Sprint Review & Retrospective

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**Applying Roles**  
 Throughout the SNHU Travel project, our Scrum-Agile Team operated in clearly defined roles, each directly contributing to the project’s success. As Scrum Master, I facilitated key Scrum events, removed blockers, and ensured that we stayed aligned with Agile values. This included preparing for Sprint Planning sessions, guiding Daily Scrums to remain focused and productive, and encouraging open discussion during Retrospectives. The Product Owner was responsible for maintaining a clear product vision and prioritizing backlog items based on stakeholder needs, as outlined in *The Scrum Guide* (Schwaber & Sutherland, 2020). This role proved essential when the decision was made to pivot toward wellness travel offerings—our Product Owner quickly updated user stories, refined acceptance criteria, and worked with the team to set new priorities without derailing existing work. The Development Team collaborated to implement features, test functionality, and ensure each story met our Definition of Done. For example, during the “Top Five Destination List” story, developers resolved a formatting issue identified by testers within the same sprint, allowing us to deliver a polished and user-friendly feature.

**Completing User Stories**  
 A Scrum-Agile approach allowed us to complete user stories in a predictable and efficient manner. By breaking down large features into smaller, manageable stories, the team could deliver incremental value and receive early feedback from stakeholders. For example, instead of building a full-featured trip search tool all at once, we first delivered a basic search function, then added filters in later sprints. This approach meant stakeholders could review the search early and suggest improvements before more complex work began. Additionally, our shared Definition of Done ensured that each story met quality standards, passed testing, and was ready to demonstrate during Sprint Reviews, which helped us maintain consistent progress throughout the project.

**Handling Interruptions**  
 Scrum’s flexibility became especially valuable when the project’s direction shifted midstream. The decision to focus on wellness travel could have caused significant delays in a traditional waterfall model, but in Scrum, we simply reprioritized the backlog during refinement and adjusted sprint goals accordingly. Work in progress was either completed or parked for later development depending on its urgency. Another example of adaptability came when an expected data source was delayed by the vendor; instead of pausing development, we used a placeholder dataset, which allowed us to continue building features. This meant we could integrate the actual data source quickly when it became available.

**Communication**  
 Strong communication was essential to our success. Daily Scrums provided a dedicated space for the team to share progress, identify blockers, and coordinate tasks. For example, I once sent a pre-meeting reminder: *“Please update your status on the wellness travel search filter before tomorrow’s Daily Scrum so we can address any blockers early.”* This encouraged the developer responsible for the filter to raise a dependency issue, which we resolved before it impacted the sprint. Our Sprint Reviews also fostered valuable feedback loops; when we demonstrated the destination list, a stakeholder suggested including an average rating for each location. We added this to the backlog and delivered it in the next sprint, demonstrating responsiveness to stakeholder input.

**Organizational Tools**  
 A shared Kanban board was one of our most effective tools for staying organized. It provided visibility into work in progress, upcoming tasks, and completed items, making it easy to spot bottlenecks. Scrum events like Sprint Planning and backlog refinement ensured that upcoming stories were well-defined and prioritized, while Retrospectives allowed us to identify and implement process improvements. According to the Agile Alliance (2021), these events are critical to fostering transparency, inspection, and adaptation, which are the core pillars of Scrum. For example, after noticing that some tasks stayed “In Progress” for too long, we agreed to limit work in progress to help maintain focus and flow.

**Evaluating Agile Process**  
 The Scrum-Agile approach offered clear benefits for the SNHU Travel project. Among the pros were adaptability to changing requirements, early and frequent stakeholder feedback, incremental delivery, and improved collaboration. The cons included an initial learning curve for team members new to Scrum and the reliance on consistent stakeholder participation. In this case, the benefits far outweighed the drawbacks. The evolving requirements of the SNHU Travel application were a strong fit for Scrum’s iterative nature, and the project’s success reinforced the value of Agile principles.

**Lessons Learned**  
 One of my key takeaways from this project is that Agile is most effective when the team is disciplined about following its core practices while remaining open to change. Short feedback cycles, clear communication, and well-defined user stories allowed us to deliver value consistently and respond quickly when priorities shifted. While no process is without challenges, the combination of dedicated roles, structured events, and an adaptable mindset allowed our team to meet stakeholder needs and produce a high-quality product.

**References**

Agile Alliance. (2021). *What is Agile?* <https://www.agilealliance.org/agile101/>

Schwaber, K., & Sutherland, J. (2020). *The Scrum Guide*. Scrum.org. <https://scrumguides.org>