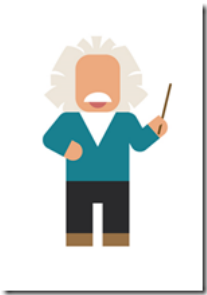


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The simple genius behind Agile software release planning

15 December 2017

Everything should be made as simple as possible but not simpler.
This axiom (popularly attributed to Einstein) embraces efficient innovation, and applies readily to many areas of technology. While we're continually developing software to make Kodak Moments feature-rich yet user-friendly, the process of getting it ready for the marketplace needed some simplification.



We had been practicing Agile at the sub-team level for many years, but realized that catching the wave of the future meant scaling this methodology to the entire organization. From sales, and marketing to operations and service, increasing our customer-focus and agility will help us respond more effectively to the market going forward.

Best practices

We developed our scaled Agile Release Planning Process by leveraging the best practices of all our Agile teams, from San Francisco-based with D2C to those in Rochester and Germany working on Retail solutions.

The process had to meet several requirements during development:

- Alignment is key to teamwork and execution, affecting everyone: SW teams, Hardware, Service, Regions, Marketing, Operations, and Leadership
- Deliver a "Plan of Record," yet allow for flexibility as priorities change (a key aspect of Agile)
- Integrate with the solutions aspect of the business

We developed our process the Agile way, e.g. performing retrospectives after each planning cycle and adjusted based on the team's feedback.

Our Release Process has several core components that all work together:

- Weekly Product Owner meeting and Product Roadmap to discuss changes in business priorities and responses – this is the core of being customer-focused and responsive to the market
- Weekly PM meetings and Dependency Tracker to monitor and manage cross-team dependencies – this facilitates coordination and execution
- Quarterly "uber backlog" and prioritization to align on top Kodak Moments priorities across businesses – aligns everyone to the highest strategic priorities of the business
- Quarterly Release Planning Ceremony to inspect alignment across all teams and deliver the Plan of Record with KM leadership
- Quarterly All-Hands meeting to share the plan

Thanks to continuous improvement, the work is never done. However, we've been running the process now for eight cycles and each one gets better.



- Last year Agile process (together with changes in our deployment practices) enabled a record-setting 4 software rollouts to our fleet.
 - This year it helped us exceed our goal of 85% deployment on schedule driving holiday sales.
- The team has consistently overdelivered despite significant strategic changes that were made as adjustments to the original Plan of Record(s).
- Most importantly, our teams are energized by our ever-improving delivery track record: "It's nice to see what's going on across the different platforms. I walked away feeling like the leadership has a solid plan for success."
- Finally we did all this while driving escaping defects down by 50%

A huge thank-you to our Kodak Moments Release Planning Team leaders (Product Owners and Program Managers)!

Team members pictured:

**Rochester:**

- Standing – Rick Angie, Ted Skomsky, Tom Pinkham, Steve Meyers, Matt Lowenstein, Mike Morba, Scott Robinson, Tracy Finnemore-Olson
- Kneeling – Dick Tuyn, Ivanka Neary, Mike Graham, Rich Chinnici, Dito Garcia, Steve Turberg, Patricia Lipari, Tammy Reed



San Francisco – James Yong, Emily Hsiao, Grace Song, David Newhoff, Christina Teng



Los Angeles – Steve Gonnella

Transformation never ends

While we've made great strides, many challenges remain. Our next step is better integration of actions to drive key performance indicators at the front end of the process as well as GTM plans at the back-end. Progress on these fronts will only increase overall organizational performance. And that's the simple truth.

Dito



By Dito Garcia, Director Retail Software Engineering, Kodak Moments

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