Sprint Review & Retrospective

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ChadaTech formed a Scrum Team to evaluate the effectiveness of a Scrum-Agile approach while transitioning away from the traditional Waterfall model. This project involved developing a niche vacation booking system for SNHU Travel within a five-week timeline that expands the SNHU Travel customer base and national presence through innovative travel offerings. The project initially focused on niche vacation packages and later shifted to a detox and wellness travel emphasis based on evolving market insights. The changing requirements provided the ideal opportunity to evaluate the effectiveness of a Scrum-Agile framework in a real-world development scenario.

As the Scrum Master, I have conducted a Sprint Review and Retrospective to assess the team's performance, collaboration, and ability to deliver value under evolving conditions. The Scrum Team collaborated across defined roles to deliver core features such as Top Destinations, Hot Deals, and personalized recommendations while navigating tight deadlines, shifting requirements, and evolving market insights. This retrospective analyzes how the Scrum-Agile approach shaped team roles, performance, adaptability, and communication. By reflecting on successes, challenges, and lessons learned, my report evaluates whether the Scrum-Agile framework was an effective development approach for the SNHU Travel Project and whether it is a viable model for ChadaTech for future projects.

The Product Owner, Christy, was responsible for defining the product vision, then building and managing the Product Backlog with the goal of maximizing the value of the product. Christy gathered initial requirements from the stakeholders and validated them by gathering feedback through user focus groups. These initial requirements were refined and organized into the Product Backlog. When faced

with shifting requirements from stakeholders, Christy refined and reprioritized the Product Backlog mid-project to pivot the focus without altering the product release date. This contribution mattered because it allowed the team to adapt to changing business priorities while maintaining clarity and development velocity. By responding quickly, the Product Owner minimized confusion and reduced waste. In doing so, development effort remained aligned with stakeholder goals.

My role as Scrum Master focused on ensuring the Scrum Team adhered to Scrum theory, practices, and rules. My goal was to ensure that the Product Backlog was being managed effectively while facilitating clear communication between the Product Owner and the Development team to maximize value. I served the Scrum Team by quickly resolving impediments, redirecting the team when focus strayed from the goal, enforcing timeboxes, facilitating open communication, and encouraging self-management. This created an environment where the Development Team felt structured and well-equipped. During the SNHU Travel project, I facilitated key Scrum Events, such as Daily Scrum. During these brief meetings, the team focused on identifying impediments and creating an action plan for the next sprint session. This contribution mattered because it made work visible, provided clarity, and maintained progress toward the Sprint Goal.

The Development Team was responsible for implementing Product Backlog Items (PBIs) and producing increments of value that meet the Definition of Done. During the SNHU Travel project, a Backlog Refinement session introduced new requirements from stakeholders. Developers reviewed the updated Product Backlog and adjusted priorities within the Sprint Backlog. This contribution mattered because it protected the integrity of the Product Goal and reduced the risk of rework. The Development Team managed change effectively through collaboration and clear communication, allowing them to maintain focus, velocity, and continuously deliver increments of value.

As members of the Development Team, Testers were responsible for verifying that PBIs met the acceptance criteria and the Definition of Done. During the SNHU Travel project, testers reviewed User Stories during Backlog Refinement and identified areas where requirements lacked detail to define test cases. Testers then contacted the Scrum Master to reveal the impediment and request clarification on user interface expectations and end-to-end functionality. This contribution mattered because it clarified expectations before development and prevented waste caused by unclear requirements. By creating a cross-functional development team that included testers working together with Developers, the Testers were able to ensure quality was built into the architecture of the program from the start instead of waiting until the end of the project, as is common in the Waterfall model.

The Scrum-Agile approach to the Software Development Lifecycle supported the completion of User Stories in the SNHU Travel project by breaking down complex features into manageable increments that could be planned, built, tested, and reviewed within each sprint. The Product Owner began by decomposing the Epic Goal into features. The features were decomposed further into User Stories that made up the Product Backlog. This ensured the Product Backlog was organized and maximized value, while simultaneously breaking down the work into pieces that can be fit into a Sprint. During Sprint Planning, PBIs were selected based on priority. Each User Story included acceptance criteria that defined expected system behavior and helped create a shared understanding of the value being created. Sprint Reviews allowed stakeholders to inspect completed User Stories and provide feedback which influenced Backlog Refinement and future Sprint Planning events. This iterative process of planning, development, testing, and review allowed the team to complete User Stories while remaining adaptable to changing requirements while staying on schedule.

The Scrum-Agile approach supported project completion when priorities shifted during the SNHU Travel project by providing structure for adapting to change. In the middle of the project,

stakeholders introduced changing requirements based on market research. These changes were addressed through Backlog Refinement where PBIs were reprioritized allowing the Scrum Team to evaluate what could be accomplished within the remaining timeline. This approach minimized rework and increased value. By adjusting priorities, the team was able to quickly pivot to stay in alignment with updated business goals. By focusing on incremental delivery of value and adaptive planning, the Scrum Team was able to handle change in a controlled manner.

Effective communication was essential to the success of the SNHU Travel project. The Scrum-Agile framework provided multiple opportunities for communication and collaboration. Scrum Events allowed face-to-face communication between team members which resulted in maximized clarity. However, there were moments when clarity was required outside of Scrum Events. One example of effective communication occurred when a tester emailed the Scrum Master to discuss an impediment and request clarification on user stories to finalize test cases. In this communication, the tester categorized their questions, requested specific feedback for clarification, and requested additional Scrum Artifacts such as wireframes for reference. The email remained positive and ended with a call to action:

> If possible, I think a Story grooming session would be very helpful to give the team opportunities to ask questions and address some of the uncertainty in the user stories to avoid waste. Once these clarifications are provided, I can finalize the test cases to ensure they fully cover the functionally required for each user story. Thanks for your help in resolving this.

This communication was effective because it was specific, and aligned with Agile values of collaboration, transparency, and early feedback. By encouraging communication across the Scrum Team, the Scrum-Agile approach helped the team address uncertainty quickly to maximize value and reduce waste.

Organizational tools and Scrum Events played a critical role in supporting transparency, collaboration, and progress tracking throughout the SNHU Travel project. Scrum artifacts such as the Product Backlog and Sprint Backlog created structure and allowed the Scrum Team to understand the Product Goal. Sprint Planning and Daily Scrums helped the team inspect progress, stay aligned with the Product Goal, and adjust to changing requirements. The use of a Scrum Board functioned as an information radiator and encouraged accountability by allowing work to be visible and updated in real time. Sprint Reviews enabled stakeholders to inspect completed increments and provide feedback. Sprint Retrospectives allowed the team to reflect on what went well and what areas needed improvement. Together, these tools and events increased transparency, improved collaboration, and supported efficient delivery by enabling continuous inspection and adaptation throughout the project.

The Scrum-Agile approach proved effective for SNHU Travel. Frequent communication, collaboration, and feedback through Scrum Events increased transparency and reduced waste. Cross-functional collaboration within the Development Team allowed quality to be built into the product from the beginning instead of being inspected at the end. However, the approach also required a high level of discipline and communication. Early ambiguities in user stories led to rework, demonstrating that Agile processes depend heavily on clear requirements and timely clarification to remain efficient.

Overall, Scrum-Agile was the best development approach for the SNHU Travel project. The combination of tight deadlines and shifting market priorities required a framework that could accommodate change without sacrificing structure or delivery. Scrum's iterative nature, focus on continuous improvement, and emphasis on stakeholder collaboration allowed the team to remain aligned with business goals while delivering meaningful increments of value. Based on the outcomes of this pilot project, Scrum-Agile represents a viable and effective methodology for ChadaTech's broader organizational transition away from a traditional Waterfall model.