

SNHU Travel Sprint Review and Retrospective

Throughout the SNHU Travel project, each person on the Agile team has played an important role in helping to create a system that meets all of the client's goals. As the scrum master, I was responsible for guiding the process along by keeping our sprints on schedule, removing any blockers, and ensuring that we had open communication between all of the roles. One of the most important parts of my role was helping the team to stay focused on the client's priorities while still allowing some space for both collaboration and creativity. Our product owner, Christy, was the link between the client and our team. She met with the SNHU Travel management team to understand what the business needed and then made those needs into user stories for our team to work on. Her direction helped us to prioritize which features were the most valuable, like developing a slideshow tool to show the top travel destinations and then later, refining it to focus more on health and wellness retreats when the business needs changed. The developer, Nicky, transformed these ideas into a real working product. She used the product backlog and sprint goals to plan out her work carefully and made sure that every feature that she coded aligned with the user stories. The tester, Brian, worked side by side with Nicky to make sure that everything functioned properly. He developed test cases to confirm that the new features met their acceptance criteria and that the older functions did not break when these new features were added. This balance between creative design and quality assurance helped us to ensure that our product stayed reliable even as the new requirements were created. By staying in their own lanes but still working together, the team was able to build a productive development environment built on trust and respect within the team. Rather than waiting for one person to finish before another person could start, everyone remained involved in each sprint.

Breaking the project down into smaller user stories was one of the most effective parts of the Agile approach. Each story described a specific function or feature from the user's perspective, such as "As a user, I want to see top travel destinations so that I can plan my vacation". This approach made it easier to fully understand the purpose of each task and how it would add value to our client. At the beginning of each sprint, we held a planning meeting in order to decide which of the stories were our top priority. This limited view helped us to deeply focus on one part of the system without losing sight of the bigger picture. As a result, there was obvious progress after every sprint which helped to keep high morale and allowed the client to provide any feedback earlier on in the process. For example, when the product owner changed the focus of the SNHU Travel application to feature more health and wellness retreats, it could have been a huge setback under a more traditional development model. However, since the Agile approach works in increments, we could adapt the slideshow that we had already designed to emphasize wellness destinations instead of having to start all over from the beginning. The structure of our user stories meant that we only had to change the descriptions and images and not rebuild the whole system from scratch. This flexibility made a huge difference when meeting the client's timeframe while still producing high quality work. Another benefit of using user stories was how they encouraged more teamwork. Developers and testers collaborated together with the product owner to make sure that the features were aligned with the client's vision. It also gave the tester a clear idea of what to look for when they are writing test cases since each story had a built-in acceptance criterion. These small, detailed goals helped the entire team to feel accountable for meeting the client's expectations.

Every project faces changes at some point, but Agile makes these changes easier to deal with. In our case, the most significant interruption was when the SNHU Travel client changed

the team's goal in the middle of development. Originally, we were designing a general booking tool for arranging all types of vacations, but halfway through management decided that they wanted to specifically focus on health and wellness retreats. We called an unplanned sprint meeting where Christy explained the client's new business goals. The team then discussed which backlog items should be adjusted or removed, and we all agreed that the focus in the next sprint would be on redesigning the slideshow and content for the new wellness theme. We were able to do this quickly without losing any progress because we worked in short cycles. If we had used the older waterfall approach instead, this kind of change would have involved revising the entire project plan and reapproving the documentation before we could continue. That would have delayed our delivery and added unnecessary stress to our team. Instead, Agile allowed us to make real-time decisions and keep our development moving forward. This experience has shown me how valuable flexibility is when a client's needs change suddenly and unexpectedly, especially in industries like traveling where trends are constantly changing.

Communication was one of our biggest strengths throughout the Agile process. Daily stand-ups allowed everyone to share what they had done, what they were working on, and where they needed some help. These quick updates helped us to catch small issues before they could become a major problem. Sprint reviews and retrospectives encouraged open feedback. For example, when some slideshow images didn't load properly, the tester noticed it, and then the team was quickly able to adjust to prevent this from happening again. When Christy explained the change towards wellness travel, her clarity helped the team to understand what changes were needed instead of making the team feel overwhelmed. Strong communication kept our team focused and motivated and everyone knew how their work contributed to the project's success, which built trust and collaboration with the team. Agile and Scrum events kept the team

organized and focused. The product backlog listed every task and priority, while the sprint board tracked progress from “to-do” to “completed” visually. This made it easier for the team to see where their work stood and stay on schedule. Sprint planning and retrospective also helped to balance our workloads and improve our efficiency. Early on in the process, we realized that the testing took longer than we expected so we adjusted our future sprints to leave a day for fixing any bugs that we had. These tools didn’t only help us to track our progress, but it helped to keep everyone accountable and connected in the team.

Using the Scrum-Agile framework proved to be the correct choice for the SNHU Travel project. It’s flexibility allowed us to handle any major changes, like the new wellness traveling focus, without losing our momentum. Scheduled check-ins also helped the client to stay involved in the process and made sure that each feature met their needs. Agile encouraged both ownership and teamwork which can be harder to achieve in a more traditional waterfall approach. While the frequent updates and communication did take up more time, it was worth it as it led to faster adaptation, better collaboration, and higher quality results from our team. Overall, the Agile approach strengthened both the team and the final product. I would strongly recommend expanding the Scrum-Agile method across ChadaTech’s projects in the future.