# **Sprint Review & Retrospective – SNHU Travel Project**

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### **Introduction**

ChadaTech has long relied on a traditional waterfall methodology, moving through software development in a rigid, sequential order. While this method offers predictability, it often struggles to adapt when client requirements change or when new opportunities arise mid-project. To test whether a more flexible approach might better serve both clients and development teams, ChadaTech piloted a transition to Agile Scrum during the SNHU Travel application project.

In this reflection, I will take on the role of Scrum Master and review how our Agile team applied roles, completed user stories, handled interruptions, communicated, and leveraged organizational tools to deliver the project successfully. I will also assess the overall effectiveness of Scrum in this pilot, highlighting both its benefits and limitations. The goal is to show how Agile not only supported the delivery of the SNHU Travel application but also improved collaboration, adaptability, and continuous learning within the team.

### **Applying Roles**

One of the defining aspects of Scrum is its emphasis on clearly defined roles. Each role is essential, and the success of the SNHU Travel project demonstrates how their interactions drove outcomes.

As Scrum Master, I acted as the facilitator and coach for the team. My responsibility was not to direct the work but to ensure the process stayed on track. For example, during sprint planning I guided discussions to make sure user stories were well-defined and achievable within the sprint. When a developer encountered a blocker in connecting the booking database, I facilitated a quick side conversation with the Product Owner and another developer to find a solution. This helped the team avoid delays without breaking the flow of the sprint.

The Product Owner role was equally critical. Acting as the voice of SNHU Travel, the Product Owner maintained the backlog and prioritized user stories. For example, while the team initially expected to focus on building a flight search function, the Product Owner reprioritized work when SNHU Travel indicated that hotel booking integration would attract a larger client base. This decision aligned development with business value and demonstrated how the Product Owner bridges client needs with technical execution.

The Development Team delivered the actual increments of the product. They worked cross-functionally, dividing user stories into tasks and collaborating daily. One team member specialized in the user interface while another focused on backend services, but they continuously cross-checked each other’s work to ensure seamless integration. Their collaborative effort allowed each sprint to produce a tangible increment that could be demonstrated during sprint reviews.

Together, these roles created a dynamic balance: the Scrum Master kept the process healthy, the Product Owner ensured alignment with business goals, and the Development Team turned user stories into working software.

### **Completing User Stories**

One of the clearest benefits of using Scrum was the way it supported completing user stories incrementally. Each user story was small, specific, and tied directly to user value. For example, one story read: *“As a traveler, I want to search flights by date and destination so that I can plan my trip.”* Breaking the work down this way allowed the team to focus on delivering value early rather than waiting for the entire system to be complete.

The sprint planning process helped the team select a realistic number of stories to complete in each sprint. By applying the Definition of Done—meaning a story was not just coded but also tested and documented—the team avoided carrying half-finished work forward. During sprint reviews, the Product Owner could see and test new functionality, which provided immediate feedback. This iterative approach not only helped stories come to completion but also built trust with the client because progress was visible and tangible.

### **Handling Interruptions**

No project proceeds without surprises, and the SNHU Travel project was no exception. Midway through development, the client requested the addition of hotel booking functionality. Under a waterfall approach, this kind of change would have been disruptive, forcing re-work of requirements and delaying delivery. Under Scrum, however, the team was able to adapt.

The Product Owner reprioritized the backlog to include hotel booking stories. During sprint planning, the team discussed which lower-priority stories could be shifted out to make room. Although this required adjusting the release plan, the process ensured that the highest-value features were delivered first. Daily stand-ups gave team members a chance to raise concerns about the scope change, and blockers were resolved quickly.

By treating interruptions as part of the normal flow rather than as catastrophic setbacks, the Scrum framework supported project completion without significant disruption. This flexibility highlighted one of the major advantages of Agile over Waterfall.

### **Communication**

Effective communication was central to the team’s success. Scrum provides structured opportunities for communication through ceremonies, but informal exchanges also played a role.

Daily stand-ups were short but powerful. Each team member shared what they completed yesterday, what they planned for today, and whether they faced blockers. For example, a developer might say: *“Yesterday I integrated the flight API. Today I’ll connect it to the front-end search form. No blockers at the moment.”* This format created transparency and allowed the Scrum Master to quickly address issues.

Beyond stand-ups, sprint reviews gave the Product Owner and stakeholders a chance to see working software and provide feedback. For example, after demonstrating the flight search function, stakeholders suggested a filter by price. This immediate feedback loop allowed the team to adapt quickly.

I also used written communication to encourage collaboration. A sample message might read: *“Team, please remember to update the sprint board after completing tasks. This helps us keep the burndown chart accurate and ensures we’re on track for Friday’s demo.”* Clear and concise communication like this reinforced accountability without micromanaging.

Overall, the combination of structured Scrum events and ongoing informal communication created an environment of openness, trust, and shared responsibility.

### **Organizational Tools**

Scrum relies on both principles and tools to keep teams aligned and productive. During this project, several tools stood out.

The product backlog was the central organizational tool. It provided a transparent list of user stories prioritized by business value. Sprint backlogs, in turn, gave the team a focused set of goals for each iteration. Having these lists visible on a digital board helped the team stay oriented and motivated.

The sprint board (managed in Trello) allowed the team to track progress visually, moving tasks from “To Do” to “In Progress” to “Done.” This simple tool reinforced accountability and provided an at-a-glance view of progress.

The burndown chart was another valuable tool. By showing how much work remained over time, it helped the team forecast whether they would complete the sprint on schedule. During one sprint, the chart revealed that velocity was lower than expected, prompting the team to discuss how to reduce distractions and improve focus.

Scrum ceremonies themselves—sprint planning, daily stand-ups, sprint reviews, and retrospectives—also functioned as organizational tools. Each event created structure, kept communication flowing, and encouraged continuous improvement.

### **Evaluating Agile Process**

Assessing the Scrum-Agile process as a whole, it is clear that the approach had both strengths and weaknesses for this project.

**Pros** included flexibility in handling changing requirements, increased visibility into progress, and regular opportunities for feedback. The iterative delivery of increments allowed the client to see tangible progress quickly and reduced the risk of delivering a product that did not meet their needs. The emphasis on team collaboration and communication also improved morale and accountability.

**Cons** included the risk of scope creep, as clients can be tempted to add more stories once they see working software. Additionally, because Scrum relies heavily on team discipline and self-organization, productivity can vary depending on the team’s maturity with Agile practices. Predicting delivery timelines with precision was also more challenging than in a strict Waterfall plan.

Overall, however, Scrum was the best fit for the SNHU Travel project. The travel industry is dynamic, with client expectations shifting as new features become possible. The ability to reprioritize and adapt was essential. Waterfall, with its rigid upfront requirements, would likely have led to delays or delivered features that no longer aligned with business goals. Scrum supported not only successful project delivery but also a culture of continuous learning and improvement.

### **Conclusion**

The SNHU Travel project demonstrated the value of Agile Scrum as ChadaTech considers moving away from Waterfall. Each role on the team contributed to success: the Scrum Master facilitated process health, the Product Owner ensured alignment with client value, and the Development Team delivered working software. User stories were completed incrementally, and interruptions were managed without derailing the project. Communication was consistent and effective, supported by organizational tools like sprint boards and burndown charts.

While Scrum presented challenges such as potential scope creep and less predictability in scheduling, its benefits far outweighed its drawbacks for this project. Most importantly, the approach fostered continuous improvement, collaboration, and adaptability—qualities that will serve ChadaTech well as it decides whether to adopt Scrum company-wide.