

# Case Study: Adopting an Agile Writing Content Development Process



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STC Silicon Valley Chapter (STC-SVC)

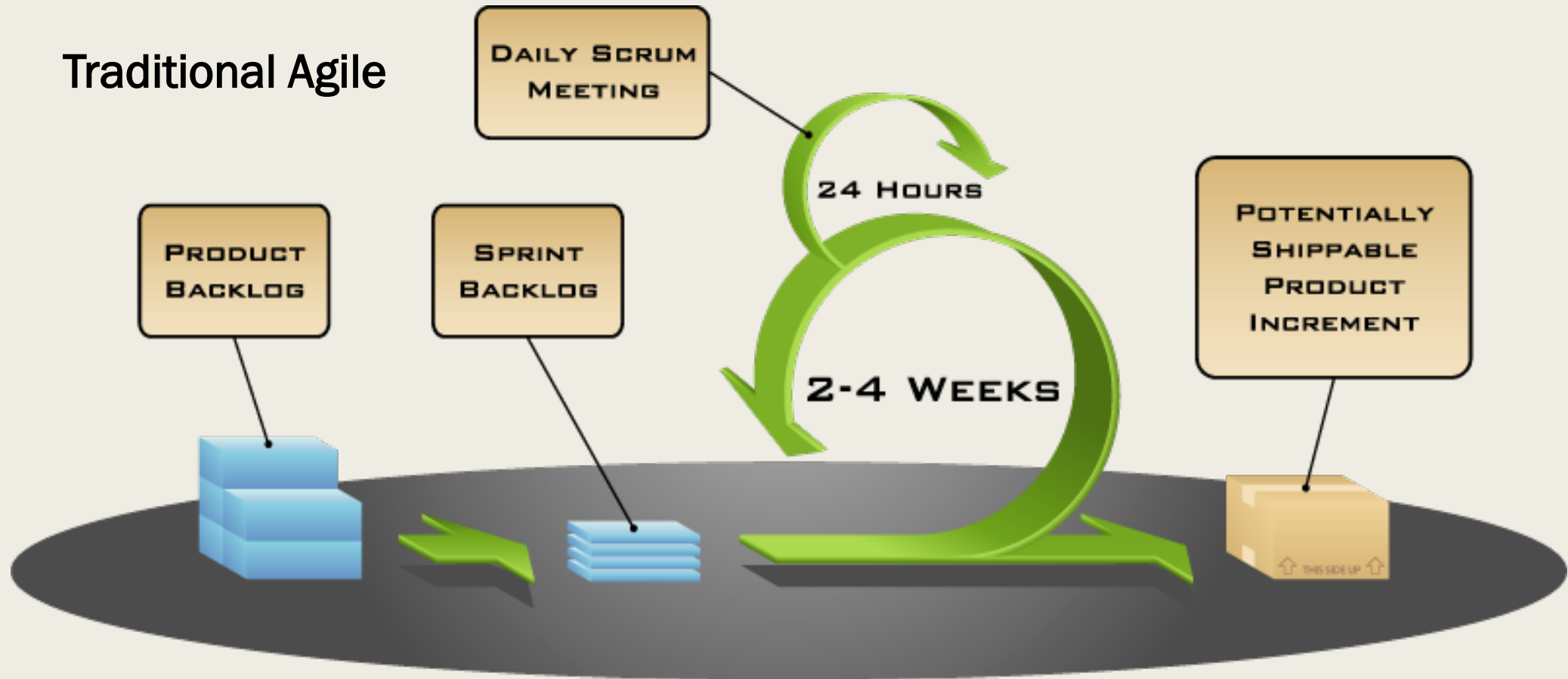
# What is Scrum?

## Scrum in 100 words

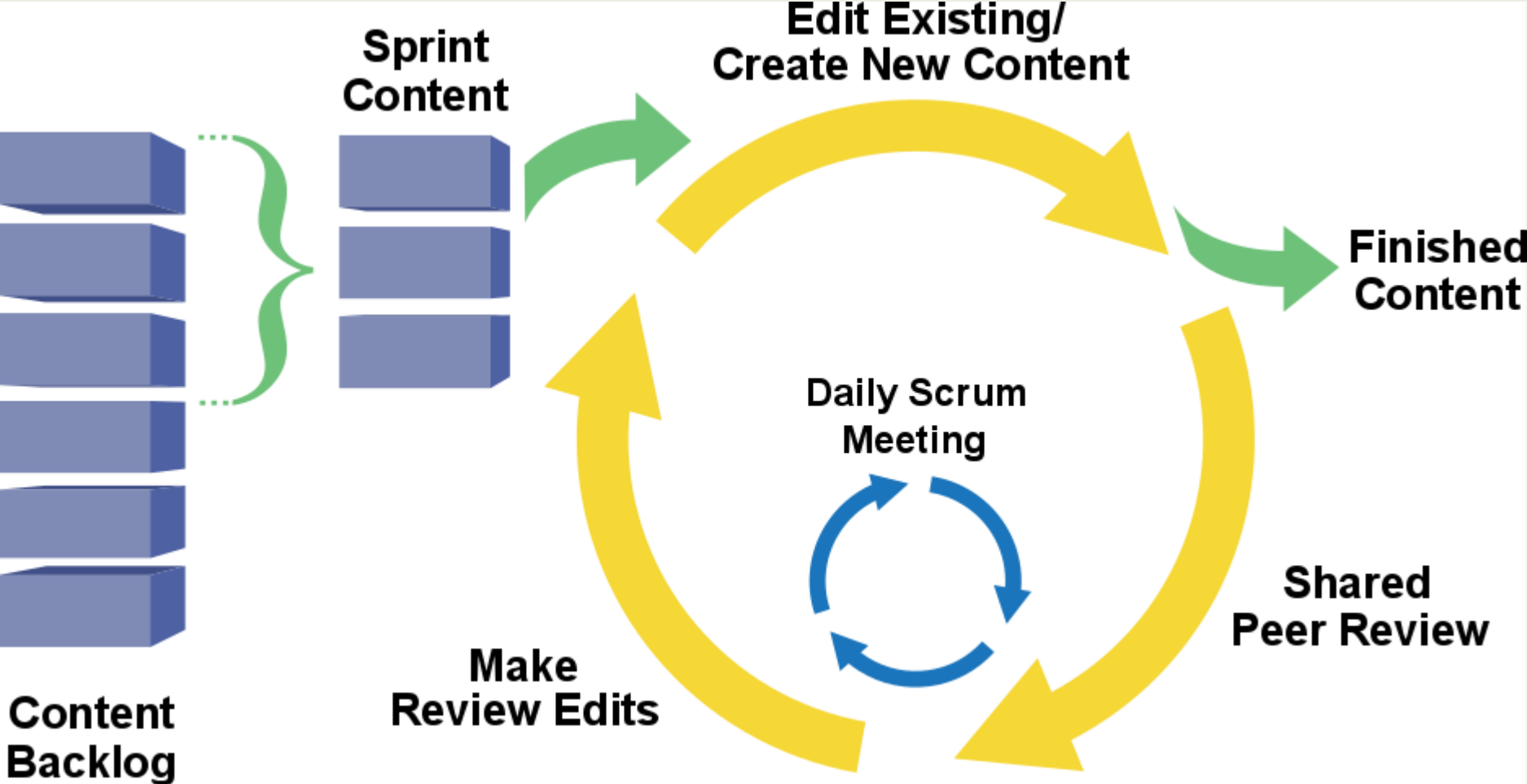
- Scrum is an agile process that allows us to focus on delivering the highest business value in the shortest time.
- It allows us to rapidly and repeatedly inspect actual working software (every two weeks to one month).
- The business sets the priorities. Teams self-organize to determine the best way to deliver the highest priority features.
- Every two weeks to a month anyone can see real working software and decide to release it as is or continue to enhance it for another sprint.

# How does an Agile process work?

Traditional Agile



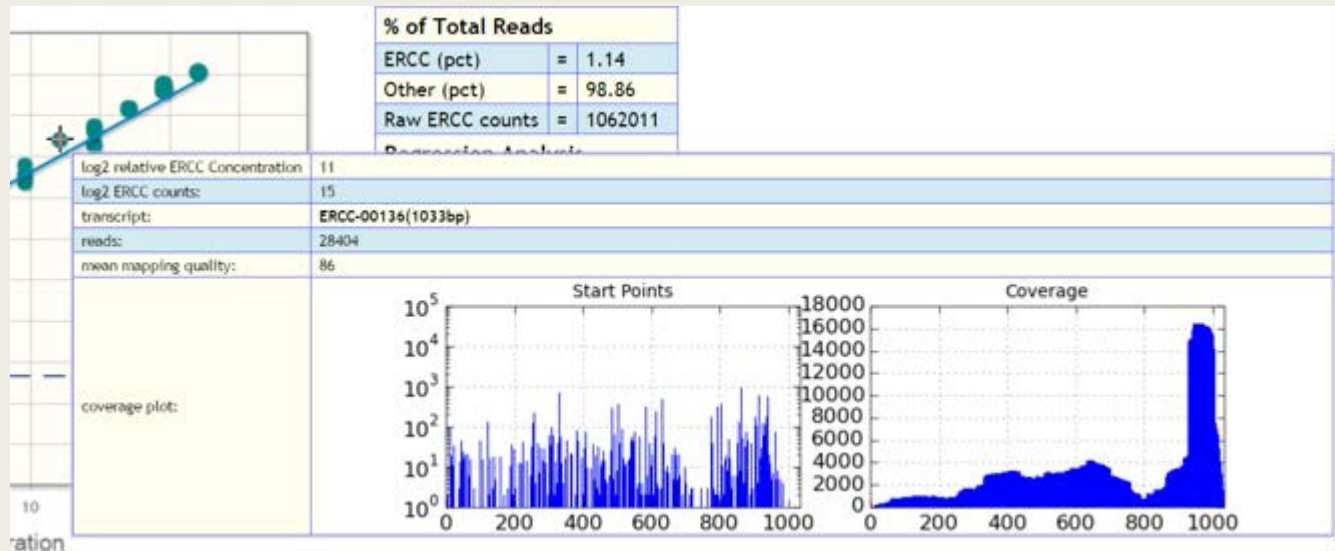
# Scrum process for software documentation



# Sprint backlog: Update Torrent Suite™ Software 5.2 Plugins Help Topics

Each subsection was *intended* to show users how to use each individual plugin.

- *Some plugins were not documented.*
- *There were gaps, duplications, inconsistencies for each subsection that was included.*
- *Documentation was difficult to follow.*
- *Users were not likely to learn what they needed to know from the Help.*
- *Time for, and resources to provide, product training was limited.*



# Agile Writing Sprints

- *Roles:*
  - Project lead (Scrum Master)
  - Content lead (Product Owner)
  - Team members
- *All team members developed content*
- *Clearly defined phases for each assignment*
  - Develop, Peer Review, Edit
- *Three hour-long sprint meetings*
  - Collaborative, interactive learning environment
  - Shared expertise, knowledge, ideas
- *Mentoring is encouraged*
  - Team members contribute various strengths



# Project lead (Scrum Master) and Content lead (Product Owner)

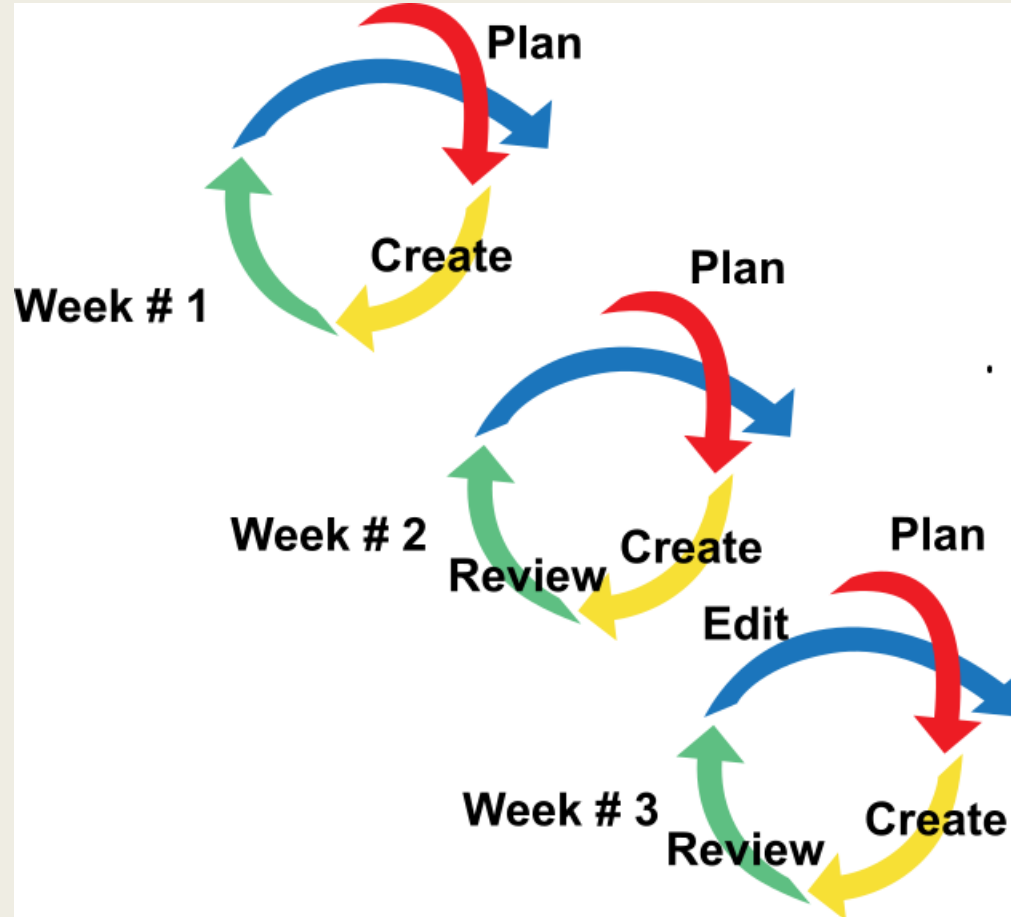
- **Project lead**

- Defines the sprints
- Determines scope of content to be covered in a sprint
- Creates and maintains the spreadsheet of topics and writers
- Tracks progress
- Redistributes work if necessary
- Schedules and runs meetings
- Determines when the sprint is done
- Publishes and sends out shared review

- **Content lead**

- Thoroughly understands the content/software being documented
- Demos/explains the software to the writers
- Organize software product trainings
- Identifies gaps in existing content (if revision)
- Develops the preliminary content architecture
- Identifies SMEs for additional info
- Is a resource for ongoing questions
- Determines when the content is complete

# Sprint Cycle activities are cumulative



Clearly defined sprints, tasks for each sprint

**Week 1: Create** content.

**Week 2: Create** (Week 2) content + **Peer Review** (Week 1) content.

**Week 3: Create** (Week 3) content + **Peer Review** (Week 2) content + **Edit** (Week 1) content.



# Modified Sprint

Included time to review legacy content and scale the learning curve

## ❑ Week 1: Review and Learn

*We reviewed the content as a group, decided on a possible structure for the content. Assignments: Further review content,*

*get familiar with software, prepare SME questions.*

*Friday: We assigned 2-4 topics for each writer to develop.*

## ❑ Week 2: Create

**Monday:** We asked a SME to join us to give us an overview of the customer-oriented tasks.

*Wednesday: Team checked in and discussed topics.*

*Friday: Topics were ready for peer review.*

## ❑ Week 3: Create and Peer Review

*New content assignments for each team member, topics were exchanged for peer edits.*

## ❑ Week 4: Create, Peer Review, Edit

Sprint	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4
1	Review and Learn			
2		Create		
3			Create	
4			Review	Create
5				Review
6				Edit

# Deliverable: Help content that was updated and ready for technical review

## Concept

### DataExport plugin

Use the DataExport plugin to export data from a sequencing run to a network drive, an external hard drive, or a removable media device, such as a USB drive. The exported data can be used to create backups, or to quickly transfer files to another system. When you configure the plugin, you select which files categories from the run are included in the export.

**Note:** Before you use the DataExport plugin, a software administrator must configure the path to the directory that is used for the export. The Destination Path to the external drive is then available in the global settings for the plugin.

## Reference (Settings to configure)

### DataExport plugin configuration

The DataExport plugin can be configured to set the destination path of the exported files, as well as specify the file types to be exported.

The configuration options for the DataExport plugin are described in the following table:

Setting	Description
Destination Path	Designates the location of the network drive, external hard drive or removable media device to which the files will be exported
Signal Processing Input	Exports DAT files
Basecalling Input	Exports WELLS files
Output Files	Exports all output files, including BAM files, reports, and analysis files
Intermediate Files	Exports files used for troubleshooting by qualified system engineers

## Task

### Review DataExport plugin results

After the sequencing run completes, review the plugin results in the report summary.

1. In the Data tab, click **Completed Runs & Reports**.
2. In the list of runs, locate the run of interest, then click the link in the Report Name column.
3. In the Summary, click **DataExport** to view the plugin summary.
4. After export is complete, the report appears in the DataExport pane. The following parameters are shown.

Parameter	Description
FILE CATEGORIES	Lists the categories for the file types that are included in the export.
DESTINATION	Is the location to which the files are exported after the plugin is run.
STATUS	Shows the status of the file transfer.

# Agile Writing Retrospective: Lessons learned

- *Start your first project with simpler material, that can be tackled in a shorter sprint cycle*
- *Project Lead and Content Lead must plan ahead and define cycles and goals before each sprint*
- *Understand the subject matter before you start the Sprints*
  - Complicated deliverables: Dedicate some time up front to ensure everyone develops some level of understanding
  - Schedule a SME to present to the team early in the process
- *Use Sprints meetings as forums for discussion – allowed more time for standup meetings*
  - Sprint meetings are a collaborative opportunity to understand the product, agree on common terms, clean up structure
- *Provide structure: Plan ahead and track assignments while staying flexible*
  - Set expectations for the Agile team: Define goals for each sprint.
  - Decide on a high-level content architect before you start the meetings.
  - Stay flexible – as writers learn more about the software, you may find organization needs to change.
  - If you need to extend the time for a stage of the cycle, continue to track where the team is in the cycle
  - Clearly define the deliverables at each stage in the cycle (Develop/Update, Review, Edit)
  - Track everything and update your tracker

# TechComm Team and Scrum Participants



## Back row:

- Pete Pavich
- **Steve Warrick**
- Rachel Saunders
- **Don Robinson**
- Charles Carlton-Smith
- **Debra Brinson**
- Michelle Parker
- Olivier Bricaud
- Eric Yin
- Ali Ozgenc
- Lisa Albright

## Front row:

- Jen Borden
- Martha Larson
- **Milind Gangal**
- Frieta Gress
- Linda Hammond
- **Kateryna Feoktistova**
- Jamie Boden
- Marty Vreeland
- **John Kokontis**

## Not pictured:

- **Brenda Gilreath**

# Questions

