# The Scrum Team and SNHU Travel Site

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# **Introduction**

The SNHU Travel project implemented the Scrum-Agile approach to develop a travel booking website. This paper provides an overview of the roles and contributions within a Scrum team and highlights the importance of effective communication in an agile environment. It also explores the benefits and drawbacks of the Scrum-Agile approach, particularly in comparison to the waterfall methodology. The main purpose of this paper is to analyze the application of the Scrum-Agile approach in the context of the SNHU Travel project and to provide recommendations for future projects utilizing this methodology.

# **Roles and Contributions**

On an Agile team, there are various different roles and contributors which lead to the success of an Agile approach project. The Scrum team consists of 3 main roles, the Scrum Master, Product Owner, and Developer. Other roles such as the tester or business analyst may or may not be needed depending on the team and project size. The roles and responsibilities of each role on the Scrum team are:

* Scrum master:
  + The Scrum master’s role is ensuring the Scrum team operates as effectively as possible with scrum values. This includes facilitating daily Scrum meetings, leading sprint plan meetings, conducting sprint retrospectives, keeping track of team members, and managing obstacles. During Scrum meetings, the Scrum Master’s job is to keep members on track and remind them about the 3 Scrum Questions.
* Product Owner:
  + The Product Owner is responsible for defining the product vision, gathering customer needs, and business goals. Product Owners manage product backlog, communicate with stakeholders, and provide team feedback.
* Developer:
  + The developer on a Scrum Team is the backbone of product development. Developers collaborate with product owners and the scrum master and self-organize their work. The developers' jobs are to update, design and test code, eliminate sprint tasks, and demonstrate their workflow to the rest of the Scrum team.

On the SNHU Travel site, each role and each position on the Scrum team was vital in creating a strong working product. In the early stages of development, SNHU was looking for an Agile team to develop a website where users can book various travel destinations. But during development, different designs and philosophies have shifted due to user feedback. The Product Owner presented the team with the website and handled various questions the team had. The Product Owner also facilitated meetings with customers for end-user feedback. The Scrum Master helped facilitate teamwork, and kept team members on task. The developer changed the Top 5 Destination list, added various details requested by the tester, product owner, and developer. The Scrum team also prioritized backlog and testing, which helped the team understand the end-user experience.

Having a cross-functional and self organizing team is a key aspect when using Agile. Using a cross-functional team, members can put the customer first by understanding their needs. On a team which needs constant communication, members can’t put the focus onto the product but rather within themselves. This also allows for more time spent on creativity, decision making, and improvement. A team which can ask potential questions at every meaning is more productive because that team member knows when they get a chance, vs random meetings.

# **Scrum-agile Approach and User Stories**

Using a Scrum-Agile approach, teams can address User Stories quickly and accurately. Using a Scrum approach, teams can revisit user stories after revisions, as iterative cycles and overlapping phases promote resource gathering during the entire stage of the project. The waterfall method does not accommodate changes once they are made, while the Agile approach promotes changes for a more refined user product.

The Scrum-Agile approach allows the Scrum team to break down project requirements into manageable and short-form tasks. Breaking down and communicating user stories and revisiting them lets an agile team be on the same page about design directions. Feedback from stakeholders lets the team improve and optimize their work and speed.

During the development of the SNHU Travel Site, when users expressed their wants and needs, they voiced their want for addition of features such as a presentation format for the Top 5 Destinations, desire for an app with similar features, and argued for more inclusivity of destination types such as museums. Using this feedback, the SNHU Travel Site team refined their product by changing the Top 5 Destination list into a presentation format.

# **Effectiveness of the Scrum-agile Approach**

The Scrum-Agile approach has many pros, but the approach also contains some cons. Customer satisfaction, Quality Improvement, Waste Reduction, and Teamwork enhancement are all pros, but there are also cons which shouldn’t be ignored:

* Customer satisfaction is one of the main benefits of an Agile approach. Customers are usually satisfied when they feel heard, and that their needs are met. Using consistent and frequent user stories, while maintaining a high product quality, the Agile team can refine a product which customers truly desire. Incorporating feedback from customers and stakeholders during the development of a product is proven to meet needs and expectations.
* Waste reduction has become one of the biggest benefits of using a Scrum-Agile approach. By having daily meetings, the team can avoid unnecessary work and focus their direction on meaningful and impactful projects that will stay with the product without the need for revision.

Cons of an Agile-Scrum approach are adapting to changing work environments and managing risks. The Agile approach may reduce waste but if the team isn’t accustomed to that waste reduction they can fall short when the work environment is changing. Having a skilled team is important for Agile to work. If a team member is skilled in C but the project shifts to Python that team member essentially becomes useless, so having a team with a broad set of communication and development skills is vital for creating a strong agile-scrum approach.

# **Conclusion**

In conclusion, the Scrum-agile approach proved to be effective in the development of the SNHU Travel site. The collaboration and iterative nature of Scrum-agile allowed the project team to address user feedback, refine the product, and meet customer needs. The emphasis on effective communication and teamwork contributed to waste reduction and improved customer satisfaction. However, it is important to note that a skilled and cross-functional team is crucial for the success of the Scrum-agile approach, as it enables adaptation to changing work environments and minimizes risks. Moving forward, it is recommended that future projects consider the Scrum-agile approach and leverage its benefits to enhance customer satisfaction, ensure quality improvement, reduce waste, and foster effective teamwork.