CS250 Sprint Review and Retrospective

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CS250 Sprint Review and Retrospective

# A. Demonstrate how the various roles on your Scrum-agile Team specifically contributed to the success of the SNHU Travel project.

Your response…

Product Owner: The Product Owner is accountable for managing the product backlog, which incorporates gathering and communicating the stakeholder needs to the scrum team while also relaying the scrum teams need for information back to the stakeholder. They are a vital bridge of communication. Our Product Owner consulted with the client on a regular basis to assist with gathering user stories. Specific points of interaction were orchestrating the focus group with key customers to gather user stories, in addition to regularly sharing progress and gathering additional refinements to the top travel destinations slideshow.

Scrum Master: The Scrum Master contributed to the success of this project by keeping us complicit with Scrum Practices. While the practices are not set in stone universally, a Scrum Master generally coaches team members, helps maintain focus, assists with value-creation, helps to remove obstacles, and orchestrates Scrum Events. Our Scrum Master was instrumental in establishing the Agile Team, Scheduling our Scrum Events, Backlog Refinement and our Sprint Retrospective.

Tester: The Tester contributed to the success of this project by developing test cases from the Product Owners user stories. These test cases help the developers have a standard of quality to work towards. These test cases are instrumental to allowing a developer to remain as focused as possible throughout the sprint. Testers play a critical role in any Scrum team by helping to ensure consistent QA. It is easier to fail early and fail often when guidelines are set in place.

Development Team: The Development Team contributed to the success of this project by remaining flexible and attentive to the requirements of the user story. The Development Team’s role will vary widely across Scrum incarnations, but ultimately, they are accountable to fulfilling the user stories and mutually agreed upon definition of done. Additionally, it is critical for developers to remain open to input and changes as they arise from consultations with the stakeholder.

# B. Describe how a Scrum-agile approach to the SDLC helped each of the user stories come to completion.

The Scrum Agile Approach aided the Software Development Life cycle in several ways. Firstly, by the benefit of having an experienced Project Owner to tend to the client relationship, a power user listening session occurred. This listening session allowed for the Project Owner to gather User Stories. Those User Stories were then passed to the Tester to help determine test-cases for the developers to reference. This helped to further the definition of done between everyone involved on the Scrum Team. Only after the user story was thoroughly defined was the user story passed to the developers for development.

# C. Describe how a Scrum-agile approach supported project completion when the project was interrupted and changed direction.

The Scrum Agile Approach definitely demonstrated it’s ability to adapt when faced with the stakeholders changing the requirement from a list to a slideshow. The Product Owner gathered the requirement from the stakeholder, which resulted in the user stories and test-cases for those user stories changing. The transition from overall travel destinations to detox and wellness travel destinations, in addition to transitioning from a list to a slideshow, were absorbed into a sprint. The product owner demonstrated this flexibility by deprioritizing other items on the backlog to accommodate these changes. Were this a waterfall approach instead of a scrum approach this change would not have been easily absorbed, it’s likely that the entire waterfall from present to future would’ve needed rewriting and prioritizing. As the developer on this project I was easily able to re-write the user stories and test cases to allow for progress.

# D. Demonstrate your ability to communicate effectively with your team by providing samples of your communication.

Effective communication is the backbone of any project’s progression, without clearly defined expectations and requirements it is very difficult to get anywhere. Effective communication between different team members to fulfill their roles responsibilities is a fundamental component of Agile methodology. Below is an example of an email requesting additional information from the project owner and testers.

**Subject:**

Verification Needed – SNHU Travel SlideShow

**Body:**  
Dear Product Owner and Tester,

I need a few pieces from each of you to move forward with the development. Below you will find a list of verifications. Please respond to this email chain with the requested information at your earliest convenience. I’ve attached a runnable .jar file of the Slideshow for reference.

***Product Owner:***

* Please verify with the client the desire is for 5 Detox/Wellness Resorts with a Clickable Link and summary of the vacation destination upon each Slide.
* Verify with the Client the Formatting and medium is agreeable.

***Tester:***

Please confirm functionality of these key features.

* Clickable Links for all 5 Destinations
  + Consistent Formatting of Each Slide
  + Cycling through all list items that repeats at 1 after reaching the last element

Once I receive the requested information, I will be able to move forward with Development.   
  
Kind Regards,

NJK

Using this email, I encouraged collaboration by mutually verifying the definition of done, while also inviting the tester to verify my development work was up to standards. This demonstrates a desire for reflection and improvement that can sometimes only be found in the review of your work by others.

# E. Evaluate the organizational tools and Scrum-agile principles that helped your team be successful.

This course utilized a variety of organizational tools to achieve the means of the SNHU Travel Project. Specifically, an Agile Team Charter, a Product Backlog, User Stories, Test Cases, and a Scrum format ( 3 questions “What did I do Yesterday, what will I do Today, what impedes me?”). Each of these organizational tools played a role in success and reinforcing Scrum-Agile principles.

Agile Team Charter: Encouraged an upfront communication of expectations and goals. The Agile Team Charter defines the Business Case, Mission Statement, Project Team members, Success Criteria, Key Project Risks and Rules of Behavior.

Product Backlog: Allows for a comprehensive understanding of the product pipeline while also imbuing flexibility. The Product Owner can reorganize the Product Backlog as the Project progresses to ensure adherence to delivery dates. Additionally, this product backlog remains flexible.

User Stories: The Product Owner launched a successful User Story gathering activity with some of the top customers. This was very much in alignment with the Agile principle of welcoming changing requirements for a competitive advantage in addition to “Individuals and Interactions over Processes and Tools”. The Product Owner could have just as easily assumed more of the User Stories and requested examples in an email format. The additional step of fostering communication was critical to gathering effective User Stories.

Test Cases: The test cases were very much an example of continuous QA instead of a rigorous QA measure at the end of a project, which Scrum is known for. Each Test Case was specifically tailored to the User Experience to ensure that the product functioned as intended. Test Cases can be used as a north star for developer’s while they are in the process of development. While initially defined, they were also redefined as the project requirements changed. This adaptation is very much in alignment with Agile principles.

Scrum Format: The Scrum Format helped maintain a grounded approach to daily activities. Asking “What I did Yesterday, what I will do Today, and what impedes me?” was incredibly useful to populate the 15 minutes of every daily standup. Using this alignment helps to identify obstacles and ask the team and scrum master for assistance. This community and transparency is part of what makes Agile and Scrum so successful.

Your response…

# F. Assess the effectiveness of the Scrum-agile approach for the SNHU Travel project.

## Describe the pros and cons that the Scrum-agile approach presented during the project.

**Pros:**

1. Adaptability

The Scrum-Agile approach allows for very quick adaptability. When the Client changed the presentation format from a list to a slideshow, we were able to work it into the Project delivery.

1. Transparent Communication

Utilizing the Transparency in communication, the Project Owner was able to relay the Clients user stories and evolving needs into the product backlog for delivery. All while not impacting the deadline.

1. Effective User Stories and Test Cases

The organization afforded by the Scrum-Agile approach allowed for gathering effective User Stories and generating successful Test Cases from those stories. While we did not have a fully functioning Scrum Team , I felt that these activities would’ve benefitted from the input of team members. The individuals and interactions over processes and tools value really shines through in this strength.

**Cons**:

1. Overly Flexible Product Owners can Impact Deadlines’

The Agile-Scrum Approach did nearly impact the deadline. Due to the Project Owners brainstorming with the Client they inadvertently altered course. If the Project Owner was less capable it would’ve likely impacted the deadline. While SNHU Travel certainly has a good idea about the target market, focusing so narrowly on the detox/wellness market is objectively a gamble that isn’t as effective as what the original project charter intended. It was not worth changing course for because we already had user preferences and search filters worked into the user stories.

1. Lack of something as Precisely Defined as a Waterfall Plan can make it difficult to provide Documentation

The Agile-Scrum Approach led to a Project Charter and a malleable Product Backlog. As a result of this we did not have as much of a skeleton of project progression as we may have had. The customer did not ask for a timeline throughout this example, but if they had we may not have been able to provide something as well-documented as a waterfall approach could provide.

1. If you team is not self-organizing the results may be questionable

Throughout the SNHU Travel Project there was a lot of potential for changing scope to derail the project. The additional request from the client to change a format that was originally agreed upon could’ve easily lead to a tangent and reworking of a key piece of the deliverable. These decisions take time, and the client would’ve likely been fulfilled by either presentation format. Scrum-Agile approach allows for a little too much flexibility when it comes to certain arbitrary decisions in my opinion.

## Determine whether or not a Scrum-agile approach was the best approach for the SNHU Travel development project.

Overall, I feel a Scrum-Agile approach was a good fit for this project. The team was self-assembling, the project manager was capable of excellent communication with the client, and we gathered excellent user stories and test cases. I do believe that a waterfall method would’ve been a better fit in the event that the client had many more creative last-minute ideas. There is a merit in open communication, but brainstorming whims cannot be entertained past a point.