**Sprint Review and Retrospective for SNHU Travel**

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**Introduction and Applying Roles**

This Sprint Review and Retrospective summarize how our team applied Scrum across the SDLC to deliver the SNHU Travel application, what worked, what didn’t, and what we will change next. Insights are grounded in The Scrum Guide (Schwaber & Sutherland, 2020), failure/transition patterns in Agile adoption (Cobb, 2015), and guidance for sustaining Agile practices at scale (Rigby, Sutherland, & Noble, 2018).

The Product Owner (PO) kept value explicit by prioritizing features that directly served user goals. Elevating “search by destination and budget” ahead of low impact enhancements kept the Sprint Goal coherent and measurable, consistent with transparent backlog ordering (Schwaber & Sutherland, 2020).

As Scrum Master (SM), I protected the timebox, removed impediments, and ensured events stayed purposeful. When a mid-sprint cosmetic request threatened scope, we deferred it and preserved the Sprint Goal using the Product Backlog to absorb change without derailing delivery (Schwaber & Sutherland, 2020).

Developers upheld a strict definition of done (tests, review, integrated build) and favored small, frequent merges. That discipline prevented the “mechanical Scrum” anti-pattern (performing ceremonies without embracing empirical learning) that often undermines new Agile efforts (Cobb, 2015).

The main takeaway from this is that role clarity plus disciplined timeboxing produced thin, testable increments each sprint and minimized churn.

**Completing User Stories**

We improved completion rates by:

1. Writing INVEST stories with explicit acceptance criteria (tax inclusive prices, default sort, etc.).
2. Slicing vertically (destination filter 🡪 budget filter 🡪 combined sort) so each increment was demonstrably useful.
3. Enforcing DoD via CI to avoid “nearly done” work.

The immediate benefit was earlier feedback and steadier flow. The secondary effect was more reliable sizing as we learned, matching Scrum’s inspect and adapt model (Schwaber & Sutherland, 2020) and Agile flow guidance to reduce batch size and feedback latency (Rigby et al., 2018).

**Handling Interruptions and Change**

Two disruptions tested our agility. External dependency was the first, in which a third-party pricing API rate limited calls. We added caching and back off, narrowed scope to “stable cached price ≤2s,” and met the Sprint Goal. That preserved outcome while adapting the path which is Scrum’s core empirical stance (Schwaber & Sutherland, 2020).

The other disruption was scope requests, from which a “Top Deals” feature emerged mid sprint. We captured it in the backlog for refinement instead of injecting it. This avoided the chaotic “mini waterfalls” Cobb (2015) warns about when organizations treat every request as urgent.

**Communication**

Three lightweight patterns kept alignment high and rework low:

* Backlog clarifications from the PO before planning (what is non-negotiable vs. stretch).
* Daily Scrums that focused on flow (yesterday / today / blockers) rather than status to the SM.
* Sprint Reviews that demoed thin slices and captured usability findings early.

These cadences reinforced transparency and trust, prerequisites for autonomy and sustainable throughput (Rigby et al., 2018; Schwaber & Sutherland, 2020).

**Organizational Tools and Scrum Events**

A Kanban style board with WIP limits exposed bottlenecks and shortened cycle time; GitHub + CI enforced the DoD automatically. A simple burndown flagged over commitment early.

Scrum events provided rhythm and decisions:

* Sprint Planning: One clear Sprint Goal: “search by destination and budget with tax inclusive totals.”
* Daily Scrum: Rapid impediment surfacing and swarming.
* Sprint Review: Stakeholders validated increments. We logged two clarity fixes (filter persistence and price labels).
* Retrospective: “Start/Stop / Continue” yielded three changes: smaller slices (</= 1 day), stricter WIP caps, and adding basic accessibility checks to the DoD.

Together these tools / events operationalized inspect and adapt, improving predictability without heavy process (Schwaber & Sutherland, 2020).

**Evaluating the Scrum-Agile Approach**

Pros: Fast feedback loops improved usability. DoD / CI reduced regressions. Timeboxed events limited thrash and built stakeholder confidence (Rigby et al., 2018).  
Cons: Early stories were oversized. External APIs occasionally broke cadence. Role drift required SM attention (all typical transition issues) (Cobb, 2015).  
Assessment: Scrum fit the project’s uncertainty. A waterfall approach would likely have delayed feedback and risked delivering misaligned features (Cobb, 2015). If future constraints demand fixed scope / date, a light hybrid (stable release milestones + iterative discovery within) would balance predictability and learning (Rigby et al., 2018).

**Actionable Improvements**

1. Institutionalize vertical slices </= 1 day and keep WIP low to stabilize flow.
2. Broaden DoD to include accessibility checks and simple performance budgets.
3. Formalize change policy: defer noncritical mid sprint requests to backlog refinement.
4. Dependency playbook: caching, retries, circuit breakers, and test doubles for third party services.
5. Regular PO discovery cadence (lightweight user touchpoints) to sharpen acceptance criteria before planning.

**Conclusion**

Scrum enabled focused, incremental delivery, rapid learning, and durable quality for SNHU Travel. Clear roles, small vertical slices, DoD / CI discipline, and transparent events produced predictable outcomes despite changing inputs (Schwaber & Sutherland, 2020). The few friction points (story sizing, dependencies, and role drift) are addressable through the improvements above. With leadership support and continued cadence, ChadaTech can scale these practices confidently (Rigby et al., 2018; Cobb, 2015).

**References**

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

Rigby, D. K., Sutherland, J., & Noble, A. (2018, May). Agile at scale. Harvard Business Review. <https://hbr.org/2018/05/agile-at-scale>

Schwaber, K., & Sutherland, J. (2020). The Scrum Guide: The definitive guide to Scrum—The rules of the game. <https://scrumguides.org/scrum-guide.html>