



Product Development: From Conception to Execution

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Agenda

- Getting Started
- What is Agile?
- Using Agile Practices
- When Will We Be Done?
- Metrics
- Advantages for the Product Owner
- Challenges for the Product Owner
- Closing Thoughts

Getting Started

Business Value Must Be Clearly Defined

- Our business challenge: The Commercial Package Product (CPP) is not up-to-date and has limited automation
- Project Business Value Statement:
 - Investment in automation increases efficiency measured by
 - DWP per FTE
 - Policy Count per FTE
 - Speed to Market
 - Quality
 - Product updates improve competitiveness and profitability
 - Internal users benefit from automation and process updates

Getting Started

The Vision provides common understanding

- Why are we doing this?
- How are we doing this?
- Who will benefit?
- Example: Grange CPP Project Vision

Support premium growth by receiving and processing information with as little human intervention as possible so that:

- Underwriters can focus on risk selection and agency management
- Technicians can focus on customer service and underwriter support
- Agents can obtain new and renewal quotes quickly
- Agents can process policy amendments easily

What is Agile?



What is Agile?

Manifesto for Agile Software Development

Individuals and interactions over *processes and tools*

Communication over process NOT communication without process

Working software over *comprehensive documentation*

Working software is more important than excessive documentation

NOT there is no need for documentation

Customer collaboration over *contract negotiation*

Customers working with developers to address a business need

NOT developers satisfying a contractual obligation

Responding to change over *following a plan*

Adapting to change NOT failing to plan

While there is value in the items on the right, we value the items on the left more.
- Agile Manifesto 2001

What is Agile?

Product Owner	Lead business representative and decision maker
Project Manager	Leads the development team and coordinates with external team resources; manages overall schedule and budget
Iteration manager	Supports a development team to remove obstacles and provide coaching
Development Team	Dedicated group of business analysts, IT developers, and quality assurance experts
Backlog	Prioritized list of features (project scope)
Iteration	Time box for selected work to be completed (often 2-3 weeks)
Stand ups	15 minute daily update for Development Team and Product Owner
Stories	Represent each feature in the backlog
Bugs	Defects identified during development

Utilizing Agile Practices

Who is the Product Owner?

- An *individual* who defines, prioritizes, and approves the features that are included in the product backlog
- May or may not be the Product Manager
- Responsible for representing the business stakeholders:
 - Pricing
 - Product
 - Customer Service
 - Underwriting
 - External customers
- Business and product knowledge and communication skills are critical

Utilizing Agile Practices

Product Owner Commitment

- Ideally, the project is the top or only objective for the Product Owner
- Create the product backlog
- Must be available for collaboration and inspection
 - Ideal is to co-locate with the development team
- On-going backlog grooming
 - Adjust priority
 - Remove features if no longer important
 - Add features that become important (may include bugs)
 - Define expected outcome for each feature

Utilizing Agile Practices

Building the Product Backlog - visualizing helps prioritize and communicate



Utilizing Agile Practices

Balance complexity with expectations

- Drives prioritization of product features or scope
- Manage customer & stakeholder expectations
- Leverage experience from other product development—how does your project compare?

	Product A	Product B	Product C
Rating Steps	50	60	300
Lines of Business	2	1	6

Utilizing Agile Practices

Incremental Delivery of Value

Continue to build remaining features

In order of importance:

- Adjust to changing market conditions
- Adjust to changing customer needs
- Adjust to changing project resources

Lower Priority, Less Complex, or New Features

Feature D Feature E New Feature Feature F Feature G

Build most important and more complex features as highest priority:

- Reduces schedule risk
- Implement completed features if priority changes

Most Important or Complex Features

Important Feature C Complex Feature K

Build foundational features first;
Release if any immediate business value may be realized

Feature A Feature B

When Will We Be Done?

How do agile projects build timelines?





When Will We Be Done?

Traditional

Identified Opportunity

Plan & Define

Design

Develop

Test

Deploy

Value Realization

Most value not realized until entire product is delivered

Agile

Identified Opportunity

Plan & Define
Design
Develop
Test
Deploy

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Value Realization

Value is added with each subsequent iteration

When Will We Be Done?

How are agile project timelines developed?

- Development team estimates each feature using a relative size method
- Translate estimates into a point scale
- Track completed work over several time box iterations
- Based upon tracked work, forecast what may be completed in each future iteration
- Utilize appropriate project metrics to track progress

Project Metrics

Metric Horizon

> 12 Months

6+ Months

3-5 Months

2 Weeks



Level	Metric	Description
Program	Gantt	Provides highest level view of sequence and milestones for entire program
Product	Burnup	Progress against backlog over time for product backlog
Release	Burndown	Progress against backlog over a timebox for more detailed progress tracking (+ impact of non-planned work)
Team	Iteration Report	Team's progress against iteration commitments

Agile Advantages to the Product Owner

How do agile practices help the Product Owner?

- Active involvement in day-to-day effort
- Understand product design impacts
- Adjust for new information
- Define features “just in time”
- Leverage user feedback
 - Minimize over-engineering – Good Enough For Now
 - Identify roadblocks or training needs
- Release completed features incrementally
- Transparency - cannot hide missing deliverables
- Lessons learned are applied within the project

Agile Challenges for the Product Owner

How do Agile practices challenge the Product Owner?

- Level of involvement may be uncomfortable or more than desired
- Being the business voice and the decision maker for project details may be a new experience
- Adjusting to an open work environment
- Learning the development team language
- Overcoming concerns with “Good Enough For Now” versus “perfection”



Closing Thoughts

- Don't underestimate the level of Product Owner involvement
- Adoption of agile practices must have executive support
- Embrace the visibility and transparency
- Empower team to determine how best to complete each feature
- Leverage the Project Manager
 - Incorporating non-agile teams and work
 - Build the project schedule including development and supporting work
- Retain an experienced agile coach to start
- Be willing to treat iterations as small experiments

Closing Thoughts

