The Continuing Adventures of Yahoo's Agile Transformation
Introduction
Yahoo!

Yahoo’s Agile Story

10 Lessons Learned, Applied

Recommendations

Today & Tomorrow

Takeaways
Yahoo!
750 million unique visitors worldwide.

Top 3 in 20 categories globally.

180 million monthly unique visitors in the U.S.

Top 3 in 24 categories in the U.S.

Twice as many top three properties as the nearest competitor.

#1 in 11 categories globally.

#1 in 13 categories in the U.S.

#1 personal homepage globally with 51.7 million unique visitors.

371.6 million unique visitors to Yahoo! homepages worldwide.

More than 13 million variations of the homepage every day.

258 million unique visitors to the Yahoo! News Network.

#1 globally in News, Finance, Sports, and more.

(comScore Media Metrix, Worldwide, October 2011)
Scale

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Distributed
Excellence:
We are committed to winning with integrity. We know leadership is hard won and should never be taken for granted. We aspire to flawless execution and don’t take shortcuts on quality. We seek the best talent and promote its development. We are flexible and learn from our mistakes.

Teamwork:
We treat one another with respect and communicate openly. We foster collaboration while maintaining individual accountability. We encourage the best ideas to surface from anywhere within the organization. We appreciate the value of multiple perspectives and diverse expertise.

Innovation:
We thrive on creativity and ingenuity. We seek the innovations and ideas that can change the world. We anticipate market trends and move quickly to embrace them. We are not afraid to take informed, responsible risk.

Community:
We share an infectious sense of mission to make an impact on society and empower consumers in ways never before possible. We are committed to serving both the internet community and our own communities.

Customer Fixation:
We respect our customers above all else and never forget that they come to us by choice. We shape a personal responsibility to maintain our customer’s loyalty and trust. We listen and respond to our customers and seek to exceed their expectations.

Fun:
We believe humor is essential to success. We applaud irreverence and don’t take ourselves too seriously. We celebrate achievement. We yodel.
In the Beginning...

Some grass-roots efforts to experiment with Agile practices began to emerge within the company and in November of 2004, Tobias Mayer, an engineer on an Agile team invited Jeff Sutherland, one of the inventors of Scrum, to speak at Yahoo!. Pete Deemer, the VP of Product Development attended Jeff’s talk and was very enthusiastic about what he heard. He asked Jeff to return and speak to the senior executive team at an offsite. This talk was very well received, and sparked a lively internal discussion about how Yahoo! should embrace Agile development methods. The debate was whether to initiate a large-scale, top-down “forced adoption”, or to try to cultivate adoption from the ground-up in a grassroots fashion. The decision was made to proceed with the latter.

From Gabrielle Benefield’s “Rolling out Agile in a Large Enterprise”
the ebb and flow
The board makes readily visible the variety and amount of work the team is doing and shows where this work is in the software pipeline. **Now we start measuring...**
Yet Another Pilot
- Sponsorship
- Funding
- Socializing

Q1 2011
• Commitment
• Communication
• Charter Community
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Yahoo! Homepage
• Executive Training
• Team Workshops
• Seeding Teams

Q3 2011
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- Visits
- Growing
- Community

Q4 2011
• Adoption Steady State
• Local Communities
• Outside Product

Q1 2012
For this section we compared the 10 Lessons Learned from Gabrielle Benefield’s “Rolling out Agile in a Large Enterprise” with what we are doing now 4 years later.

Implement Solid Engineering Practices
Align with Management
Design:
Find Common Ground
Play together
Align with Project Management
Scrum isn’t a Silver bullet

Coach. Don’t Dictate.
Privacy is Important
Don’t Expect Everybody to Like It
Fund the Coaching Team Adequately
Coach Deep, Not Broad
The Organization Must Also Adapt
Seek Expert Help
Think Globally, Act Locally
Scale Virtually

exercise
self service
Focus on Principles
Where Yahoo is today...
...and where we are going tomorrow
Organizational Transformation
Experiment with Kanban
Lean Everything
Takeaways

(If I knew then, what I know now)
Piz Allow Me To Grow...
1. Stand-ups
2. Retrospectives
3. Time boxes
1. Automation
2. Visibility
3. Cadence
Style of Play

- **Explore**
  ask questions, experiment, think “what if...?”

- **Discover**
  come up with original ideas, “ah-ha” moments that are powerful intrinsic motivators.

- **Immerse**
  enter a state known as “flow,” which is linked with creativity.

- **Imagine**
  transport themselves to different worlds, developing empathy.

- **Connect**
  reorganize knowledge from different experiences into a new understanding of the world.
1. Transparency
2. Trust
3. Flow
You have to take risks. You have to venture beyond your comfort zone. If something does not work the first time, you have to try again. If one thing does not work, you have to try something else. You have to let them feel pain. You have to keep it fun. And you have to keep giving energy and love, because falling down hurts, but learning to run is freedom.
Questions?
To learn more contact keithn@yahoo-inc.com