The Product Owner contributed to the success of the SNHU Travel project by keeping in touch with the client and communicating any new requirements or changes to the rest of the team. For example, in week 5 of the project, the client wanted to narrow down the “Top Ten Destinations” list to feature only detox and wellness destination packages. After receiving the request from the client, the Product Owner immediately communicated the changes to the team during a meeting in order to integrate the changes immediately so that the needs of the client could be met and the project could be completed within the time frame. The Scrum Master contributed to the success of the SNHU Travel project by “ensuring SCRUM is understood and enacted” within the team (Cobb, 2015). During the meeting where the Product Manager communicated the changes from the client to the team, the SCRUM Master made sure to ask if the schedule was the same or if the dates were going to shift. This question demonstrates the SCRUM Master’s dedication to making sure the flexibility of agile was being utilized and acknowledged, since one of the duties of the SCRUM Master is to “understand and practice agility” and product planning (Cobb, 2015). The developers of the team contributed to the success of the SNHU Travel project by self-organizing and creating the project required by the client. For example, when the team became aware of the changes to be made to the project, the development team took a look at the features they have developed already and made room for the new requirements all on their own, without guidance, in order to meet the new guidelines set by the Product Owner. The testers contributed to the success of the SNHU Travel project by putting together the user stories necessary for sprint planning. For example, in the beginning of the project, the testers were the ones to organize the requests of the client into user stories, which were then used by the development team to go over deadlines and requirements for the project.

A Scrum-agile approach to the software development life cycle helped each user story come to completion due to the flexible and team-oriented nature of the agile method. The ability for an agile team to change course helped the user stories come to completion because if there were ever a change in priority or the details of a user story, the team would be able to adapt to those changes on a whim since there is no rigid planning structure. For example, when the client wanted to change the “Top Ten Destinations” list to feature only wellness and detox destinations, the team was able to use most of the features they had already created and meet the requirements with only a few minor alterations.

The SNHU Travel project was interrupted and changed directions in week 5 when the client wanted to change the featured destinations. Since a Scrum-agile approach offers a flexible planning structure and work is completed in sprints instead of all at once, the team was able to move forward efficiently, and reused some of the features that had already been created and implemented the new requirements detailed by the client efficiently. An agile approach also allows for the alteration of project backlogs, meaning that the team could change the priority of some stories in order to accurately meet the requirements presented by the client by the deadline.

A sample of my communication was an email I sent to the Product Owner and tester. The sample is below:

To: Product Owner and Tester

Good afternoon. In light of the recent change involving the SNHU Travel website’s Top Ten Destinations list, there are a few things that I need from you both. From the Product Owner, I would like to clarify a few things about the new destinations. What does the client define as a wellness and detox destination? Should spas and hotels be specific destinations, or should the destinations just include spa and hotel options? From the tester, I would like feedback on the format of the list. Is it easy to use and understand? Are there any changes or alterations that can be made to make the list better? Thank you both for your timely responses.

Melanie Probst

Developer, SNHU Travel

This email was meant to clarify some of the changes requested by the client in the SNHU Travel project and to receive feedback on what would be needed to make the change. As seen in the email, I made my questions specific and clearly indicated who the question was meant for. I included the information all in the same email as well in order to facilitate communication between myself, the testers and the Product Owner. Doing this made sure that every one of us were on the same page and that these questions did not need to be repeated in the future, sving everyone time.

Agile principles that contributed to the success of the team included daily standups and information radiators. For example, the changes to the project were discussed during a daily standup meeting, and they were detailed on the information radiator for reference by the team when needed. This helped everyone stay up to date on the changes and what needed to be done to get the project done by the deadline. Agile tools that helped contribute to the success of the team include emails and an online message board for the team. This kept communication open and allowed for everyone to contribute on their own schedules, allowing for more work to be done more efficiently. For example, whenever a team member needed clarification or wanted to discuss an aspect of the project, they were free to use the tools described in order to get the clarification they needed.

The pros of a Scrum-agile approach include flexibility, efficiency, transparency, communication and effective teamwork. A team functions best when communication is open, changes can be worked with and stress can be kept to a minimum. These are all things that agile does well. A few cons of a Scrum-agile approach include a lack of planning and a volatile development structure, meaning that the project could change at any time and the team will have to adapt at any time in order to deal with it. This can cause stress and put pressure on the product backlog, potentially making it difficult to meet a deadline or certain project requirements. The Scrum-agile approach was the best approach for the SNHU Travel project. There were changes that needed to be made along the way, and a short deadline to meet them within. A structured development plan such as a waterfall plan would not have been able to cope with the challenges presented in this project, making an agile development approach the most effective.

Sources

Cobb, C. G. (2015). Chapter 3 Scrum Overview. In *The Project Manager's Guide to Mastering Agile: Principles and practices for an adaptive approach* (pp. 36–37). essay, John Wiley.