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Sprint Review and Retrospective

With the Agile methodology each scrum team member plays an important role in every project and that was clear in the SNHU Travel project. The Product Owner first engaged stakeholders and collected important information for the project. They found out the timeline we would need to follow, what would need to be included in the final product, and what was important to the client. From there they created a product backlog and user stories based on this information for the team. As the sprint continued, they interviewed users to find important features to be included in the product. They also continued working with the team getting answers from the users and clients that the rest of the team had while working. The Scum Master helped facilitate various scrum events and supported the team throughout the sprint. They helped manage the sprint backlog. They held daily scrums and kept the team on time. They would also offer to bring some conversations offline to keep the meetings on track. They helped solve issues developers and testers were having. Overall, they kept the team on track and helped when needed. The developers and testers participated in daily scrums. They made sure the whole team knew what they were working on, what they had completed, and what they needed help with. They created test cases and modified them when their client and user updates. They communicated to the team their bandwidth and what they could handle in the sprint. Lastly, they communicated their questions for users and clients to the product owner, all to make sure the sprint stayed on track.

Creating user stories is integral to the agile-scum method. This takes what the end users deem important and creates actionable items for the scrum team. There are a couple of important features to user stories. They are given a size so the team can know how big the ask is and helps with time estimation. User Story Value Statements are created for each story following a specific format. This makes what the user wants easy to read and the end goal of the story very clear. Then acceptance criteria are listed. These are all the criteria that would be needed to make this user story complete. For example, our user Story 4 for the SNHU project had this user value statement: “As an end user, I want to click on a filter that will filter my top travel recommendations based on types of travel, so that I can see travel recommendations based on the type of travel I am currently looking to do.”. Some of the acceptance criteria included the ability to click on a filter that will filter the top travel recommendations by travel type and ordered list of destination in filtered travel type from most popular to least popular. This user story was given a size medium because it wasn’t overly complicated but would be time consuming. All this information was taken from the users and translated into the value statement and the overall user story. The user stories were then used and referenced through the rest of the development process.

One of the main benefits of the scrum-agile approach is that it is a flexible approach. For example, from the user stories our tester’s created test cases. These test cases were prioritized and broken into test steps of inputs and expected results. After the initial test cases our tester received an email from the product owner which had clarifications for the user stories. The tester read through the clarifications, digested the information, and then implemented it into a second round of the test cases. This made it so the tester didn’t have to completely start over when things changed. They were able to modify what they were already working towards and still fulfil the client’s needs. The tester also followed up with the Product Owner with additional questions about the user stories so any other clarifications could be included. They used clear, precise questions to help alleviate any future modifications and get actionable answers to be implemented into the test cases.

Communication is important for any scrum team and the scrum-agile approach allows for multiple ways to have effective communication. Each scrum event allows for clear communication. The Daily scrum allows for structured communication from the entire team every day. This ensures the whole team is in constant communication and helps make sure things aren’t missed. Additionally, the team will follow up with other members via email. Like the example above, testers will email the product owner for clarification. Or the developer will reach out to the testers and make sure they also have bandwidth for changes. The developer will also email the product owner about changes in scope. These techniques were important in engaging the whole team throughout the process. It allowed for changes to happen smoothly and for everyone to stay on the same page.

Many tools and scrum-agile principles helped the team be successful. Starting with sprint planning our team utilized rolling-wave planning and the MoSCow technique. This made our estimation flexible while still giving us a priority order for the sprint. The product owner created a team charter so the team can understand what was needed for the whole project in a digestible format. From there, the product owner was able to create a product backlog and user stories. Daily Scrums were used to keep the team on track each day. They also helped find any issues within the team and solve for them quickly. We also used pair programming to reduce errors overall. The sprint review and retrospective helped the team understand where they succeeded throughout the sprint and what needed to change for the next sprint.

The scrum-agile approach was the best approach for the SNHU travel project. Because this approach was used the team was able to be flexible in their workflow, start with the project quickly, and deliver on time. The project had a quick deadline so it wouldn’t have allowed for a lot of planning up front like a waterfall method would have required. Additionally, because more information from the client and users were obtained throughout the sprint the team was able to pivot but still stay on track. The scrum-agile approach is not perfect though and does have some cons. For example, because you are only estimating for the current sprint, it may be hard to estimate the ultimate delivery date for larger projects. Luckily, we didn’t have this issue for SNHU travel because we were only given five weeks for delivery so only allowed for one sprint. Another con would be it is team dependent so a weak link on the team can affect the entire team. For example, one of our team members was continuously late to our daily scrums. This was ultimately solved by the team but can affect the productivity of the daily scrum. Also, since there is a lot of teamwork involved some team members need time to adjust to this type of work. For the SNHU travel project the benefits of the scrum-agile approach outweighed the cons and was the best fit for this project.