Throughout the development of the application for SNHU Travel, each Scrum-agile Team member as contributed greatly in their own unique ways. Firstly, the product owner has continued to give feedback throughout the development process, providing direction and new user stories to build towards. The programmers have done a wonderful job of implementing code and rewriting code on the fly, allowing for robust user interfaces and interactive Travel Package display. The testers are not to go unnoticed, as they managed to continually test and stress the system, prying for weak points and bugs before the users get handed the finished product. And finally the Scrum master has done a terrific job pushing the team towards an iterative and quick workflow, promoting communication all the while.

In the traditional waterfall approach, many user stories would have never even be considered, much less come to fruition. The Scrum-agile approach expects and is built around an ongoing development process that is subject to change, and as such, user stories are quickly addressed, accounted for, and implemented into the system.

Thanks to this Scrum-agile approach, we had the team thinking about future iterations of the product prior to the user stories even being suggested. Due to this future-minded thinking, as soon as the team received a new user story, was interrupted, or received a change in direction, instead of panicking and losing tons of time rewriting the whole system, they calmly were able to implement it into the intentionally flexible system. In this way, we could react to the change or interruption quickly and immediately continue development. For example, while working on development for a user story that would display the top five most recommended travel packages to a user based on previously purchased travel packages and user interests, we instead were asked to change direction entirely, putting much more of the focus on detox and wellness based travel packages. While this change of direction might be jarring and altogether frustrating for a traditional waterfall based development approach, thanks to easy to manipulate code and the pre-conceived notion that development is intended to be approach with drastic change in mind, it took our developer a little more than a nod of their head and a couple of ours to make this daunting task a thing of the past.

Examples of our team’s effective communication include continual daily communication in the form of Agile meetings. During these meetings we would make sure to give room to each team member to talk about what they had been working on the previous day, what they plan to work on for the next day, and what they believe is hindering them from completing the tasks set before them. This daily communication allowed each team member to felt heard and as thought they had an outlet to express concerns and new ideas throughout development, as well as enabled each team member to feel valued and understand exactly what they bring to the table during development and why they should feel important throughout the process. Furthermore, these meetings allowed everyone a clear understanding of where we are in the grand scheme of development and what user stories are being tackled be which team members. We also made sure to include the product owner in meetings often to ensure that the direction of the development is upheld, preventing any miscommunication and wasted time due to development in a wrong direction, something that a traditional waterfall-approach development might not be able to do as well.

Overall, our team found that daily Scrum meetings were very effective in attaining our goal of upholding an Agile system. We found that among all of the Scrum events that took place, the most effective tools we had all were centered on the heightening of communication skills between team members, as these heightened levels of communication promoted quick turnaround times and fast team reaction speeds to new directions and user stories. When a team member felt as though some obstacles were being placed in front of them that they couldn’t deal with on their own, rather than struggling with it and eventually learning that another team member could deal with the task in a much more time efficient manner, we learned to ask for each other’s help right away. This team mindset that didn’t give regards to self-promotion or competition was game-changing and instrumental in speeding up development time.

As a whole, our team found the Scrum-agile approach to be beneficial in the development of the SNHU Travel project. The biggest pros included the fact that the interruptions in development due to new proposed directions were easily handled, and we found that our team was getting far less frustrated due to high levels of communication and a small team size, allowing each member to be heard. The cons of Scrum-agile included the fact that we were not all experience in Agile methods prior to this development, so much of our time was spent learning and making a habit of these methods, rather than instinctively acting Agile while developing. In summary, the Scrum-agile approach was received positively and is considered to be the best approach for the SNHU Travel development project.