# **CS 250 – Final Retrospective**

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**Applying Roles**

Every role in an Agile team has their purpose and that was the case as well during this exercise. Going based off the example project with SNHUTravel, we had four team members plus the client. Our Product Owner Christy was the representative for the client and relayed all information from the client to the team and vice versa. When the client wanted to make changes to the original vision, it was Christy who relayed the proposed changes to the team, and it was up to the team to execute the new plan. Ron was playing the role for Scrum Master, which in a way resembles a project manager, but instead of managing the team, they ensure the team adheres to the Agile practices. After all, an Agile team should be self-motivated and self-driven and thus require less supervision than a traditional management style (Agile Alliance, 2015). Ron’s main interaction with the team was when a pivot was made to target detox and wellness vacations, and Ron was concerned about changing deadlines based on the client’s input. Luckily, no change to the schedule was needed so no backlog modifications were needed. Our developer Nicole (a role we played as well) did most of the heavy lifting (in my opinion) with coding the project and making sure that there was a deliverable at the end of the project. When we modified the list view java window, we were essentially fulfilling the client’s needs with their desired application. Finally, Brian was our tester, and we had to write and then modify our use cases to match the client’s needs.

**Completing User Stories**

Writing user stories is typically the job for the Product Owner when they meet with the client and determine their needs and requirements. User stories are typically divided into three parts: a specific user type, a goal or task to be completed, and the expected benefit resulting from the goal or task to be completed (Thouin & Hefley, 2024). These stories serve a purpose other than defining customer requirements. They are also used as a descriptor for developers and testers to determine when a task is complete enough to move on to the next phase of development or testing.

Brian was our main tester and for a time, we played this role as well. We had to write user stories and then write test cases that would be used later to determine whether a feature was done or not using the acceptance criteria. When we wrote our test cases, they had to be based on previously written user stories and the current design for the list view. Later, when the client reported that they wanted a change from the top 5 destinations to a focus on detox and wellness and therefore had to change the test cases to match up with the new needs.

**Handling Interruptions**

One of the most important aspects of being Agile in Scrum is the ability to adapt to various situations, even late in production (Agile Alliance, 2015). Since the customer is involved almost every step of the development process, there are bound to be times when the customer changes their mind about some feature or aspect of the project where the change in question better suits their needs or could perhaps be a cheaper alternative without sacrificing effectiveness. We had one such interruption when the customer wanted to change how the application was laid out. Instead of focusing on a top 5 destinations as was stated in the original plans, the customer pivoted ideas to focus on a detox and wellness vacations to catch in on a trend. So, changes had to be made to the list view application for SNHUTravel from the top 5 to detox, which was as simple as changing text and pictures. These changes did not result in any changes to the deadline or sprint velocity in any way, so no other Scrum event was needed.

**Communication**

**W**e had to write user stories and test cases for this project, and in doing so, we had to write out a professional type of email and had to follow a few structural requirements when writing out this email. Number one, when asking a question, one needs to be precise and written in a way where it can’t be confusing and should expect a certain close-ended answer, because we want to avoid open-ended questions. One of the stories I wrote for the user stories and then a test case was that tags would be added as a method to filter out the library of vacations so that a user could specify and target a specific type or location for a vacation and so each package would require filter tags or keys. One of the questions I asked the Product Owner regarding this was whether the client was willing to provide the development team with a list of keys or tags that the packages would be assigned or if the development team would be free to make these tags for the initial release. A follow-up and related question were if the client wanted the IT Administrators to be given the privilege to create, modify or delete these tags as the needs arise? These questions are more of a yes/no question so there’s no way the customer can provide an answer that would be confusing or even open-ended.

**Organizational Tools**

Throughout this course, the only tool that we’ve utilized for the project management side of things was a forum style discussion board where we post a question or suggestion and then wait for a reply. This is highly unusual as face-to-face communication is preferable than a discussion board. There are third-party applications and websites such as Jira, ClickUp and even Trello that can be used to track specific tasks or track agile ceremonies, but none of the above have been utilized for this current job. The closest we came to proper and effective communication was practicing writing a professional email.

**Evaluating Agile Process**

Overall, the entirety of the SNHUTravel project was small and therefore did not require too much scheduling or planning. Much of the initial planning process never changed throughout the length of the project so the project did not require much pivoting, and because the customer was involved every step of the way, when they did pivot, it did not alter the flow or pace of the team’s progress. Granted the change that was requested was a small change, it still doesn’t change the fact that being able to change on the spot could affect the continuous integration of work being completed.

If this project had been managed in a traditional or waterfall method, as opposed to an Agile or Scrum style, things may or may not appear different. Again, as the size of the overall project was small, and most of the initial planning never changed, waterfall methodology would not have affected the planning or even the initial stage of development. The one piece that would have been affected by following traditional project management would be the change midway through the project from a top 5 destinations, to a top detox or wellness package. The client would not have been able to request this change until the product was set to be deployed and released. Any changes would have to be created as an update for a later release or deployment.

References

‌ Agile Alliance. (2015, November 4). *12 Principles Behind the Agile Manifesto | Agile Alliance*. Agile Alliance |. <https://agilealliance.org/agile101/12-principles-behind-the-agile-manifesto/>

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