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Sprint Review and Retrospective

Everyone has contributed differently towards the completion of this sprint; however, each role has been vital in its success. The Product Owner was successfully able to hold meetings with the customer and report that feedback to the rest of the team. This feedback was used for determining which sprints were most important and what work should be done. The Tester was able to successfully receive the customer feedback from the product owner and create test cases for the development team to complete to mark sprints as complete. Many interactions between the product owner and tester happened through email or face to face, that clarified what the tester should be looking for based on the knowledge the product owner had from the customer. Since the Dev Team worked with the tester, they were able to implement the code they had written into the main environment since it had passed all the test cases. As Scrum Master, I have set up meetings such as the daily scrum, sprint planning, sprint reviews, and retrospectives to further the team in their knowledge of the agile process and to assist them in their work.

Completing user stories is a crucial part of the scrum-agile process. The ability to adapt at any moment to make progress on what the customers/users really want is what makes the scrum-agile approach so valuable. When the product owner has meetings with the customer, they are able to get direct feedback on what the user really wants to see changed or improved on. These meetings give the most direct feedback line to the team on what to do next so that they can move the project in the correct direction. When the product owner comes back and gives the feedback they got back to the rest of the team it allows them to fully complete the user stories since they are coming directly from the mouth of the user.

The scrum-agile approach is great at handling interruptions due to its ability to adapt to adapt at any moment to a change in the project. This approach is different from the typical waterfall methodology due to how often it checks in on itself to determine if changes need to be made. The SNHU Travel development team was working on creating a top ten destinations list to be personalized for each user and was far in the process before the need to change directions was seen. The new direction would be to focus on a top five list of the best wellness/detox vacations instead. There was concern on the development team of whether their work would be for nothing or not, but the scrum/agile process allowed for a quick change in direction and completion of this new top five wellness/detox list. By getting thorough feedback from the product owner on what the customer wants to see and a complete test case from the tester, the developers were able to see how much of the code they were writing could still be used even when going in this new direction. Without the scrum-agile approach, nobody would have even known about this change in direction for the project, and they would push a feature that not many users want anymore, creating negative feedback.

Communication is the backbone of every company, scrum-agile further promotes communication in all roles. Holding the daily scrum has greatly improved communication within the developer and tester teams. It helped them see the work that is being done within the team on the project and know what is going well and what is not. Within the daily scrum, all team members had a chance to talk about what they did yesterday, what went well, and if there is anything they need help with. With this knowledge from every member of the team, every day, help is easily obtained from fellow team members and knowledge silos are avoided. Another meeting that furthers communication would be the sprint retrospective, the meeting where we review what has gone well within a series of sprints, and what needs to be worked on. This direct feedback from other team members helps individuals adjust to the work environment and continue what is going well and maybe adjust what is not going well. Besides just the meetings, no part of the agile processes works when there is no communication with the team members. Scrum-agile is there to encourage communication between departments so that nobody is working on projects that the customer does not want. The constant feedback loop from the customers communicated back to the development team from fellow team members is what makes scrum-agile adaptive.

Organizational tools that assist in the management of agile have helped the team be successful by supplying an online collaborative environment that gives the live status of the project. One organizational tool called Jira which was specifically created to manage software development projects, is particularly helpful in managing the scrum-agile workflow. Jira has sections called ‘reports’ and ‘dashboards’, that allow for easy viewing of the progress of sprints or trends from similar sprints. They also allow management to see the exact status of how the project is doing and how previous sprints have gone. This is helpful in timeline planning as all the data from past sprints is there to assist you in determining how the upcoming sprint is going to go. Of course, these tools do not do all the work for you, it is up to the management team and I (Scrum Master) to enter accurate data into programs such as Jira in order to get the most out of them. Entering outdated or inaccurate data into management programs will only make the project worse, so it is pivotal to make sure they are well maintained.

The scrum-agile approach has allowed the team to create new features for the users of SNHU Travel that they themselves requested in a rapid manner. Overall, it was the best approach we could have had to this rapidly changing project. Some major pros of this approach have been the ability to adapt new requirements from the user, the constant upkeep with user stories, the elimination of information silos, and the new lanes of communication that it has opened for the teams. Most of these pros come from the consistent meetings that scrum-agile provides, when every meeting is laid out for the team of when it will happen and why, it is easy for them to remember why and when the meetings will happen. A con of the scrum-agile approach is that it is very fast paced. Since sprints are laid out on short timelines it may be difficult for new teams to get accustomed to the idea of working in a scrum-agile environment. Despite that, I do think that the scrum-agile approach is the best approach for the SNHU Travel development project. After implementing it in the last seven weeks we have seen significant progress on the project and want to continue using this approach going forward. The SNHU Travel development project has been a rapidly changing project as new user stories come in, and we need a development style that can adapt at any moment to accommodate that. This makes scrum-agile the best possible approach to the SNHU Travel development project.