



Now in its eleventh year of operations, LAN International is a software development company that provides revolutionary revenue management solutions to broadcast radio and TV entities under the brand VIERO®. The company currently serves more than 1,100 radio stations in over 220 markets across the United States, making it one of the largest providers of such systems in the nation. LAN's state-of-the-art, 24/7 customer support spans the nation with its headquarters in Aliso Viejo, CA and offices in San Antonio, TX and Orlando, FL. LAN is a subsidiary of Clear Channel.

Overview

With constantly changing requirements as the rule, rather than the exception at LAN International, the company turned to Agile practices over three years ago in an effort to be able to better react and respond to customers' demands. After getting its teams humming along with Agile practices, the logical next step for the company was to move away from various spreadsheets to an Agile tool. Unfortunately, the tool vendor that LAN International first chose was incompatible with LAN International's business processes, particularly because the team wasn't able to seamlessly pull items from the backlog into iterations and releases. And, the development team at LAN wrestled with the tool's user interface and found it difficult to navigate and quickly find information they needed within their day-to-day activities.

In addition to having issues with its original software development tracking tool, LAN also struggled with a multitude of other tools, including one for QA, another for testing, and even hold-over spreadsheets used to track various development projects. Not only was the company spending an excessive amount of money for these silo-ed tools, but it also had no way to get a single view of the development organization. After a few months of lowered productivity, frustration and escalating spending, LAN began evaluating other Agile solution providers.

Implementing Rally

As a first step in their evaluation process, LAN began using Rally Community Edition for a small team and one project. The development team found that they preferred Rally's simple user interface and the way that Rally handled the backlog of software projects. They also found that they could use Rally to replace several of the other tools they were using, such as the one being used for quality management. Additionally, with Rally's open Web Services API, LAN would be able to integrate its defect tracking software directly into Rally. Once the team used Rally for one pilot project, they voted unanimously to move the entire development team to Rally.

In order to make implementation a bit easier, Scott Roberts, Program Manager, watched several Rally webinars, including "Getting Started with Rally and Agile" and sent links to webinars and other Agile resources such as white papers on to the development team from Rally's knowledge portal.

Scott says, "Rally has an entire library of Agile resources on their web site and I found this really useful in getting the team started with both Agile and Rally. Rally helped us quickly create internal Agile experts so teams could help one another. Now we're able to ramp up new team members quickly because Rally is the only tool they need to know."



Company and Industry

- Software development company providing revolutionary revenue management solutions to broadcast radio entities under the brand VIERO®

Development Environment

- Dispersed development teams in Florida and California
- Four-week iterations, with accompanying one-month releases

Challenges

- Project management tool in use was incompatible with company's business processes
- Silo-ed tools were expensive for the company to maintain and made it difficult to view an overview of all development efforts across the organization
- Defect tracking tool was not integrated into other tools used by the development organization

Solution

- Implemented Rally's Agile lifecycle management solutions, enabling close synchronization of company's business process and reinforcing Agile best practices
- One end-to-end software lifecycle management solution providing cost savings and complete view of development across the company
- Rally Quality Manager enabling defect tracking to be closely integrated with other development efforts

Results

- Cost savings due to the reduction of tools across the organization and the creation of higher quality software
- Release time reduced by two-thirds, from every three months to one-month releases

Scaling Software Agility®



Making Rally and Agile a Success A Second Time Around

After a bad experience with their previous tool provider, LAN's development team was a bit leery of employing another tool to solve its problems. However, the Rally user interface has proven easy for people to become accustomed to and Rally's focus on basic Agile principles has helped reinforce Agile best practices. LAN currently uses Rally Enterprise Edition, alongside Rally Quality Manager for test and defect management, for the 10 projects currently in progress in various areas of the company.

"We are often asked to do things at a moment's notice, and Agile and Rally enable us to better respond to changing priorities based on customer requirements," says Scott.

Prior to implementing Rally, the company released once per quarter. Now, LAN operates on four-week iterations with a major release every one to two months. LAN uses Rally's iteration and team status dashboards to track development status and balance the workload across various projects all in one view. Backlog items are constantly added, with elaboration and prioritization of user stories occurring at the beginning of each iteration. Individuals track their own progress by customizing views in their 'my home' and 'my widgets' pages within Rally. And, because individuals, teams and projects now have a single source of information on development status, LAN has found that usage of Rally has spread across the company and functional areas.

Scott explains, "Once people in the company began to see the results from Rally, it started to become the go-to place for tracking pretty much everything. Now almost everyone in the company is using Rally on a daily basis. The thing I like best about Rally is that it provides me with a high-level picture of development efforts that I can then send to upper management."

Looking Into the Future

Now that Rally is so prevalent across the LAN organization, the customer support organization is looking to link their information into Rally using Rally's Web Services API. Integrating LAN's customer support database with Rally will provide a complete view of customer requests, especially as related to development priorities, and will enable LAN to see everything in one place.

"We are constantly finding new uses for the Rally solution, so we'll only look to expand our use of it in the future. Rally has become absolutely integral to everything that we do," says Scott.

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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