**Final Project**

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As the *SNHU Travel* project comes to a close, I have taken some time to reflect on success of the agile team. In our team, we had four roles: product owner, scrum master, tester, and developer.

A Product Owner’s responsibilities include—clearly expressing the product backlog items, ordering the product backlog, and ensuring that the product backlog items are clearly visible to all members of the team (Cobb, 2015). The Product Owner for the *SNHU Travel* project also regularly met with the client to keep them informed on progress, as well as receive any feedback from the client on the application from various stages in development. The Product Owner did an excellent job at maintaining the product backlog during this project. She also did an excellent job keeping the entire team up to date on the goals of the project as they shifted—specifically when a major change to the application was requested from the client.

The Scrum Master from this project was an excellent example of the role. He oversaw daily scrum meetings which proved invaluable for the success of the team. These meetings provided a platform for al members of the team to express themselves, leading to an atmosphere of open communication. Open communication is essential to the success of a scrum team, as explained in the agile manifesto (Schwaber et al., 2001). It is important to stay on track during daily scrum meetings, though—and our Scrum Master did an excellent job to keep the team focused on topics that were pertinent to the current sprint.

Development of this project was a hand-in-hand effort by our Developer as well as our Tester. The test cases for each user story greatly benefitted the Developer in ensuring the requirements of each user story were met.

It is very clear that the Scrum-agile approach to this project was extremely beneficial. Each role in our team knew exactly what was expected of them for each sprint. With each goal being extremely clear and transparent—the team was able to execute their roles flawlessly.

The efficiency and adaptability of our Scrum team was put on full display in week 5. After a meeting with the client, the Product Owner held a meeting with the team to inform them that the client had requested a major change to the application. In the more rigid environment of a waterfall approach, the request might have been detrimental to the schedule of the project. Our team, however, was set up to be ready for this type of change and were able to implement it in the working application almost immediately.

It should be noted that constant communication was imperative to our success. As I explained in the previous paragraph—our Product Owner kept the entire team up to date on the requirements as they morphed and shifted. We also kept communication lines open throughout the rest of the team. All team members knew to ask clarifying questions when things were unclear. The daily scrum also proved to be a great time to get clarification on anything that may have been hazy. Outside of the daily scrum, e-mail was the main source of communication. E-mails requesting disambiguation were regularly sent to whichever member of the team could give the best answer. Here is a sample of one of those e-mails:

(Product Owner),

I am currently working on developing the test case for user story #3. The current user story is not clear on which elements on the page are interactive/“clickable”. Specifically, when a destination is similar to a previous destination. The user story says the destination on the top 5 list should have an attribute that states which previous destination it is most similar to. The story does not indicate if that attribute should be linked to the user’s purchase of that trip, that destination page, or not interactive at all.

I request a list of all elements described in the user story with an additional descriptor of “interactive”. This will greatly improve my ability to write the test cases.

Thank you,

- (Tester)

Overall, the Scrum-agile approach was a great benefit in this project’s completion. The approach provided a security of adaptability which led to an almost flawless execution—especially in situations where a more traditional waterfall approach might have fallen apart. This adaptability is the key benefit over the waterfall method. A Scrum-agile approach is not without its drawbacks though. Without some level of Scrum training, a team may not understand exactly how to operate within their individual roles. Furthermore, it requires full acceptance of the Scrum-agile methodology for all team members. If any individual does not embrace the openness of the approach, it can cause problems for the rest of the team. The same problems can arise from individuals who prefer to work alone rather than as a member of a cohesive team. With these considerations in mind, I highly recommend the approach to small to medium sized teams.

*References*

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