CS250 Sprint Review and Retrospective

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Table of Contents

[CS250 Sprint Review and Retrospective 3](#_heading=h.gjdgxs)

[A. Demonstrate how the various roles on your Scrum-agile Team specifically contributed to the success of the SNHU Travel project. 3](#_heading=h.30j0zll)

[B. Describe how a Scrum-agile approach to the SDLC helped each of the user stories come to completion. 3](#_heading=h.1fob9te)

[C. Describe how a Scrum-agile approach supported project completion when the project was interrupted and changed direction. 3](#_heading=h.3znysh7)

[D. Demonstrate your ability to communicate effectively with your team by providing samples of your communication. 3](#_heading=h.2et92p0)

[E. Evaluate the organizational tools and Scrum-agile principles that helped your team be successful. 3](#_heading=h.tyjcwt)

[F. Assess the effectiveness of the Scrum-agile approach for the SNHU Travel project. 3](#_heading=h.3dy6vkm)

[Describe the pros and cons that the Scrum-agile approach presented during the project. 3](#_heading=h.1t3h5sf)

[Determine whether or not a Scrum-agile approach was the best approach for the SNHU Travel development project. 3](#_heading=h.4d34og8)

[References 4](#_heading=h.2s8eyo1)

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.

Our team has roles for one product owner, one scrum master, developers, and testers. There is also a client involved in certain parts of the process, but they do not directly contribute to any success, we just basically get requests from them and communicate our progress or what’s possible. Each of these roles fills a key component of scrum, and was vital to SNHU Travel’s success. The product owner helped us to prioritize each user story and the pieces of development related to them, as well as communicate our needs to stakeholders and groom our backlog. Our scrum master also interacted with the backlog a lot, and led scrum meetings so that we could discuss our previous and next steps, as well as any challenges in the way of our progress. They helped us stick to agile principles, which was crucial for things to work the way they should have. Developers and testers played adjacent roles, where developers had gotten essentially coding and app design tasks and had to, in some cases, insert a collection of pictures and links to each travel listing, make images clickable, and put buttons on the screen to match the scrolling style requested. Then the testers would follow up by writing test cases for each feature and confirming that the intended functionality worked, as well as did not break when performing any unintended operations. Testers also had to update their test cases based on any requests from the PO.

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

Taking a scrum-agile approach in this project was a big reason that the user stories were able to be completed. Aside from communications, scrum made it very simple for us to effectively shift our weight in another direction whenever necessary. Some of the user stories were to add a certain functionality as a field that the user could set and adjust in their profile, and we sometimes needed further clarification about whether or not this should be in profile, homepage, search, etc. A few of these fields were for budget and vacation type preferences, and there were also stories based on the user being able to browse a menu of vacation types tailored to their history and preferences. By tracking user stories, we were able to prioritize them and assign them a weight for how long or how much effort they would require, which gave us a much stronger top-down view of the project to decide next steps and track progress. This helps stories to be developed quicker, and gives our team the ability to convey our progress to stakeholders. In a waterfall approach, this would not be as interactive because it would be left up to each individual to maintain this type of tracking, which would likely not be stored in one central location. Agile principles allow us to come together and be more cross functional with teams and employees, which is certainly more efficient.

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

By working in short sprints and prioritizing tasks effectively, we were able to complete deliverables and have them tested and shown as progress frequently, and any adjustments were simple and not demoralizing as we had not chased perfection throughout development, only completeness to be refined and maintained later on. There were not many interruptions, but changes of direction did take place when a design change decision was made by the PO or client. Thanks to being “agile,” we had the facilities to shift quickly and had actually planned for these kinds of changes up front. The main change that was requested was for the layout of the app to allow users to scroll through like a slideshow, and each listing was supposed to target wellness and detox retreats, which we just filled in easily. This marketing change is really not even relevant to a developer, as they are just focused on building the technology, and likely the client or their team will be the one filling out the listing descriptions.

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

Communications were a big part of development, and we often had to read and write emails to all different members of the team. Since we broke things down by each role’s responsibility and encouraged communication and teamwork, whenever somebody got stuck or needed information from another member, they felt very natural going straight to them as soon as possible. Hypothetically, we had all worked in the same room as each other. Each member was responsible for their small piece of the pie, however did assist and interact with other roles quite a lot, which differs greatly from waterfall. As new updates were made to the client’s desires, we would simply email back and forth to confirm what was being asked, and request additional information. As a sample, this email is from a developer to product owner and testers:

*“Hello Product Owner and Tester,*

*In light of the recent changes requested, I have a few things that I need to know before proceeding. In order to move forward with development, I must ask what our goal is as far as the wellness-targeted destination descriptions.*

* *Are we looking to promote physical wellness, mental wellness, and detox, as a way to influence people towards the notion of self-care; or are we targeting a different group of people?*
* *Is the layout of the slideshow going to change, or should it remain the same?*
* *Any changes to website functionality please let me know.*

*Testers:*

*Please inform me of any information you need to know about changes we make to the code, I will provide you with as exhaustive a list as possible, and hopefully the test cases you have written will remain usable, but I will also inform you of any functional changes to the slide show.”*

This sample of communication is effective because it identifies very concisely each thing that the developer needs clarification on, and lays those out in bulleted questions so that it is easy for the PO or tester to respond directly to what it is that they need. The developer also encourages feedback and further communication from the tester, which promotes agile culture as the tenets of agile include open communication.

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

Organizational tools used throughout the SNHU Travel project include the agile team charter, product backlog, user stories, and test cases, all documented at each stage of the project. The agile team charter is a central location for all information about the project, including each role and its description and members, what they’ll be responsible for, and contact info. This tool is meant to be referenced at any time by anyone, and is important to have because it not only identifies each member and their role, but it describes the business case, vision statement, success criteria for the project, any risks to be watchful of, and rules for behavior and communication. This is an all-encompassing document of the high-level details of the entire project, and the rest of the scrum process should reflect these details that are laid out. The product backlog is a huge list of every single thing that could possibly be accomplished for the project, in order of priority and maintained by the PO in response to their communications with the client. This will be managed according to what the PO deems that the client is looking for. User stories are broken down into tasks, and get put into this backlog, but must be written out in depth for the developers to create. Test cases are like user stories for testers, and basically just describe each operation that the tester needs to create tests based on and eventually use to test the program. All of these organizational tools are pretty crucial to success, as they lay out a logical, yet flexible action plan that encourages teamwork and promotes the creation of a viable product.

# 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:

* Short sprints with focus on completing a deliverable help get a viable product working in little time, keeping the design flexible and open to adjustments. Each step is more approachable this way, highlighting progress and accomplishments.
* Organizational tools and documents like user stories, test cases, and the agile charter keep things focused and on track by prioritizing work from start to finish without being too vague or too exhaustive. Changes can be made along the way, and multiple parties are involved in planning each step so that team members are not as isolated.
* Team structure and roles are well defined in agile, with a scrum master being responsible for clearing a path for developers and the rest of the team so they can focus more on their work and identifying challenges. This breakdown of responsibility makes advocating for your needs more natural, and since team sizes are smaller, everyone should feel closer to each other and not make decisions that would impede another team member’s efforts.

Cons:

* Sometimes, more than one story needs to be worked on at a time to make sure the pieces work together before moving forwards. If one part is not done, the other part that relies on it will just have to sit around waiting to be tested as a whole. In the SNHU project, there would have been multiple developers required to work on separate stories at once, which would probably be possible but might put extra strain on the team resources.
* If the developers are not done working on a feature, the testers will have to wait for them to finish before they can perform and even sometimes write test cases. In the travel project, the tester had to wait a week or two for the features to be developed before they could write accurate test cases, although agile does work quickly this might be a problem in certain cases. The tester should be doing other things during this time.

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

Scrum-agile was definitely the best approach for the SNHU travel project, especially due to team size. Chada Tech’s team for this project was about 5-10 members, and while more could have been included, this project was the perfect size for this amount of people to tackle. Once user stories were outlined, they were quickly chipped away at and meetings were held with the client weekly or more to present code and adjust functionality. Changes were made mid-development, which would have been a lot harder to adapt to without an agile framework that focused on getting smaller chunks working at a time. Progress was not too rigid and drawn out, so everything was easily shifted towards the new goal. It was convenient to be able to talk between developers and testers once features were about to be started, and again once they were finished. SNHU Travel didn’t have a fully fleshed out idea upon meeting our team, so there was really no way we could have done a lot of planning up front anyways, leaving agile as the obvious solution. Pieces of the sprint were only able to get done so quickly because of the constant and smooth flow of communication from the client, to the PO and scrum master, and then the developers/testers. Scrum-agile was the best possible approach for the given scenario.