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## Overview

Change is a constant within the development environment of one of the largest Internet networks today. Three years ago, CNET began to research alternative development practices in an effort to improve business and engineering collaboration and time-to-market, while reducing the time spent on requirements documentation and change control. After reading books on the Agile Development Methodology and having some project managers get certified as Scrum Masters, CNET was ready to move forward with implementing Agile.

## Challenges

When CNET first implemented Agile practices, they tracked their various development projects using spreadsheets. However, as the team grew and more projects were added, the 20-plus spreadsheets used to manage development projects across the organization became unwieldy and complex. Additionally, project managers were the only ones who updated the various spreadsheets on a painstakingly manual basis, a process that wasn't scalable. The many spreadsheets also did not provide an overarching view of development across the enterprise. With no way to tell how the development organization as a whole was working and little visibility on burn down and tasks, CNET had a difficult time prioritizing work across the business unit.

Bill Leech, Senior Manager of Project Services, explained, "We knew we needed to extend our Agile development practices, but found ourselves stuck because we needed a project manager for every project. We absolutely couldn't justify the additional headcount in our budget."

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## Looking for an Agile Solution

Once the CNET team began to look at Agile tools, they quickly narrowed the review down to two providers and signed up for each company's trial version to evaluate the applications. Simplicity and ease-of-use were two of CNET's primary requirements as they wanted to rollout an Agile solution quickly. They found that Rally was overwhelmingly simple and intuitive, especially as compared to the other tool provider.

Bill noted, "One of our criteria was a tool that was flexible enough to support Agile the way our organization had implemented it. The Rally solution let us use our own hybrid mix of Agile, Scrum and XP processes without forcing us to change anything. We also knew that Rally's intuitive application would give us a shorter learning curve and speed up the rollout process."

## Company and Industry

- Industry: CNET is #1 in reaching technology news audiences online in the world.  
*Source: comScore Worldwide, 06/08*

## Development Environment

- Two week iterations, with periodic releases
- JSP code base, HTML markup, CSS, and JavaScript

## Challenges

- Twenty plus spreadsheets unwieldy to manage and required that each project have its own project manager
- No overview of the development efforts across the organization

## Solution

- Implemented Rally's Agile lifecycle management solutions, providing a single, enterprise-wide overview of all development projects across the organization

## Results

- Almost two times faster time-to-market as compared to industry average
- Team productivity 10% higher than industry average

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## Implementing Rally

Today, Rally is used daily across the business unit and other business units are exploring its value. During daily standup meetings, Rally's iteration status screen is used to show the status of the sprint. Iteration and release planning is conducted using the drag-and-drop functionality within Rally's planning dashboards. The workload for the development team is balanced through the team status dashboard, and the development team is adept at using the task state within Rally to identify and resolve major issues. Product owners and project managers use the release status dashboard to look at how an entire release is progressing. CNET's iterations usually last two weeks, with releases varying in frequency depending on the project.

"You can actually hide a lot of issues in a plan-based schedule which you simply can't do if you are using Agile and Rally. With Rally, we now have really good visibility on our engineering efforts, so it's easy to see where we stand at any point in time. Rally gives us real-time insights on what resources are being used for particular projects," says Bill. He goes on to explain, "One of the biggest benefits of using Rally is that it hasn't required us to change our Agile practices. Rally provides complete flexibility and provides a real, daily account of how the organization is progressing towards our goals."

Bill says, "I was impressed by how easily I could take a nine-month project and pull out the data I needed. In just a few hours, I can recap a whole project of over 10,000 hours of work. Rally provides the data to provide management with daily updates on where every project is in accordance to the deliverables. Also, the use of the project hierarchy in Rally, the development organization is completely aligned with the business."

## About Rally

Rally is the leader in Agile application lifecycle management (ALM) dedicated to making leaner development organizations that respond faster to changing customer needs. According to a study by QSM Associates, teams that rely on Rally's Agile lifecycle management products and services are 50% faster to market and 25% more productive than industry averages. Rally's products were honored with four consecutive Jolt Awards (the software industry's equivalent of the Oscar® award) in 2006, 2007, 2008 and 2009. The company's end-to-end solutions for Agile development also include Agile University, the largest source for Agile training, and Agile Commons, the largest collaborative Web 2.0 community dedicated to advancing software agility.



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