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To first start out my Sprint Review and Retrospective of the SNHU Travel Project, that our very skilled agile team has accomplished, I would like to talk about the various roles in which the different branches have helped achieve this goal. For starters with our Product Owner. They were the ones who helped start the whole project and included me on the first meeting of the client who wanted the SNHU Travel project to become reality. After that meeting we both understood what our jobs were now and what it was that we needed to get started on. I set off on making our agile team while our Product Owner set out on making the product backlogs, which were an incredible asset to our project, along with the many other assets that they made. Such as the user stories for the testers.

The Tester’s, who worked so diligently with the developers, had to quickly update their test cases in a decision made mid-project to switch focus to a different travel preference. They still helped keep on track and assured us the quality of our product was still what we were expecting. They were set to test every possible outcome of our project and be sure that what we were making would uphold to the standards that we set for our client and that our client would be getting exactly what they had asked for, in working order and on time.

The Development team actively participated in the sprint planning and daily scrums, collaborating to overcome any obstacles. Referencing back to the massive change in the focus of the project mid-way through. Though there was a slight misunderstanding when it was first announced, and thoughts of having to scrap the whole project and restart were thrown around, it was assured that it was only a change of focus and that they were still on track to meeting the deadline. The Development team really did an amazing job on their work of the code to meet the needs of the client and deliver an outstanding quality project that will last.

For my role as the Scrum Master I not only helped in the initial startup of this project by helping assemble an agile team that we were going to need for this project but also helped with other matters within the project. I helped facilitate communication, not only with the members of the team but with the Product Owner and Stakeholders of the project, by setting up the daily scrums and other events that would lead to the team on a whole understanding with each other and where everyone was within the project. I also helped to remove impediments resulting in swift resolutions to problems, minimizing downtime and effectively helping keep us on track to our desired deadline.

Shifting gears to focus more on how the Scrum-agile approach to the SDLC helped us with each of the user stories. Just by the iterative nature of Scrum it did allow for continuous refinement of the user stories. The nature of the regular sprints we held provided stakeholders the opportunity to interact with prototypes which lead to valuable feedback. That feedback is exactly what led to some of the first iterations of our User Stories and original design of what people were expecting to get out of the experience of using the SNHU Travel app. We ensured that the user stories were up to date, backuped by the feedback we received from the stakeholders on our project to make sure that we were in turn creating the exact product that they were asking for.

As I have stated before the project was in fact changed mid way through which did cause some concern. There was no real worry though as the Agile system allows for adaptability to these types of situations. In fact when this did happen it was a swift turn around to catch everyone up on the new criteria, get everyone on the same page and move right along as planned with little to no hiccups anymore. The use of the daily scrums was an excellent addition to this minor problem as it led the way for us to all be on the same page and a complete understanding with one another for the new direction that we were heading with this project. Another matter that helped us along with the change was the Product Backlog. That useful tool is a dynamic tool meant to facilitate reprioritization. Meaning that with the new change meant that there were things that were no longer as prioritized as they were before so that meant that new things can be accomplished and so on. It helped aid us on what needed to be done versus what can not be at the top of our focus so that we can move along smoothly.

Effective communication was a must for this project. Daily standups are what kept the team aligned. They were especially helpful in a more challenging sprint when there would be multiple dependencies that could surface. It allowed for us to quickly identify what could be potential bottlenecks and facilitate collaboration on how to resolve them. Another great tool was the Sprint reviews. Using a sprint review allowed for both the team and stakeholders to be aligned. It meant that we could demonstrate a prototype during one of these reviews and allow for real-time feedback which in turn helped to foster a collaborative spirit among the time and the stakeholders.

Organizational Tools and Scrum-Agile Principles were a massive help with this project. Jira came in handy as a tangible way to visually be able to see and track the workflow. There were also the scrum events. Such as the sprints, daily standups and the sprint reviews. We also did a scrum event called poker one time and that helped working through the project and let the team bond a little. It was a fun event, even if it took a little longer than anticipated.

There are pros and cons to the agile system as a whole. With some pros being that agile allows for flexibility and customer satisfaction. The flexibility of agile means that when we had that little hiccup it was not a problem to be able to work around it and change priorities for the project. The customer satisfaction was great as we got real feedback as we developed small increments instead of the whole project just to find out that it was all wrong. There also come some cons in the system as well. There is a learning curve with agile as everyone has to understand how the system works to be able to function in it well. It is not a massive learning curve and is something that someone can understand and get a good grasp on after a few weeks of being in it. There is also some rigidity within the system but not much. There are some things that take some more extensive upfront planning than there were of others and, while that is not a bad thing, the flexibility of the system actually worked in the opposite direction here. It could feel like it was more constraining as to be so flexible on everything is too much. The little rigidity that there was good, it was a healthy balance.

If it ever comes to it again I would choose agile to do this project all over again ten fold. The dynamic nature of the travel industry and evolving user requirements favored a more agile approach rather than a waterfall. This was a big one as being able to move the project to meet the needs without breaking the project was much needed and appreciated. Also the ability to regularly assess and reprioritize features according to the incoming feedback. That helped us to deliver a product that was better for the end users and to make a product that the client could be happy with.

In conclusion, the Scrum-Agile approach proved effective for the SNHU Travel project. It offered the flexibility needed for a dynamic development environment. The iterative nature of Scrum that helped facilitate continuous improvements. Finally the ease of adapting changes to the project requirements.