Divide and conquer can be considered one of the strategies of the Agile method. Everyone has roles and responsibilities for the project, and those pieces combine to make the whole. The Agile method covers all aspects of the development process—from customer interaction to quality assurance testing.

At the forefront of the SNHU Travel development, the Product Owner played a pivotal role. Their primary responsibility was ensuring that the customer’s requests were clearly and effectively communicated and their intent was met. They translated the customer’s desires into clear tasks, which were then prioritized in a backlog for the developers. Notably, the Product Owner also acted as a bridge between the customer and the development team, addressing queries and ensuring that the team remained aligned with the customer’s vision, thereby reassuring all involved.

Following the Product Owner in the Agile hierarchy is the Scrum Master, who assumes the role of the team's leader, mentor, and primary supporter during the development lifecycle. They lead daily meetings, keep the team on track, maintain momentum, and promptly address issues. In the SNHU Travel project, the Scrum Master was crucial in ensuring that developers understood their tasks and remained focused on their goals, instilling confidence in the team's ability to overcome challenges.

The team is rounded out by the developers and testers, who are the foundation of this process. They work closely to deliver the best possible product. Developers take tasks and responsibilities from the Product Owner and Scrum Master, ensure everything is understood correctly through clear communication, and then begin development in tandem with testers. Developers must communicate their tasks clearly so that testers can build appropriate tests. Poor testing or inaccurate communication can lead to bugs or lousy development in production. In the SNHU Travel project, developers and testers worked together to prevent these issues.

From the outset, open communication was a top priority. Communication was vital, from customer to Product Owner or developer to tester. For example, here is a sample email that illustrates this communication:

**Subject:** Clarification Needed for Test Case #2: Setting Price Limit

Good morning [Product Owner's Name],

Regarding Test Case #2: Setting Price Limit, I have a question. The user story describes a link that allows a price limit to be set but does not provide specifics. Should the currencies be modifiable, and are there minimum or maximum prices that can be set? Please let me know how you would like us to proceed. I appreciate any assistance in advance.

Respectfully,  
[Your Name]  
Tester

These quick, simple emails keep the project flexible and ensure that developers are on the same page as everyone else. This also prevents unnecessary code from being developed, saving time and effort.

Communication is also critical when establishing user stories. This involves the whole team. The Product Owner builds a backlog and works with the team to examine the tasks by grouping similar items, estimating times, and establishing priorities. Feedback is crucial in these meetings, ensuring that everyone has a hand in making the user stories as effective as possible.

However, interruptions will occur no matter how well user stories are planned. A customer might change their mind about a task, or a primary developer might get sick, requiring their work to be passed to someone else. This is where the Agile method shines with its flexibility. Clear communication and collaboration ensure that everyone has at least a general understanding of each other's roles and responsibilities. For example, a secondary developer would be familiar with the primary’s tasks and quickly take over if needed. The Product Owner could also promptly shift priorities to accommodate new customer requests.

Experimenting with new organizational tools can help the team work more effectively. Azure Boards, for example, were beneficial for the Scrum-Agile method. They allowed user stories to be quickly built with underlying tasks, clearly illustrating the parent-child relationship of tasks and enabling direct assignment, timeline estimates, and analytical functions. When tasks changed, the assigned developer was instantly notified, and the dashboards could be customized for daily Scrum meetings, showing sprint progress by personnel and work item type.

Overall, the Agile process was the best approach for the SNHU Travel project. The customer had a broad goal that evolved as the project progressed, and the Agile method allowed the development team to remain flexible and adapt to the customer’s intent. This flexibility and ease of communication and collaboration are significant advantages of the Agile method. However, there are potential downsides as well. Without proper management, constant changes and adjustments to deadlines and tasks can be confusing, and the project’s momentum can stall or even move backward. Product Owners and Scrum Masters must ensure that the customer’s requests stay within the boundaries of possibility and that developers and testers don’t lose sight of the end goal amid daily shifts.