Can Your Enterprise Survive the Digital Business Era

Every Business is a Software Business

While waterfall techniques and manual spreadsheet management have been effective in the past, the disruptive state of business is forcing companies of all sizes to consider more accelerated methodologies. None of these ideas are new to the business world, though. The real challenge is determining how—and, more importantly, when—to make essential process changes.

The new reality is that every company relies on software—both to streamline internal operations and to improve customer experiences. However, the rate of software updates is quickly outpacing the traditional means of release management that large enterprises have in place.

There are plenty of resources available to explain how to implement enterprise release management on a more technical level. From a higher-level business perspective, though, it's time to answer the question that could make the difference between staying ahead of competition for years to come or falling far behind the curve as more innovative companies take charge and disrupt you—why change release management now?
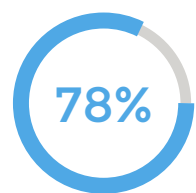
Highlights

- The effects of disruptive competitors may seem small now, but they will quickly grow out of hand if traditional means of managing software releases persist.

- Implementing enterprise release management technology can take existing systems and enable them to support the adaptive environment that more accelerated methodologies are creating in Fortune 500 companies.

- To support daily or even hourly release schedules, Plutora is capable of maintaining the integrity of the software without compromising speed of production.

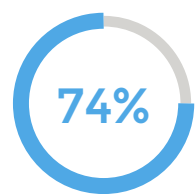# The Value and Importance of Accelerated Business Performance

Seeing the value of accelerated business performance might be a challenge for Fortune 500 companies that have built a strong foundation of well-performing cash cows. The effects of disruptive competitors may seem small now, but they will quickly grow out of hand if traditional means of managing software releases persist.

VMware recently released a study in conjunction with Forrester Consulting to examine what IT decision makers feel are the driving forces of increased software demands. Some of the key results included:
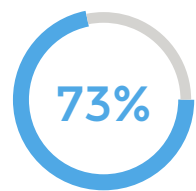
78% of respondents cited a need for improved operational efficiency as a key driver of accelerated IT projects. Companies must respond to customer needs more quickly and accelerated business performance makes it possible.

74% of respondents claimed that data protection and security is still a top priority. However, as release rates increase exponentially, it becomes increasingly difficult to maintain the integrity of the software. This finding highlights the importance of implementing accelerated business processes properly to maintain a stable infrastructure.

73% of IT decision makers said that the need to improve the customer experience ranked highly as a driver of accelerated business performance. It may not seem like it today, but the longer companies wait to adapt to today's rapidly-evolving software-centric business world, the easier it will be for start-ups to displace them in the market. The concept of brand loyalty is waning and customers will have no qualms about switching to new vendors if companies aren't offering the latest features.

Even if decision makers see these research findings as convincing reasons to accelerate business performance, there is still the possibility that updating processes gets pushed off for another couple of years. However, the business world has reached a crucial inflection point that requires immediate action from decision makers before more agile players pass them by.

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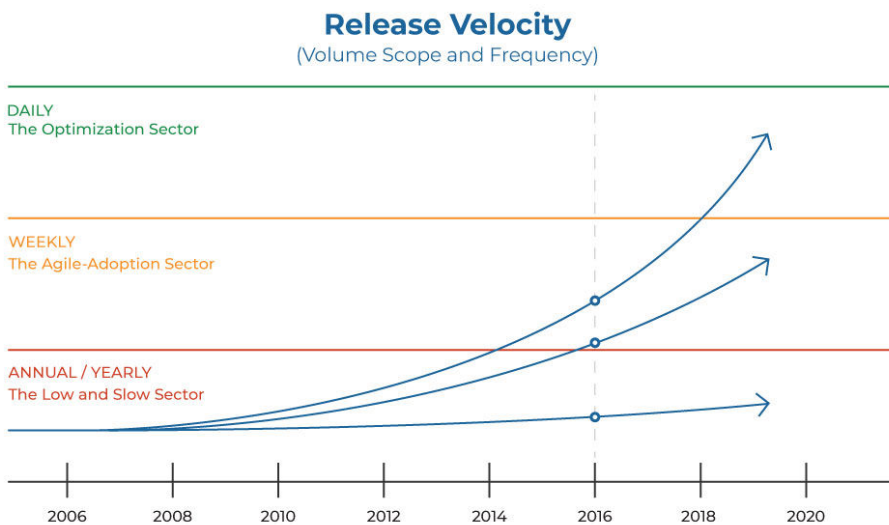
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Why Now Is the Time to Accelerate Delivery with Enterprise Release Management

The rate of digital disruption is victimizing Fortune 500 companies in a way that has led to 52% of members of the list from 2000 to disappear due to mergers, acquisitions or bankruptcy. No Fortune 500 company wants to become the next Kodak, which was ranked 153rd on the list in 2005 until the age of smartphones washed over it.

Recent research from Plutora has discovered that the year 2014 introduced an inflection point that marked an exponential increase in the volume of software changes. Now, in 2016, companies must choose whether they will adapt or continue to fall behind the competition at that exponential rate.

Release Velocity
(Volume Scope and Frequency)

DAILY
The Optimization Sector

WEEKLY
The Agile-Adoption Sector

ANNUAL / YEARLY
The Low and Slow Sector

2006   2008   2010   2012   2014   2016   2018   2020

This graph extracted from Plutora research highlights why now is the crucial time to implement enterprise release management. When assessing a company's status in terms of innovation and ability to adapt to digital disruption, it's important to determine which of the three sectors characterizes the business.

ANNUAL/YEARLY
The Low & Slow Sector

This is the riskiest zone to be in with regards to accelerated deliveries. The red sector indicates that companies have maintained the status quo in the wake of digital disruption. In 2016, the effects still seem manageable. However, even in the next two years release demands will increase exponentially to the point that manual spreadsheet management and waterfall strategies with annual release cycles will crumble.

WEEKLY
The Agile-Adoption Sector

This sector indicates that companies have embraced accelerated methodologies such as Agile and Disciplined DevOps. In 2016, it is likely that these companies are keeping pace with the volume of change and moving faster than the competition. However, even weekly releases won't suffice as the volume, scope and frequency of change continues to increase exponentially.

DAILY
The Optimization Sector

Enterprises that have reached the green sector of the graph in 2016 are innovating with the likes of behemoths such as Facebook. Not only have accelerated methodologies taken hold, but enterprise release management has also been implemented to maintain software release quality while supporting stability. These companies can scale to meet the exponentially increasing release demands for years to come.

News Corp – What One Fortune 500 Company Has Done to Evolve

When digital disruption thought leaders discuss examples of companies that exemplify the green sector of the Plutora graph, startups are the common choice. For example, the classic story is of Uber's ability to quickly redefine the transportation business. What was once dominated by an antiquated taxi system became an industry led by Uber and its digital disruption model.

However, start-ups aren't the only companies that have been able to evolve in the face of digital disruption. Despite the increasing failure of Fortune 500 media companies to adapt, News Corp has been able to maintain its position as a global powerhouse with Dow Jones, The Wall Street Journal, Fox News, The New York Post and more all under its umbrella.

According to Mark Drasutis, Head of Innovation at News Corp, there are two keys to keeping up with digital disruption. One is flocking—the ability to ensure internal teams (in IT and beyond) are constantly adapting to change and can steer the company in the right direction to counter disruption.

The other key is an insatiable desire to meet consumer needs. When it comes to software releases, customer experience is everything whether it's a new feature or customer outcome, companies must ensure they stay on top of the competition when it comes to delivering high-quality experiences.

However, Drasutis explains that the internal structures must be in place to support such an adaptive and innovative culture:

In order to be innovative, teams also need to be self-organizing, and have the capacity to manage resources in order to assemble, adapt or disband. At the same time, you need to create strategies, structures and systems which are 'plastic' and can respond to change.

The manual spreadsheets that so many companies use to manage software releases today have no chance of keeping pace with software release volume, scope or frequency.

Instead, implementing enterprise release management technology can take existing systems and enable them to support the adaptive environment that more accelerated methodologies are creating in Fortune 500 companies.

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"Innovate or Die" Is a Common Start-Up Mentality—But It Works for Fortune 500s, Too

Even if IT decision makers and business leaders understand the value of accelerated processes and enterprise release management solutions, the challenge is still to convince executive boards to take on vast process changes. This can be a challenge, but there's never been a better answer to the common "why now" question that executives ask.

Maintaining annual software releases and waterfall methodology to support cash cows will keep driving revenue; but rest assured that more agile companies with the "innovate or die" mentality are coming—and 2016 is a turning point that could enable them to overtake acceleration laggards.

Executives can no longer push acceleration and enterprise release management off. By 2018, the volume, scope and frequency of software release demands will become so great that no amount of resources will allow waterfall/spreadsheet processes to keep up with market innovation. If a company is going to adapt to digital disruption, now is the time.

Implementing the Plutora DevOps platform enables companies to support the Bimodal IT reality, keeping legacy systems updated while more modern, agile software releases can be executed as quickly as necessary. To support daily or even hourly release schedules, Plutora's Release Management, Environment Management and Deployment Management modules are capable of maintaining the integrity of the software without compromising speed of production.

Even if you still rely on an underlying infrastructure of legacy systems, Plutora can help you meet digital disruption demands. If you want to learn more about the Plutora platform and how it can facilitate the urgent need for release management change, contact us today for a free demo.

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About Plutora

Plutora, the market leader of continuous delivery management solutions for enterprise IT, ensures organizational alignment of software development with business strategy. Plutora improves the speed and quality of application delivery by correlating data from existing tool-chains, coordinating delivery across diverse ecosystem of development methodologies and hybrid test environments, and incorporates test metrics gathered at every step of the delivery pipeline. The platform provides visibility and a system of insights into the entire value stream, guiding continuous improvement efforts through the measured outcomes of each effort.

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