

Demonstrate how the various roles on your Scrum-agile Team specifically contributed to the success of the SNHU Travel project. Be sure to use specific examples from your experiences.

The team is composed of me, who is the Scrum Master, the Project Manager, a developer and a tester. I as the Scrum Master lead the efforts in staying true to our agile methodologies. That means that I lead daily stand ups, I engage with stakeholders to make sure that any feedback is provided and inacted within our work. I lead and help collaborations happen throughout the team and set up knowledge transfers and 1v1 for the blocks and any short comings of the team. The Project Manager is the large picture person who sets up and develops our backlog, which is the lists of items that we will be accomplishing this Sprint cycle. He also sets up our user stories, which are derived from the direct feedback of the customer. These user stories can often change and eventually mature to full-blown features of the product or can be completely eliminated if they don't fit the overall design. Our testers work hand in hand with our developers and are not a separate part of the team but rather a cohesive part that enables us to work concurrently as we develop the user stories and make sure that the work that is being done is free of bugs and that it works. They also make sure to ask the questions that often lead to erase or ease any ambiguity that is derived directly from either the product owner or the customer themselves. In terms of our developers, well they work on our daily scrum meetings to deliver any updates that they have for the entire team to be aware. They also work to provide the estimates of the user stories that the product owner has developed and provides insight on the sprint planning that the team as a whole has decided but ultimate has been set by the product owner.

Describe how a Scrum-agile approach to the SDLC helped each of the user stories come to completion. Be sure to use specific examples from your experiences.

When working with the SNHU Travel project our agile approach helped us immediately jump into action by having a broad and abiguous understanding of what the product would ultimately end up providing for the customer and its client base. Initially the product owner gathered the features and expectations directly from the client in the form of a list of functions that enticed each of the stakeholders when they themselves shop or expect to shop for travel and vacations. Initaly the product owner was able to deciper that we needed a top 5 or top 10 listing of the various vacation destinations. He was also able to gather that we needed some sort of pricing structure that could allow for either specials or the ability to sort via price. One of the biggest feature requests was to be able to choose and pick the users own preferences by either creating a profile or having a questionnaire that would later determine the type of vacation packages that would be provided to the customers that are shopping on the websites. Lastly the user stories devleoped also allowed for insight onto what types of products were “hot in the market” which initally looked like cruises, guided expeditions, or even air travel but ended up being “wellness” packages that cater to a more niche clientele. All this was helped greatly by the fact that the user stories painted a picture, but they weren't carved in stone. Because it was just an idea that was later better defined, the team was able to pivot and create from the baseline that was already implemented. Had this been a waterfall approach, the whole thing would of had to been delivered and heavily modified way later into the product lifecycle where the changes might of been too costly and therefore the delivery might of been incredibly disappointing to both the development team as well as the customer.

Describe how a Scrum-agile approach supported project completion when the project was interrupted and changed direction. Be sure to use specific examples from your experiences.

Well, as earlier stated, very late into the product lifecycle the team had to shift from developing a top 5 or top 10 destination vacation packages that included guided tours, cruises, and international travel that then shifted to a very niche product of “wellness” vacations that are up and coming and provide a more unique catering experience to the customers that will be able to find a one stop shop for these types of experiences. Because the team had a basis of what the product entailed and therefore the user stories were simply artifacts, the team was able to simply implement the changes without having to completely scrap all that was already developed. With that, we were able to deliver a product that was as requested but also saved a lot of time and effort from the development team to be able to meet our goals and sprint deadlines. The change did in fact impact the overall picture of what the initial product had in mind but not so much so that it misaligned the principles that started the sprint cycle to begin with. Thankfully without “gold plating” and simply approaching with the ambiguity that was there to begin with, the user stories “matured” into what was ultimately desired by customer and its user base.

Demonstrate your ability to communicate effectively with your team by providing samples of your communication. Be sure to explain why your examples were effective in their context and how they encouraged collaboration among team members.

The biggest resource to communicating with the team were the daily stand ups as well as the emails asking for clarity of what the features entailed given the user stories. One clear example was when developing the price filter and function. Initially the Product Owner provided a very vague and unassuming feature that felt more of a list to fill with the other various functions of the website. When later clarified, we found that it was important to create the feature separate from the ability to sort and filter from the types of vacations, range of prices, and even travel type. Later on we could of even implemented a way to provide the specials that were initially asked for. Given that the clientele for “wellness” vacations are not necessarily the types of people that focus on price but rather experience we shifted our efforts to that instead.

Evaluate the organizational tools and Scrum-agile principles that helped your team be successful.

Be sure to reference the Scrum events in relation to the effectiveness of the tools.

The kanban board that we created, which included the user stories as well as delivered the updates and follow-ups with the team were great and allowing ownership but also transparency from everyone. Another big one was our burn-down charts, which allowed the team to visualize how far we had come and perhaps where we could hurry up more on or where we might of needed to spend less time given the progress we had made so far.

Assess the effectiveness of the Scrum-agile approach for the SNHU Travel project. Be sure to address each of the following:

Describe the pros and cons that the Scrum-agile approach presented during the project.

The scrum-agile approach brings unity, transparency, collaboration, accountability as well as flexibility to the approach of delivering a quality product. It involves the customer directly and allows for the features that were once considered critical to be revamped or eliminated as needed without having to sacrifice the efforts that were already invested. The cons are that because of the lack of direction and larger ambiguity it does create a sense of lack of finer details which can often lead to paralysis of where to begin or what are the right questions to ask.

Determine whether or not a Scrum-agile approach was the best approach for the SNHU Travel development project.

I do believe that scrum-agile was perfectly suited for this particular project. We were able to get started quickly with the user stories, we developed a working product within weeks and quickly re-directed once the customer realized what their niche client base was and how we could maximize what we had and axe was unnecessary from the sprint cycle and backlog.