**Agile Retrospective**

Every role on the Scrum-agile team contributed to the overall success of the SNHU (Southern New Hampshire University) Travel Project in several ways. Developers are the backbone of the Scrum team; they are the ones responsible for putting the project together and completing items in the product backlog. They are also responsible for changing their plans each day to complete the Sprint Goal, as well as “holding everyone else accountable as professionals” (Schwaber, 2020). While working on the SNHU Travel project as a developer I was responsible for updating the top destinations list that was written in Java and later exported as a JAR file. We were responsible for adding new images that would fit correctly on the file, along with adding a brief description for each location.

As the product owner you are responsible for maximizing the value of the product based on the work of the Scrum Team. This will be different at every organization as well as changing per Scrum team. “The product owner is also available for effective Product Backlog management” (Schwaber 2020). The Product Owner is responsible for developing the Product goal and communicating that to the team. I took the role of Product Owner on a previous discussion assignment. Although I was technically responsible for creating the Product Goal, I wanted input from the rest of the team to make changes everyone was happy with. This may not always be the case and as a Product Owner there will be times when you must put your foot down and make decisions based on the good of the product and that may not always be what the team wants.

The Scrum Master is responsible for establishing the Scrum and everything that comes along with it. The best way to achieve this is making sure everyone on the team understands Scrum theory and practice. They are also responsible for the team's effectiveness and are always looking for ways to improve. In an assignment early in the course we took user stories from users that preferred other traveling software to ours. The users gave us examples of reasons why they choose other travel agencies over ours and as Scrum Master we had to improve our backlog based on these suggestions. This is one of the basic responsibilities of the Scrum Master.

The Scrum-agile approach to the software development life cycle helped each of the user stories come to completion in many ways. It gave the team items that they could add to the product backlog. These items were important because we knew that by completing them, they would have a direct correlation to the number of users we would gain. We knew this because we specifically asked the users what we would need to implement for them to switch to our product. One of the major user stories we were given was the top 5 destinations list. This was important to our users, and many of the other stories were based on the destination list.

The Scrum-agile approach supported project completion when we had some minor change of direction. In a discussion where we worked together with group members the Scrum Master wanted the daily Scrum to be done a certain way but some of the developers thought a change to the time would work better for them. Because they are the ones updating the backlog and completing tasks within the backlog daily it makes sense for the Scrum Master to allow for the time change to the daily scrum.

One of the most effective processes for creating openness and transparency within a Scrum Team would have to be the Daily Scrum. The Daily Scrum is a meeting that takes place every day before work begins, where the team talks about ways to progress the Sprint Goal and clear the backlog. This technique is effective for many reasons; it allows the developers to discuss their progress or problems in any way they see fit, so long it progresses the Sprint. These meetings are focused on communication, quick decision making, and eliminating the need for other meetings which provide developers with more time to work (Schwaber 2020).

User stories are an excellent form of communication and a great organizational tool. This is important when it comes to software development, often when developers are focused on their daily work, they can miss easy implementations or ideas that would make the product even better. For instance, one of the previous assignments the user stories came from people that had been using other applications rather than SNHU (Southern New Hampshire University) Travel. They were specifically asked why they use other products and not SNHU Travel, the users gave examples such as a top destination list, and customized locations. This is great for development because it can give us high priority items to add to the backlog, they are high priority because users specifically said they would switch to SNHU Travel if some of these features are implemented. Although not every item will be a high priority, the more users that give feedback the better focused the development team can be. This is a major reason all websites (including SNHU Travel Program) should have a place where users can report bugs and add suggestions. Gathering in person user stories would still be important, but more information is always better.

The Scrum-agile approach for the SNHU Travel project was an effective tool in creating, designing, and maintaining the project. When it comes to Scrum the pros far outweigh the cons. Because communication is so important when teams are unable to meet in person it can really hinder the project. You can always use Zoom or other communication software to have meetings, but it is not a complete substitute for in-person meetings. Because of this the level of collaboration in the project can fall off and not be easily maintained. While there are other cons with agile this is the only one we experienced as a team. I could draft an entire separate paper about the pros of the Scrum-agile process. It increases the focus of the specific needs of customers and allows for customizability throughout the process. It is also great for adapting to change, which happens a lot in software development. Overall, the Scrum-agile approach was the best suited for the SNHU Travel Project. It is the most intuitive project management process available today and made creating the SNHU Travel Project a breeze.

Resources:

Schwaber, K. (n.d.). *The 2020 scrum GUIDE*. Scrum Guide | Scrum Guides. Retrieved April 25, 2022, from <https://scrumguides.org/scrum-guide.html>

*The Use of Agile Project Management is Increasing*. Villanovau.com. (n.d.). Retrieved April 25, 2022, from <https://www.villanovau.com/resources/project-management/the-use-of-agile-project-management-is-increasing/>