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Through out the course of the project, I experienced the different roles of a Scrum team in relation to SNHU Travel. I have learned a lot about these roles and how they are all important to the success of an agile team. The Product Owner is important because they are responsible for communicating with the client as well as creating user stories. Writing the initial user stories for SNHU Travel was interesting. I had to take the conversation the Product Owner had with them and create logical ideas out of the randomness that users had envisioned. I remember that one user said they wanted to be able to see recommended vacations and the other two users said the exact same thing in just slightly different ways. As a Scrum Master, I saw what it was like to try to keep a team on topic during a Daily Scrum. There was a video that we watched during this course that had an example Daily Scrum in it and the Scrum Master had to make sure the team kept on topic about the project rather than let the group start a million different side bar conversations. The development team had an interesting role to play as well. They are the ones that make sure the user stories are completed before the end of the sprint. The development team would have a Daily Scrum meeting and update their Kanban Board as well as discuss where they were at or what they planned on doing so no one would create duplicate work. As a developer I was tasked with updating a part of the SNHU Travel site with updated information. I used a created user story to do so. I believe at this point however that testers are one of the most important roles. Not only do testers work with the product owner directly to create tests, but they are also the ones responsible for making sure that the developed code works according to the user stories. One thing that I did as a tester that I didn’t know a tester was responsible for was create test cases for the user stories to make sure that everything the user wanted or needed was present in the final submitted code.

The Scrum-Agile approach allowed each user story to come to completion because there was constant communication with the client. Without being able to communicate with the client on a regular basis, it would have been hard to get the user stories done correctly. There was a time during the course in which, as a tester or developer, I needed more information from the client about a user story so I emailed the product owner so they could get clarification from the client for me. Without this open communication, getting a user story correct every time is not possible.

There was a point during the project in which the client wanted to switch from a list style menu for users to a newer slide show style. In a traditional project like Waterfall, most of our work would have been thrown out and we would have to start over. This new style came to me in the middle of a sprint. That would have been a few weeks' worth of work gone with something like Waterfall. Thankfully with agile we are supposed to expect these kinds of changes and I was able to do that. I was able to keep most of what I had at this point done. The only real change was an update to test cases and reworking some code to incorporate the new slide show rather than a list format.

One Scrum-Agile principle that allowed my team to be successful was constant communication with the client. While having constant communication like this can be overwhelming, it is essential to make sure the project is going according to plan. Another tool that was extremely helpful was the user stories. The user stories helped by providing a jumping point for the development team to start coding. This allowed for a more streamlined process without the need for constant stopping to make sure this was what the client wanted.

One example of effective communication was an email that I sent as a tester. Below is the email I sent to the product owner regarding user stories.

To: Johnathan Johnson

Subject: User Stories

Good afternoon Mr. Johnson,

The team seems to be having trouble trying to wrap their heads around how to start this project. The user stories that were provided don’t seem to give enough detail on the intent that the client has. Would you be able to get a little more information from the client on what the final product could look like so me and team have a firmer starting ground? This would help get the ball rolling for this project so we don’t fall behind on deadlines.

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In this email I was messaging the Product Owner because the user stories that they provided were not clear enough for the development team to work with. The reason this email was effective was because it was clear to the point as to why I was emailing as well as providing the information needed to reply with what would be object I asked for. This encourages collaboration because it provides a problem that needs solution from another role of the team's dynamic. Developers can’t just message the client directly, but the testers work beside the developers and the testers work directly with the product owner who is able to reach out to the client.

I believe that agile was the best approach for this project. One of the things that made agile the perfect choice was adaptability. We were constantly changing how we handled different aspects of the user stories during development. SNHU Travel wanted to add new parts and change at the drop of a hat it seemed. If we were to have used something like Waterfall, we would have ended up with an unsatisfied client. In the modern tech space with a lot of startups popping up, it is easy to get overlooked in tech so having an unsatisfied client could majorly hurt a new company. One thing that might be looked at as a con to agile however would be constant communication. In agile you cannot go a day without a new meeting on the progress of what you are doing and that could get old fast. However, within agile, it is necessary to have this constant communication, so you make sure you are doing what the client wants.