Sprint Review and Retrospective

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CS 250: Software Development Lifecycle

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June 22, 2025

For this SNHU Travel project to have finally been completed, it relied heavily on each member of the team to perform their duties at an effective and efficient level. As the Scrum Master for this team, I was responsible for overseeing the Scrum events and making sure they adhered to Agile principles. Throughout this project I organized daily stand-ups and weekly sprint plans and made sure the team stayed focused and removed any distractions when necessary. The product owner throughout this project played a key role in creating and managing the product backlog. Whenever a new requirement was given by the clients, the product owner was quick to adjust the product backlog and shift priorities quickly without causing any major delays. This was especially relevant when the clients wanted to change the website to focus on detox/wellness vacations. The product owner was quick to communicate with the team, and appropriate actions were taken to ensure that the changes were made smoothly with no hiccups in deployment times or major delays. During the SNHU Travel project, the development team created software deliverables based on user stories and requirements obtained from the clients during a meeting between the two parties and the product owner. The developers worked together in pair programming teams to create high-quality products in an accelerated period where quality and efficiency matter the most. When changes needed to be made to the software, the developers were quick to make the necessary changes to ensure that the clients were going to be ahead of the market. The testers during this project were crucial because they worked closely with the developers to ensure quality software was being produced and run by the clients and end users. Because of their attention to detail, the project was able to launch without a hitch, and users were pleased with the quality of the product. If problems ever did arise, the testers and developers would work together again to find a solution and run the automated test cases as well as some edge cases to ensure the product is back to running in top quality.

The Scrum-Agile approach to the software development life cycle (SDLC) helped user stories come to completion in many ways. The Agile approach relies on sprints, which are weekly timed periods where the development team focuses on completing a list of tasks. These sprints give the developers and testers time to develop, test, and refactor code based on user critiques and feedback. Over time this enables the finished products to be more refined for what the client is looking for and what the client wants to interact with. Because of this constant feedback loop, user stories were able to be completed and within a close or perfect margin for what was wanted, and it was made possible because of the Agile SDLC. An example of this in the SNHU Travel project was during week 3, where user stories were collected, and a software prototype was made to try and see what the product would look like after the first sprint. This gave the client and development team a good starting point for what to work on and what to expect moving forward.

When encountering interruptions during the project, the Scrum-Agile approach handled itself well, and changes were made swiftly with little to no hassle. An example of this during the SNHU Travel project was the previously mentioned detox/wellness vacation package change, where clients wanted to jump on a new trend. The team was quick to change the product backlog, and developers were able to make changes to the codebase right away. They ensured that the clients received the changes they wanted as soon as possible. While this kind of change would have been difficult to implement for a different approach such as the waterfall approach, the Scrum-Agile approach offered flexibility and was able to make the required changes promptly.

One of the reasons why this project went so smoothly is because there was a constant stream of communication between the team and the clients. As the scrum master, I was responsible for ensuring that sprint meetings were taken full advantage of. I wanted the team to all be on the same page with a solid understanding of what was expected during the week and what the product needed to look like by the end of it. Whenever questions were being asked, there was always a direct answer given, and if there was not an answer readily available, then there would be discussion on the topic until there was an answer or at least a general understanding. Another way that the team communicated was through email. Throughout this project, I had to send emails to different team members. One example is when I had to email Christy, the product owner, and Brian, the tester. I had to email them regarding questions I had about the project and how to proceed. Being able to communicate with the product owner was crucial to this project's success because it was Christy's job to work with the clients and stakeholders to get an understanding of what they wanted and how we could provide it for them. Being able to have a strong understanding of what is required gave the team the resources they needed to work effectively and collaborate between themselves efficiently.

For this project, the team utilized organizational tools such as JIRA and Azure Boards, and communication tools such as Slack. Jira was especially helpful during sprint meetings where the product backlog was being discussed and refined. The team created stories and issues and assigned tasks to each member of the team and planned out what work was to be done during the sprint. Azure Boards were used by the team to track bugs in the software, maintain user stories, and ensure the team was following the correct path to success. The team also used Slack to communicate remotely if team members were not able to attend the physical in-person daily stand-up meetings. All these tools helped the project succeed.

Throughout this project there were many upsides to using the Scrum-Agile approach, but there were some downsides as well. The pros of the Scrum-Agile approach were that it was flexible, and whenever problems or changes in direction showed themselves, the team was able to respond quickly and adapt to the changes. The incremental sprints gave the team weekly goals to complete, and after every delivery, gave stakeholders and clients something to test and feedback on to improve the product. Another bonus to using the Scrum-Agile approach was that there was constant communication and team collaboration taking place. Everyone was working together and communicating with the clients and users to deliver the best product. Some cons, however, included the unpredictability of how substantial changes were going to be, which could lead to confusion if not handled properly. As well as a lack of documentation, if new members were to join the team, they would need to do a lot of catching up with team members, which could cause some delays to the overall project. Despite these drawbacks, the Scrum-Agile approach was the best approach for the SNHU Travel project. It was the best approach because the requirements for this project were always evolving, which gave the agile approach a much better lead over other approaches such as the waterfall approach. The clients also wanted working prototype software to get a feel for the product, and with the help of agile and sprints, it was an amazingly easy goal to achieve. To receive feedback and make continuous improvements to the product, Scrum-Agile is best suited for the SNHU Travel project.