with them to have the new feature be implemented.

Below is an example of proactive involvement and good communication from the dev team for more clarification regarding changes in the form on an email:

Hello Maria and Jason,

Hope all is well. Just wanted to reach out about some questions the dev team has regarding the changes to app we discussed today at DSU.

* Would you like the descriptions of the new destinations to have key words such as detox or wellness, to indicate their category?
* Are we making the shift to having wellness/detox focused destinations appear first only in the top 5/10 categories or the entire website as a whole?
* Would you like to see any other visual changes in the UI, e.g. warm colors, to indicate a destination focus on detox/wellness.

In terms of testing, I do not think we need whole new test cases, but mostly category checks and other UI changes checks if business requests them. Please let us know, we are eager to start on the new changes, thank you.

Best,

Linkhon

This form of communication was very effective as the questions asked were very concise and to the point, leaving no room for ambiguity. They also provided reasons to not spend extra bandwidth and resources on creating new tests which helped in lessening the load on the team.

Having an Agile project-management tool can help coordinate the team and boost efficiency. Tools like Agility can help the team keep track of their progress and see any backlog items that are coming their way. This way the team can stay on course and prepare for any shift in plans. Also, I believe having the Daily Standups where the team could see the Agility board helps with the team’s morale as well. Having a tool like this provides visual feedback, which may help in motivating the team to reach their goals. Seeing the board at every DSU helps each team member share their progress and blockers while also being aware of the backlog and upcoming stories.

The agile methodology is fantastic for flexible development process, as our work is done in short bursts, led by test driven development, so if a change in direction arises, it is relatively risk free to quicky develop new features/stories and prioritize those for development. The has been no drawbacks in using the Scrum-Agile methodology for this project and I believe this was the best approach for the SNHU Travel development project.