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CS 250

SNHU Travel Final Project

For the SNHU Travel project, our team followed a Scrum-Agile development approach, and I had the opportunity to take on the role of Product Owner. This position put me in charge of overseeing the product vision, refining the backlog, and ensuring that our development efforts aligned with stakeholder goals. Taking on this role was a valuable learning experience, as I was responsible for bridging the gap between user needs and development execution. Throughout the project, I worked closely with the team to deliver a travel-focused application that prioritized personalized itineraries, user-friendly features, and, eventually, a pivot toward wellness and detox travel options.

As the Product Owner, my responsibilities centered around maintaining a clear and organized product backlog. I began by writing and refining user stories that captured key features for the SNHU Travel application, including trip search functions, budget planning tools, and destination highlights. Each user story included clear acceptance criteria, so the development team could easily understand what needed to be done. I also ranked these user stories in order of importance, which helped the team focus on the most valuable tasks during each sprint. One of the first stories we completed involved displaying top travel destinations with image slideshows and text descriptions. My guidance helped clarify what type of content and layout the stakeholders wanted, which allowed the team to deliver this feature on time and with confidence.

The Agile approach we used allowed for rapid, iterative development and frequent feedback. At the end of each sprint, we held Sprint Reviews where we showcased our work. These meetings were useful not just for tracking progress, but for ensuring that stakeholder expectations were being met. As the Product Owner, I played a key role in gathering and sharing this feedback. For example, when we presented the initial slideshow feature, one of the stakeholders suggested that we change the theme to focus on wellness and detox travel. Rather than causing disruption, this change was easy to accommodate because of our Agile workflow. I updated the backlog with new user stories related to wellness destinations and adjusted our priorities accordingly. This moment really highlighted the strength of Agile—it gave us the flexibility to shift focus mid-project without losing momentum or scrapping previous work.

Throughout the development process, communication and collaboration were essential. I communicated frequently with both the development team and our stakeholders. I used tools like Jira to track progress, update the backlog, and share notes after meetings. I also participated in Daily Standups, where I listened to team updates and answered questions about the product vision or user stories. One example of effective communication came when a developer was unsure whether a feature needed to include links to booking platforms. Because we had clear user stories and acceptance criteria, I was able to quickly clarify that yes, this was a priority. This simple exchange prevented wasted time and ensured the feature was developed correctly the first time.

Scrum-Agile organizational tools like sprint planning, backlog grooming, and retrospectives were extremely helpful for keeping our team aligned. During sprint planning meetings, I helped decide which user stories would be tackled next, making sure they matched our goals and sprint capacity. During retrospectives, I gathered feedback on what went well and what could be improved. One takeaway from these meetings was the importance of refining our user stories more clearly—early on, some of the stories were too broad, which led to confusion. After recognizing this, I started breaking them down into smaller tasks with more specific goals, and this noticeably improved the team’s productivity and clarity. Tools like digital task boards helped visualize our progress and gave everyone a shared understanding of where we were in the development cycle.

When comparing the Agile approach to the traditional waterfall method Chada Tech previously used, the differences were very clear. Under a waterfall model, we would have needed to lock down the full scope of the project early on. If the stakeholder later wanted to pivot to wellness travel, this would have caused delays or even required a rework of previously completed tasks. In contrast, the Agile model allowed us to make the change as part of our normal sprint planning and backlog grooming process. Agile gave us room to adapt quickly while still delivering value in each sprint, which is a huge benefit in projects where user needs or market trends can shift rapidly.

Of course, Agile isn’t without its challenges. One of the main difficulties we encountered was managing changes in scope without disrupting the team’s focus. It took practice to strike the right balance between flexibility and stability. There were also moments when some user stories needed more detail than initially provided, which led to slight delays. However, these challenges were manageable and became less frequent as we improved our planning and communication. Retrospectives played an important role in helping us identify and resolve these issues early on, which made each new sprint more effective than the last.

Looking back on the project as a whole, I believe the Scrum-Agile approach was the best fit for the SNHU Travel development project. It supported our need for flexibility, enabled strong collaboration, and ensured that user feedback was incorporated continuously. From my position as Product Owner, I saw firsthand how Agile allowed us to build a better product by keeping the lines of communication open and letting stakeholder input guide our work. The structure of sprints and Scrum events created a consistent rhythm for the team, and the emphasis on transparency made it easy to track progress and adjust course when needed.

This project also helped reinforce the idea that Agile is more than just a process—it’s a mindset that values collaboration, adaptability, and continuous improvement. The transition from a waterfall mindset to Agile thinking wasn’t always easy, but it was worthwhile. It taught us how to stay focused while embracing change, how to prioritize the user experience, and how to deliver a valuable product step by step. I believe Chada Tech would benefit greatly from adopting Agile across more teams. Based on this pilot experience, it’s clear that Scrum-Agile brings measurable advantages in productivity, quality, and client satisfaction.

In conclusion, acting as the Product Owner for this project gave me insight into both the responsibilities of the role and the benefits of Agile development. The SNHU Travel application improved with every sprint, and our team adapted quickly to new priorities and feedback. The Scrum-Agile approach supported open communication, efficient task management, and incremental progress—all key factors in our project’s success. I strongly support expanding Agile to other teams within Chada Tech, as it empowers teams to build better products while staying flexible and user-focused.