**Sprint Review and Retrospective**  
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**Introduction**

The SNHU Travel project served as the pilot effort for ChadaTech’s transition from the waterfall model to an Agile methodology using the Scrum framework. As Scrum Master, my responsibility was to facilitate communication, remove impediments, and ensure the team worked within the Scrum framework to deliver a valuable product increment each sprint. The project goal was to develop a customer-facing application for SNHU Travel that would expand the client base by offering innovative features such as destination highlights, wellness travel packages, and dynamic filtering options for vacation planning.

**Applying Roles in a Scrum Context**

Each Scrum role played a critical part in delivering the product increment.

**Product Owner**: The Product Owner served as the voice of the stakeholders, maintaining a prioritized product backlog and ensuring each user story aligned with business goals. Early in development, the Product Owner guided us through refining the “Top 5 Destinations” feature, which was initially presented as a static list. Following stakeholder feedback, it evolved into a slideshow to enhance user engagement, and later shifted entirely to a “Wellness Packages” feature to respond to a change in market focus. This ability to pivot quickly was made possible through continuous backlog refinement.

**Developers:** The development team worked on implementing user stories incrementally. This included building filtering functionality for vacation types (e.g., adventure, relaxation, cultural) and budget ranges, as well as creating personalized vacation list displays. Developers collaborated closely using pair programming and engaged in estimation techniques such as Planning Poker to improve accuracy and workload distribution.

**Tester:** The tester integrated testing into every sprint rather than waiting until the end, a shift from traditional waterfall practices. Test cases, such as the “Top Five Destination List Test Case” and the “Wellness Packages Display Test Case,” were designed prior to development, following a test-driven development approach. This allowed defects to be caught early and ensured the delivered increments met acceptance criteria.

As **Scrum Master**, I facilitated alignment between these roles by ensuring the team participated fully in Scrum events, addressed blockers quickly, and maintained transparency through shared tools.

**Completing User Stories through Agile Practices**

The Scrum-Agile approach allowed our user stories to be completed more efficiently than they would have been in a waterfall environment. For example, when the “Top 5 Destinations” feature pivoted to “Wellness Packages,” the existing acceptance criteria and test cases could be adapted rather than rebuilt from scratch.

This iterative approach meant that the “Vacation Type Filter” and “Budget Filter” stories were delivered and tested within the same sprint, ensuring each met both functional and quality requirements. By focusing on a “done” increment at the end of every sprint, the team avoided carrying incomplete work forward. The Product Owner’s backlog prioritization ensured the highest-value features were delivered first, while our daily standups allowed developers and the tester to coordinate on dependencies.

**Handling Interruptions and Changes in Direction**

One of the most significant interruptions occurred mid-sprint when stakeholders decided to replace the “Top 5 Destinations” feature with the “Wellness Packages” concept. In a waterfall environment, this late change would have caused major rework and delays. In Scrum, the change was addressed during backlog refinement, and the new feature was added to the sprint backlog only after ensuring the scope was achievable without jeopardizing existing commitments.

Similarly, the decision to implement a slideshow presentation format for destination highlights was made after initial testing revealed that a static list did not encourage user interaction. Because Agile encourages adaptive planning, the slideshow could be implemented without disrupting other sprint commitments, thanks to tight communication and a clear definition of done.

**Communication Practices for Openness and Transparency**

Transparency was maintained through multiple communication channels:

Daily Standups: Provided immediate visibility into progress, blockers, and dependencies. These short, focused meetings ensured issues such as delayed API integration for the budget filter were addressed before they caused bottlenecks.

Backlog Refinement Sessions: Allowed the Product Owner, developers, and tester to clarify requirements and adapt priorities as market needs shifted. Cobb (2015) notes that refinement is essential for reducing ambiguity and preventing rework.

Digital Information Radiators: We used Azure Boards to track sprint progress, with visible task status, owner assignments, and blocker flags. This openness enabled cross-role problem-solving without over-reliance on the Scrum Master for updates.

An example of effective communication occurred when the tester identified that the slideshow component did not render correctly on mobile devices. This was reported in Azure Boards, prioritized in refinement, and resolved within the same sprint, avoiding a release delay.

**Organizational Tools and Scrum Principles Supporting Success**

Azure Boards proved to be a critical organizational tool. It allowed for:

* Real-time task tracking, reducing the need for lengthy status updates.
* Clear ownership of backlog items, preventing duplication of work.
* Integration with test case management, enabling the tester to link results directly to user stories.

These capabilities supported Scrum principles of transparency, inspection, and adaptation. The use of Planning Poker and affinity estimation improved estimation accuracy, ensuring sprint goals were realistic. Additionally, pair programming sessions between developers improved code quality and knowledge sharing, aligning with the Agile value of “individuals and interactions over processes and tools” (Beck et al., 2001).

**Evaluating the Agile Process**

The Scrum-Agile approach offered several advantages for the SNHU Travel project:

**Pros:** Enabled rapid adaptation to stakeholder changes, integrated quality assurance into every sprint, improved collaboration through cross-functional teamwork, and delivered increments that could be released to users faster.

**Cons:** Required a cultural shift for team members used to waterfall practices, with some initial challenges in estimating story points and adjusting to the higher frequency of communication.

Given the project’s evolving requirements and need for continuous stakeholder feedback, Agile was unquestionably the better fit over waterfall. In a waterfall approach, the mid-project change from “Top 5 Destinations” to “Wellness Packages” would have delayed delivery by weeks, whereas Scrum allowed the pivot with minimal disruption.

**Conclusion**

As Scrum Master, I observed firsthand how Agile practices, effective communication, and the disciplined use of organizational tools allowed the SNHU Travel project to deliver value in an adaptive and collaborative manner. The success of this pilot reinforces the recommendation for ChadaTech to expand the Scrum-Agile approach across all development teams, particularly for projects where stakeholder needs may evolve rapidly.

**References**

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Cobb, C. G. (2015). The project manager’s guide to mastering agile: Principles and practices for an adaptive approach. Wiley.