



DASA

DEVOPS AGILE
SKILLS ASSOCIATION

IMPROVING TIME TO MARKET FOR DIGITAL PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

By
Irfan Sharif

To promote the mission of advancing the Agile and DevOps ways of working for building and operating software and technology-powered digital products and businesses. Also, to support the advancement and help organizations thrive in the current digital age, the DevOps Agile Skills Association (DASA) has established an enterprise leadership forum (ELF).

The ELF is a community of business and technology leaders promoting agile and DevOps working among organizational leaders. DASA ELF regularly conducts live online conversations with experts to provide leaders with conceptual and concrete advice to help them drive business and organizational success through agile & DevOps ways of working.

On June 3, 2022, DASA conducted the "Improving the time to market of digital products and services" online ELF event. Irfan Shariff, DASA Research Director, facilitated the event, and the following experts participated.

- Sumeet Ahuja, VP - Product at Circle: Sumeet's 20+ years of experience in product management spans all aspects of product management and across multiple industries - fintech (PayPal), telecommunications, and semiconductors. He currently leads the global product strategy at Circle, a blockchain / Web 3.0 company.
- Matt Young, Chief Executive Officer at UserVoice: Matt combines his engineering background with empathy for the customer. He is the CEO of User Voice. UserVoice provides products to enable digital product teams to stay connected with their customers. His journey from being an engineering leader to the CEO of User Voice began when he observed that product teams tend to

focus more on technology and less on understanding customer needs and pain points. He brings a deep understanding of the delivery and product discovery processes. To paraphrase him: a prerequisite for an efficient DevOps process is ensuring you know to build the right product.

- Mehdi Alaoui, Managing Consultant at Capgemini Invent: Mehdi is a managing consultant with Capgemini and helps large organizations transition from waterfall to agile development. His transformation work involves helping organizations evolve roles and processes to become product-centric agile organizations.
- Morgan Pras, Managing Consultant in Strategy and Transformation at Capgemini Invent: Morgan comes from the business technology practice within Capgemini. She specializes in digital transformation in finance and public services industries and supports companies in France and Europe in their agile and digital transformation initiatives.

DASA thanks Sumeet, Matt, Mehdi, and Morgan for sharing their wise insights and practical guidance on the various factors that come into play in improving the time to market digital products and services.

The conversation covered the following three themes:

- While the speed of delivery is critical to the success of digital products and services, it is only one part of the equation. Speed of discovery is the other part. Product discovery - iteratively discovering the right product to build and delivery speed go hand in hand.

- Organizations must deliver innovative digital products and services- that is the imperative of the digital age. However, unlike the previous technological ages, such as manufacturing, where product innovation was confined mainly to R&D departments, product innovation in the digital age happens differently. It happens as part of the product discovery and delivery process and as part of a larger ecosystem.
- Lastly, what are the shifts in mindset and culture that have to happen for organizations to deliver innovative products that drive user and business outcomes consistently? And what are some of the tools organizational leaders can use to achieve the required behavioral and cultural shifts?

Here is the executive summary of the conversation about improving the time to market of digital products and services and the takeaways for organizational leaders to apply within their context to accelerate the time to market of their organizations' digital products and services

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Across all industries, increasing customer expectations and rapid digital product innovation are increasing the pressure on organizational leaders to improve the time to market their digital products and services. But improving time to market is easier said than done. It requires a holistic approach that combines product discovery - iteratively discovering the right product to build - and delivery speed go hand in hand.

To establish a virtuous circle of product discovery and delivery capable of consistently delivering innovative digital products that delight customers and drive business outcomes, leaders need to build a corporate ethos and culture centered around learning. A learning culture embodied in phrases such as fail fast and fail forward should inform all product development life cycle aspects. Leaders and organizations can build the right product that meets customer needs by learning to make iterations without wasting upfront investments.

Here is an essential takeaway for leaders, especially in existing enterprises with legacy ways of working and technologies. Organizations must invest in building Agile, DevOps, and supporting technological capabilities to build products based on validated customer needs rather than presumed customer requirements. Organizations can build the right products based on experimentation and learning by first building Agile and DevOps development and delivery capabilities. The investments in building these capabilities will reduce costs by minimizing the risk of building the wrong products and enabling innovation to happen at the speed and scale demanded by the digital age.

Innovation in the digital age is primarily a team sport and not the sole preserve of a few gifted individuals. Further, teams within and across organizations collaborate to build and assemble innovative digital products and services.

Key messages for leaders on accelerating innovation:

- Leverage the power of the ecosystem - partners, vendors, competitors, open-source - to co-create products
- Focus your innovation efforts on product aspects that make a difference to your customers while utilizing readily available services (libraries, APIs) to build the non-differentiating product components.

Organizational culture is the secret sauce that makes all these things happen - discovery, delivery, learning, collaboration, and innovation. Here is the gist of the leadership guidance on shifting the culture and mindsets to enable organizations to thrive in the digital age.

- A customer-centric and technologically welcoming learning culture has to permeate the entire organization.
- OKR (objectives and key results) is a powerful and practical tool to drive organizational culture and business alignment.

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