Kelly Reinersman,– Sprint Retrospective

We made it! After another successful sprint, we can stretch and celebrate and look back and reflect. That’s what this is supposed to be now. What I will be doing is explaining what went well, what did not go well, what we achieved and what we need to do better. Every area of this sprint is going to be investigated and analyzed for our benefit. This will make us better as a team and a company.

Starting at the beginning of the sprint we had a plan to start with. We were able to extract the user stories from the dialogue in the meeting with the stakeholders and product owner. It made our job a lot easier once we knew what they want. The more accurate information we have the better the product can be. We can only do what we know to do. Organizing it into a spreadsheet for the Product Back log made it extremely easy to organize and share to the proper team members. This one document is the one we will all be touching and modifying daily. The product owner will have the final say on how the log gets prioritized with the knowledge he receives from the team and the stakeholders or testers, because these groups have the most up to date information throughout each sprint. Things that the whole team does not need to worry about will be handle by this role. The product owner, Christy, of our team did great work by asking what the client wanted to achieve. This puts the foundation down for the entire project. The main goal comes from this initial question. Amanda, the client, answered “We need to get our travel site up and ready in five weeks because that is when the public starts to think about vacation travel for the year.” This answer gave us the best start possible with the timeline, the goals, and the theme all in one answer. After this happened, we went into a meeting to discuss the project with Ron, the Scrum Master, and they bring him up to speed on their communications. He immediately sets up his minds organization skills by mentally tallying the different talents he is going to have to find for this project. He mentions a tester and then the developer, the Product Owner is already Christy, so she took control with her role and stated she was going to start the initial Product Backlog. This means so much to the Agile project because accountability and efficiency are key factors in a successful project.

The Scrum Master (SM), Ron, will also be assisting in this task with the input he gathers from the testers and the developers. Ensuring this log stays a priority as much as the top priority in the log will be the best practice we can continue to perfect. Ron will be mainly making a schedule for these updates made it even better and less likely to be hindered if we know what to expect. After our daily scrum meeting, led by Ron (SM), which will be just about 15-20 minutes of stand-up talk and task assignment confirmations, we will be able to organize the product log and send it out to the necessary members.\ At the end of each day, we can update the board and the end of each week we can fully delve into the log to update it. This will most likely change with the different projects about to come our way, and we will be able to get them organized and Agile ready with each passing project. After the Product back log was updated, the daily meeting happens, there was not much else to do but to watch the teams get into their assigned tasks and help out when we could. As a Scrum Master it would be vital to keep the team comfortable as well as on task with no distractions, unless emergent. Most people would call this a baby-sitting kind of situation, and it sort of it. The SM is there to make sure all communication is properly received and given to the appropriate team members through Scrum events like Sprint Planning and Sprint Retrospectives. This allows for less confusion and more open communication between the Dev teams and the Stakeholder(s) and Product Owner(s). Transparency is the key to making sure everything in the transition and in the process of planning is communicated pristinely. We do that well, but there are room for improvements. Possibly by utilizing a tool from the Scrum toolbox. For example, we could use Discord, Slack, Azure, and many more to be able to quickly update project sprint we are working on in real time and the ability to see the responses as well. After the Scrum Master completes the Sprint Schedule and applies it to the project there should be an easy routine to fall into for everyone on the teams involved. Having predictability like that makes it easier for the SM to keep the bad factors out of the project and away from the hard-working teams. Ron seems like he had it all settled by the end of this meeting. The only thing that could have gone better was Ron asking the Product Owner, Christy, and the Client, Amanda, more questions for a little more detail into what he needed to be planning.

After this initial meeting we took to public and found our focus group. As a Product Owner, Christy, was able to ask a group of people several questions about the current wants/needs that the customers in their demographic of traveling would want to see on a travel site. More specifically she asked this, “If we were to update our tools and offerings, what would you like to see?” There were three customers in this meeting and by the end of the session Christy had made them feel heard by writing it into the product log as well as prioritize it. That is a great way to show the team what they are up against and what they need to accomplish in a reasonable amount of time. These requests were then made into user stories and revised user stories to add more detail to each request. Attention to detail is essential for any Agile project and is welcomed by every team member. The more detail there is the better the outcome should be.

As the detail and user stories roll in it was the developers’ job to make sure the requests were incorporated and functional before sending it out to the testers. This would have been easier with a daily meet at the end of the day to prepare for the next day, fortunately weekly updates worked out just fine. Testers then did amazing, detailed work in order to weed out all of the bugs and broken code. Then the developers sent it back to the Scrum Master, and finally the SM sent it to the Product Owner for the Client, Amanda, to see and approve of. Every single role in an Agile Scrum team has a purpose. We do not do things willy nilly, but organized and accurate as possible. With the previous method we were not getting as far near as fast or as accurate with all the problems arising after we thought we were done. This company will one day embrace Agile to the fullest and if this project is any indication then we have it in the bag. Congratulations on making the transition a smooth one and we cannot wait to see the next project for this method that you come out with. Great work everyone!!