Zach Fizet

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When using Scrum-Agile methodologies, there are a variety of different roles that each have their own unique and important role to play to ensure the success of the team and the project. Throughout this course, working on the SNHU Travel project allowed us to get a “hands on” approach to each of these roles. Each role was responsible for different aspects of the project, providing valuable insight into the different perspectives of a Scrum team and how each role functions as a part of that team. This type of learning was invaluable, as it will allow us to transition to a professional scrum team much more easily, as we now have a basic understanding of what Scrum is and how each role functions within Scrum.

One of the first roles we took on in this course was the role of Scrum Master. The Scrum Master is responsible for facilitating scrum events, removing roadblocks, and, in general, supporting the rest of the scrum team. The Scrum Master guides the scrum team through the software development lifecycle by keeping the team engaged and focused during sprints. The Scrum Master also serves as a facilitator between different scrum roles. During my time playing the Scrum Master, we worked on backlog refinement and sprint planning. This allowed me to figure out which features were most important to include in the SNHU Travel project. This would eventually tie in via the User Stories assignment, as those stories provided some of the additional features that we would add to the project. Ultimately, as Scrum Master, I was responsible for planning for future assignments, and setting myself up for success as I transitioned into different roles in upcoming modules.

Another role that I played during the course of this project was that of the Product Owner. In the module where I was the Product Owner, I was also responsible for creating user stories. When creating user stories, I created five different user requests or requirements based off of what was presented to us in the animation that was provided in the assignment. These requests were then directly turned into user stories, or features that would eventually be added, somewhat, to the SNHU Travel project. As the Product Owner, I then organized the product backlog, organizing these user stories based on things like priority and size. By organizing these stories in the product backlog, I was ordering end goals from users that were to be added to the SNHU Travel project based off their importance and scope. This ensured that the project was successful in what it set out to do by ensuring that the goals users were looking to meet were being added to the project. In a sense, we were providing the tools to users so that they could be successful in whatever it was they were setting out to do. For example, in the user stories assignment, one of the stories that I created as an end user was that I wanted to be able to set a price range on my vacation searches, narrowing my results based on what fit into my given criteria. As product owner, I was able to take this goal that the user was looking to meet and turn it into a tool that could be used by said user, and any user that uses the SNHU Travel website. The scrum-agile approach to the SDLC helped these user stories come to completion through the use of the product backlog. By using the product backlog, I was able to determine what items were most important and which items fit into the requirements of the SNHU Travel project, allowing for the team to prioritize their work based off of the product backlog.

The next role that I played when developing the SNHU Travel project was Tester. This role was particularly interesting to me, because I had never really worked on a project from this perspective before. During this module, I completed an assignment where I created test cases. These test cases would be based off of my user stories that I created and would follow a basic template where I would create test steps. The goal of these steps was to accomplish the goal of the user story. These test steps included inputs that needed to be taken, and their expected results. One of my test cases was based off of the price range filter user story that I had created. In the assignment, I outlined the steps that needed to be taken to accomplish this goal of setting the price range filter on the SNHU Travel website. By creating this outline of inputs and expected results, I’m ensuring that the test case I was working on was functioning properly. I didn’t literally test these test cases on an actual, physical website, but the same logic was applied. This contributed to the success of the project by ensuring that functions being added to the project were functional and working as intended. This role was interesting because it showed me how a user story can eventually transform into an actual feature in a project.

In module five, I played the role of developer. Personally, this was my favorite role, as I actually got to work on code and get into the “nitty gritty” details of the project, which is what I enjoy the most. During this module, we were presented with an interruption that required the project to change direction. We were given new requirements that needed to be added to the SNHU Travel project. These requirements came in the form of a creating a new slideshow that was focused on detox/wellness vacations. During this, we updated the existing slideshow to reflect these new destinations that we picked out, as well as provide some additional descriptions of these destinations. To me, playing developer was the single most important part of this entire project, as in order for this project to exist at all, the lines of code had to be written to create the project. As we were met with an interruption during this module, the scrum-agile approach supported this “pivot” in project direction. During the meeting organized the product owner, we were informed of these new requirements. Time was crucial here, as we needed to prioritize this change in requirements to ensure that SNHU Travel was meeting the goals of its users and beat the competition to the punch by promoting these health and wellness vacations. Because we are working in an agile development environment, we didn’t need to shift dates for deadlines. Instead, the product owner deprioritized other stories in the product backlog so that we could focus on this product instead. This is important to note because in a non-agile environment, we might’ve had to move dates around or push-back a product release. Instead, we were able to push out a product release on the same time schedule, allowing for our work to continue as if we were never interrupted in the first place.

During module six, we were assigned to a “team” where we would discuss different scrum roles and how they would benefit this company as they made a change from a traditional development environment to a scrum-agile environment. Personally, I found this section to be somewhat disappointing, as I was really the only one in my group that seemed to contribute. This is a great example of why message boards are probably not ideal for communication amongst a team working on a project. In a more “real life” setting, communication is facilitated every day through the use of scrum practices like the daily-scrum. The daily scrum acts as a meeting where each member of the scrum team can outline some basic information regarding their work. This allows teams to create a better idea of what everyone is working on, where any bottlenecks may be, and where any problems may potentially arise, encouraging the team to handle those problems with collaborative effort. This style of communication can be effective because it creates an environment where collaborative effort can flourish by providing instances where teams may need to work together to overcome an obstacle. Additionally, the daily-scrum as a communication tool helps to keep everyone accountable. If someone isn’t working on much, it will be very evident very quickly.

Sprint Planning, the Daily Scrum, and the product backlog were the most effective organizational tools that were used during the SNHU Travel project assignment. Sprint Planning allowed the product owner, the scrum master, and the development team to prioritize items from the product backlog to be worked on during that sprint. This creates a clear goal to be achieved during that sprint. In the context of the SNHU Travel Project, Sprint Planning was essentially the user stories assignment that we were given. We created stories, prioritized them, and then expanded upon them in future assignments. While the daily scrum wasn’t explicitly applicable to the SNHU travel project, I wanted to include it anyway, because the daily scrum could be when a change in requirements or a change in the sprint could be brought up. The daily scrum can facilitate those changes by allowing the team to communicate and collaborate on how they are going to handle those changes or interruptions. Lastly, the product backlog that we created for this project was crucial in determining which products were the most important and was directly used to plan for sprints and guide the work that the development team was working on.

For this specific project, the Scrum-Agile approach had many pros, and just a few cons. The main con, in my opinion, was that I was essentially a solo development team, so I did not have many opportunities to practice working as a team with other people, and the one opportunity that I did have to interact with others as a team was mostly negative, because I was really one of the only people that participated. However, in the context of the overall project, the Scrum-Agile approach allowed for the team to manage user stories, take those stories and turn them into features, and adjust to changes on “on the fly” without affecting the overall development lifecycle. The scrum-agile approach facilitated the translation of user stories from stories, to products, and then into test cases. As I stated previously, the scrum-agile approach was helpful in allowing the team to adjust to changing requirements without interrupting the current sprint that the team was in when we were tasked with creating the “health and wellness” slideshow. Because of the scrum-agile approach, instead of scrapping all of the work we had completed up to that point, we were able to transform that work to fit these new requirements, which is why we didn’t have to adjust any of our pre-planned timelines. Overall, I would say that the Scrum-Agile approach was the best approach for the SNHU Travel project. Without using Scrum-Agile methodologies, it might not have been possible for the SNHU Travel project to complete the goals that they had set out to accomplish. Because of the principals of Scrum-Agile, the SNHU Travel project was able to determine all of the requirements from the client and users and apply them using scrum-agile methodologies. A traditional waterfall methodology could not have accomplished the things that SNHU Travel accomplished with scrum-agile because of the way things changed week to week with the SNHU Travel project. It is possible that the waterfall approach could have created a similar product, but it would have been created on a much longer timeline.