**7-1 Final Project: SNHU Travel Sprint Review and Retrospective**

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**Applying Roles**

During this sprint for the SNHU Travel Project, each role within the Scrum Team contributed to success in ways that demonstrate the strength of Agile collaboration. The Product Owner played the most critical part in maintaining alignment between the development team and the business goals of the travel agency. By refining backlog items and clarifying acceptance criteria, the Product Owner ensured that features such as the “Top Destinations” display were prioritized and understood before work began. This guidance provided the clarity that developers and testers needed to avoid wasted effort and stay focused on client value. This clearly demonstrated that the effectiveness of a Product Owner directly influences whether Agile projects meet stakeholder expectations (Magnussen et al., 2024).

The Scrum Master, in turn, created an environment that allowed the team to perform at its best. This included facilitating Daily Scrums to keep communication flowing, guiding the team through Sprint Planning, and protecting them from distractions when priorities shifted. A Scrum Master adds value to the team by removing obstacles and fostering collaboration, rather than directing the work themselves (Kristensen, 2021). Acting in this capacity allows developers and testers to focus on producing quality increments without being derailed by external interruptions.

Developers carried the bulk of the responsibility for implementing user stories into functional features. Their work requires close collaboration with testers, who validated whether those features met acceptance criteria. When building the slideshow component to showcase travel destinations, developers created the structure while testers verified that text and images displayed correctly and that navigation between the slides was smooth. The tight feedback loop between these two roles meant that defects were identified quickly and addressed within the sprint, reducing the risk of delayed fixes or missed bugs. Collectively, the roles reinforced one another: the Product Owner provided clarity, the Scrum Master removed the barriers, and the developers and testers delivered and validated value.

**Completing User Stories & Testing**

The Scrum-Agile approach directly supported the completion of user stories by breaking down requirements into clear, testable increments. Stories were framed in user-centric language, such as “As a traveler, I want to filter destinations by my profile preferences so that I can see trips most relevant to me.” This format kept development grounded in customer needs and gave testers a natural path for validation. Each story functioned not just as a requirement but as a basis for the building blocks of the product. The story was not complete until both the functionality was delivered, *and* the acceptance tests were passed, which ensures a solid foundation for any feature being worked on.

The iterative cycle of Agile was especially effective in refining stories mid-sprint when SNHU Travel management identified detox and wellness vacations as a growing market trend, and thus a needed application focus. This required a shift in the project’s design focus, with the Product Owner reprioritizing the backlog to ensure the slideshow application highlighted wellness travel options. Rather than discarding earlier work, the team adapted by updating stories and acceptance criteria to reflect the new emphasis. Developers adjusted existing features to display the wellness content and by handling the changes within the sprint without moving deadlines, the team demonstrated how Agile supports responsiveness and adaptability, while still delivering usable software.

Testers worked alongside developers throughout the sprint, adjusting test cases as features were updated to highlight wellness travel options. Instead of waiting until the end to validate the slideshow, testing happened in parallel with development, which allowed issues to be caught and corrected early. This approach reflected the shift-left testing model (Mollah, 2023), where user stories naturally become test scenarios. In practice, this meant stories like “As a traveler, I want to browse wellness destinations so that I can compare options” were immediately turned into checks to confirm that new images, text, and filters displayed correctly. By embedding testing into the sprint, the team ensures that changes driven by SNHU Travel’s new priorities were validated early and continuously, rather than creating a bottleneck at the end of development.

**Handling Interruptions**

One of the defining experiences of this sprint was the shift in requirements when SNHU Travel management requested a focus on detox and wellness vacations. In a traditional development model, such a change would likely have derailed the schedule or resulted in discarded work. Within Scrum, however, the change was handled by reprioritizing backlog items while keeping the sprint dates intact. The Product Owner took the lead in negotiating which stories would be deprioritized, allowing the team to concentrate on implementing the slideshow application changes.

As Scrum Master, my role was to facilitate this transition by ensuring the team understood the new priorities and by helping them identify what could realistically be accomplished within the sprint. This involved maintaining transparency during Daily Scrums, tracking progress against the revised backlog, and removing potential blockers. Rather than treating the change as disruptive, the team used it as an opportunity to demonstrate agility. The ability to integrate new market insights without sacrificing the sprint goal reinforced the value of Scrum in a dynamic project environment.

**Communication and Collaboration**

Effective communication was essential to navigating these changes and completing the sprint successfully. The Product Owner played a central role by clearly communicating management’s new focus on wellness travel and by translating it into actionable backlog items. This clarity prevented confusion and kept developers and testers aligned on the updated objectives. A strong Product Owner serves as the primary bridge between stakeholders and the development team, and this responsibility was acted out clearly here (Magnussen et al., 2024).

The team also relied on direct and timely communication to resolve questions as they arose. For example, developers sought clarification on whether the existing slideshow panels should be adapted or rebuilt, while testers asked about how new acceptance criteria should apply to their cases, and whether any new variables were introduced with the new content. These conversations occurred in real time during the development of the application which reduces delays and rework when these roles are working in silos. By encouraging open dialogue, the team conserved momentum even as the requirements shifted. The collaborative environment kept all team members engaged and ensured that everyone had a clear picture of progress toward the sprint goal.

**Organization Tools and Scrum Events**

Scrum events and tools provided the necessary structure to manage changing requirements without losing focus. Sprint Planning gave the team the opportunity to reassess backlog priorities when the new wellness travel focus was introduced, while the Daily Scrums created space to track emerging challenges as the features were implemented. The Sprint Review allowed stakeholders to see a prototype that included the wellness updates. This provided further opportunities for feedback loops that resulted in better quality increments. Finally, the retrospective provides a forum to reflect on how the team adapted under pressure, and where opportunities to improve lie.

Organizational tools such as the product backlog and task boards were equally important. The backlog served as a living document where the Product Owner could adjust priorities in response to new business needs, while the task board gave the team a transparent view of what was in progress, completed, or halted due to blockers. Together, these tools provide ways to foster accountability and visibility, reduces the risks of misalignment, and provides a visual overview of a project’s building blocks. The Scrum Master’s facilitation of these tools and events adds value by ensuring that the team’s energy remains focused on delivering increment of value. This was evident in how the team maintained progress despite mid-sprint changes.

**Evaluating the Agile Process**

Looking back on the sprint, the effectiveness of the Scrum-Agile approach for the SNHU Travel project becomes clear. One of the major advantages was adaptability: the team was able to shift focus to wellness travel without derailing progress or deadlines. Early and continuous feedback kept the work aligned with client expectations, while the integration of testing into every sprint increment reduced the risk of late defect discovery. Collaboration across roles created visible accountability and fostered a stronger sense of ownership over the product.

At the same time, the sprint highlighted some challenges that come with Scrum. Adjusting priorities mid-sprint required discipline from the Product Owner to ensure the backlog stayed clear and actionable, and from the team to avoid scope creep. There was also a learning curve in balancing the flexibility of Agile with the need for predictability. Some team members initially felt uncertain about how to measure progress when the focus shifted. These challenges reflect common concerns noted in many studies about Agile, such as the need for consistent stakeholder engagement and strong Product Owner leadership (Magnussen et al., 2024).

With all that in mind, the Scrum-Agile approach did seem to be the best fit for the project. The SNHU Travel application required flexibility to respond to changing client needs, rapid iteration to deliver visible progress, and collaboration across roles to validate changes. A waterfall approach would likely have struggled to accommodate shifting market priorities without costly delays. By the end of the sprint, the team had not only delivered updates aligned with client expectations but also demonstrated how Scrum could support ChadaTech in building a more adaptive and collaborative culture.  
**Conclusion**

The sprint reinforced the value of Agile practices in supporting both delivery and team collaboration. Each role contributed to success in some way. The Product Owner provided clarity and focus, the Scrum Master facilitated communication and removed obstacles, the developers delivered the features and functionality needed for the sprint goal, and the testers validated those features against acceptance criteria to ensure quality. User stories and continuous testing ensured that features were not only built but also confirmed against client requirements, while Scrum events and tools created structure and transparency.

Most importantly, the team demonstrated adaptability when requirements shifted mid-sprint, turning what could have been a lengthy disruption into an opportunity to align more closely with client priorities. The experience showed that Scrum is not only a process framework but also a mindset that emphasizes responsiveness, communication, and shared responsibility. For ChadaTech, the lessons from this sprint suggest that scaling Agile practices across teams could strengthen both product outcomes and organizational culture.

**References**

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