Working on the SNHU travel project with my team has been very fulfilling and rewarding. It was hard work but at the end of the day we came together and made the dream happen. I could not have done it without each team member fulfilling their role perfectly like they did. It’s all thanks to the product owner, the developers, and of course I was the glue holding the team together as the scrum master. Together we delivered value to the customer and the stakeholders, using agile methodology that I will be discussing here.

First of all, let’s talk about the product owner, who really set things in motion. The product owner set up a direction for us to go in by actually communicating with stakeholders and customers. For example, they made sure to set up the product backlog and answered the development teams questions about the customer’s requests for the project, like getting hot deals sent into the inbox on new travel locations.

The developers were quick to respond to items in the backlog, and made sure to work together to get the job done within 5 weeks, so that we could still meet the deadline. I know it was hard for them, but we are like a family and they enjoyed the challenge. They displayed quick turnaround and fulfilled customer requests very quickly from the product backlog. For instance, when asked for a change to the program, involving changing the theme from top destinations only, into specifically relaxation focused trips.

As for me, I took care of communication between our team and stakeholders. I made sure that everyone was on track and meeting deadlines, and if there were any problems, I addressed them right away. I think it was good that I kept the team on track, because we avoided any conflicts that could have arisen. And I was able to help the team by getting the developers what they needed, and by setting up meetings with the stakeholders. An example of the communication I gave during the travel project was when I wanted to make sure that the stakeholder understood what we were doing, and that they were comfortable with it. I wanted to make sure we were all on the same page. I set up interviews with stakeholders and they were able to see what was going on, and they were able to ask any questions they might have had. It was nice that I was able to communicate with them and help them understand what we were doing. Then I just had to communicate this to the rest of the team.

The agile approach helped us make sure the user stories got completed efficiently and correctly. First of all, we made sure to have a very clear understanding of the product backlog, so the development team could work together to get the job done. And we worked in sprints, where we completed a certain amount of functionality in each sprint. We took each user story, and divided it into tasks in the sprint backlog. Then after each sprint, we tested the functionality we had developed, and improved it as needed. And we kept the stakeholders informed of the progress we were making. In this case, the agile approach helps with the travel project by keeping the product backlog organized and prioritized, so that we know what to develop and when. The developers needed to see the size of features, when determining what to work on first, so that things like being able to sort by price, which is important but also a small feature, would be completed first.

Lots of our success also comes down to adhering strictly to Agile principles. Without these, I am not sure that this could have gone as smoothly as it did. For instance it is so important that the highest priority be the customer. So we made sure to constantly deliver versions of the travel project to customers so they could try out the slideshow features and look at the destinations available and the descriptions of each fabulous location. This gives them a taste of our work and also shows when and how we listen to feedback, in future versions at least. We also welcome changes late into the development as discussed earlier. Finally I made sure that me and the product owner discussed things face to face with the team members so we could show them that this is a personal one on one project, not just business.

While there are many benefits to the agile approach, we hit a few snags along the way. We encountered some trouble when we had to change the product backlog, because we didn’t always know what it would take to implement an item. We couldn’t just change things willy nilly, because the development team needed to know what was needed from customer requests. And sometimes, the team wasn’t able to implement a feature because they didn’t have the time to do it. The product owner knew this when they planned out the sprints, so this wasn’t a problem, just a minor bump in the road. The product owner managed the backlog by delaying less important things on the backlog, freeing up time for the requests so that they could be completed within the 5 week time frame that we had to complete the request. I think the final result came out fantastic. Of course that is the pro of an agile approach like this, when you hit a snag you don’t have to scrap everything and start over. You can just take a step back, re-evaluate, and move forward.

In conclusion, the agile approach is great for the customer, the development team, and the product owner. This is because the customer gets to see their request come to life, the development team gets to produce something that they are proud of, and the product owner gets a great product. I also found it to be a great learning experience, and something that I would like to do again. I made a lot of friends on the team, and I learned a lot from the development team as well. I think our group did an excellent job on the product, and the customer was very satisfied with the result. The program looks great, maybe we can all plan a trip to the beach together using the program.