

When the VP is a Scrum Master, You Hit the Ground Running

In early 2010, Unisys Cloud Engineering was a newly crafted organization of senior engineers, architects, and managers with decades of waterfall successes. The new VP was chartered with implementing agile methods; he was also a practicing scrum master. Nine months later, we were amazed to realize we had completed over 100 sprints for 20 products, across four geographies, including Bangalore. While every organization's scrum adoption story is unique, ours offers insights into:

- Whole organization scrum adoption
- Distributed scrum from the very start
- Scrum for atypical software projects.

In our paper, we will expand on these key insights and provide detailed examples from our experience:

- Instead of training small teams or engineers, we trained the entire management team in one week as Scrum Masters and Product Owners, which sped adoption and acceptance of scrum throughout the organization
- Using distributed scrum, and the tools that make it possible, from the start of implementation benefits everyone because of increased visibility of all scrum artifacts
- Bypassing the conventional wisdom of making small, incremental changes and instead introducing wholesale change (new organization, new product focus, new teams) using the scrum framework forces teams to leave the past behind and adapt quickly.
- The success of scrum onshore inspired and expedited the Bangalore development teams' move from RUUP to scrum for full integration within the organization.
- Since our teams produce products that are a mix of software, tools, and infrastructure, we applied "pure" scrum where possible and then adapted the framework to our particular needs while continuing to deepen our understanding and adoption of the framework.

We'll also provide answers to these and other thorny questions:

- What do scrum masters and directors of improv theatre have in common?
- How do you do scrum when your development is not test-driven? If you don't even have tests? Or QA engineers?
- What happens when the VP who initiated scrum rearranges his schedule for six weeks to attend every sprint demo?
- How do you get former team leads and line managers to stop telling people what to do?
- How can you get engineers to stop expecting to be told what to do and start managing themselves?
- Why does story grooming remain our biggest challenge?

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