Trials and Tribulations of Finding the Right Agile Framework

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The Challenge

Ever had to convince a group of sys admins to adopt Agile?

In the middle of a merger?

While brand-new to their organization?
Background

an independent, non-profit multimedia organization that was founded on a mission to create a more informed public.

an NPR division dedicated to providing digital experiences, technology and support for editorial, research, programming and production teams as well as our listeners.

an NPR division dedicated to providing Member Stations with digital programming, tools, services, and support.
Getting Started: Understanding the Workload
“We all sit in the same room/slack channel, so we don’t need a whole process. We can just talk about stuff and it eventually gets done.”

Sys Admin Lead
“I never know whether I can work on a project or if I’m going to be interrupted to fix something or help someone.”

Senior Sys Admin
Getting Started: Different Perspectives

Developer: “I just wait till I see Tyler in the hallway and then I ask him for help with my devbox. He gets annoyed but he usually does it pretty fast.”

Audio Archivist: “Oh, we email Vick (the remote sys admin) directly for help with audio extraction since he set up a tool for us and he’s the only one who knows how it works.”
Getting Started: New Challenges

262 Member Stations

10+ new products and services
# First Iteration

## Open
1. DIO-12411 Migration Issue 2
2. DIO-12447 Migration Task 6
3. DIO-12449 Migration Issue 6
4. DIO-12450 Support Request 8
5. DIO-12413 Planned Work 2
6. DIO-12477 Support Request 3
7. DIO-12473 Migration Task 5
8. DIO-12419 Random Request 4
9. DIO-12451 Random Request 6
10. DIO-12478 Support Request 4
11. DIO-12471 Migration Task 3

## Blocked
1. DIO-12429 Migration Issue 1
2. DIO-12413 Migration Issue 4
3. DIO-12424 Planned Work 3
4. DIO-12472 Migration Task 4

## In Progress
1. DIO-12472 Migration Issue 3
2. DIO-12432 Planned Work 1
3. DIO-12418 Random Request 3
4. DIO-12476 Support Request 1
5. DIO-12416 Random Request 1
6. DIO-12430 Random Request 5
7. DIO-12476 Migration Task 2
8. DIO-12476 Support Request 2
9. DIO-12479 Support Request 5
10. DIO-12446 Migration Issue 5
11. DIO-12449 Random Request 2
12. DIO-12460 Migration Task 1

## Done
1. DIO-12446 Migration Issue 6
2. DIO-12449 Random Request 3
3. DIO-12460 Migration Task 1
A Little More Structure

- Example Migration Epic (6 issues)
  - DIG-12411: Migration Issue 2
  - DIG-12409: Migration Issue 1
  - DIG-12412: Migration Issue 3

- Planned Migration Work (6 issues)
  - DIG-12474: Migration Task 6
  - DIG-12472: Migration Task 4
  - DIG-12470: Migration Task 2

- Issues without epics (16 issues)
  - DIG-12420: Random Request 6
  - DIG-12423: Planned Work 2
Adding Kanban and Service Desk

- Single point of entry for all unplanned work
- Allowed us to collect basic information
- Users could also track the status of their requests
Advantages and Benefits

Scrum - planned project work aligned with the division’s existing sprint cycle

Kanban - unplanned work triaged by a single sys admin
What We Learned

● Sometimes dealing with overwhelming instead of incremental change is unavoidable. Even then, it’s faster to go slow.

● Allies are essential. If you don’t have allies, it’s worth trying to understand why and either change your approach or see if you can change their minds.

● Scrum is great for product teams, but it couldn’t handle our interrupt-based work. Kanban is great for service desk and interrupt-based work, but couldn’t handle our longer or more complex projects. We needed both.

● Keep trying things!
Questions?

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