

Scaling Scrum adoption for a leading medical insurance company

Reducing time-to-market by 50% and improving the product delivery process.

Client: A leading medical insurance company

Industry: Insurance

Project Type: Transformation and Agility

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Overview

1 Challenge:

A leading medical and life insurance company decided to adopt an Agile approach for its delivery centers all over the world.

The business was struggling with collaboration between business stakeholders and IT teams. As a result the delivery process was slow and not always within budget.

Product managers lacked a clear vision of their role and accountability with the company.

2 Solution:

Following consultations with executive leaders to secure engagement and identify risks, we led discovery sessions with business and IT stakeholders to identify the challenges preventing collaboration and agility.

Our onsite team tailored individual and team training for the IT teams, business stakeholders, product owners, delivery managers and delivery teams.

We established a unified perspective on an Agile methodology and facilitated company-wide collaboration with cross-departmental workshops.

We held on-request coaching sessions to ensure consistent delivery of value to the business.

3 Result:

Our customized programs brought product owners, delivery teams and business stakeholders together, mitigating prioritization and cooperation problems that had been slowing the product delivery process.

Time-to-market is much faster and more predictable, enabling more confidence and reliability in strategic corporate decisions.

The company is able to scale Agile methodologies and develop reliable business strategy.

Challenge

Scaling Scrum for a worldwide company strategy

Without the support of leadership, between 40% and 50% of Agile transformations fail. Often, clients are looking for a quick win – rapid Agile certification, or genericized Agile meeting formats such as standups and retrospectives – rather than reflecting on gaps in their current culture, leadership and practice.

After an IT manager at this leading medical insurance company watched our video lessons, they contacted us for help in adopting an Agile approach in their global delivery centers. The business needed to improve its development and delivery process, and speed up the time-to-market without increasing the budget. The main issues concerned understanding the product owner role and how the backlog was managed, prioritized, and communicated. The process lacked transparency, leading to ineffective backlog refinement sessions and development teams that were prioritizing tasks that were not aligned with the business strategy.

Solution

Supporting SCRUM scaled adoption by training and coaching delivery teams and business stakeholders

Our initial task was to engage multiple levels of the organization to help establish a broader operational perspective and transformational plan. We visited the client onsite to chart and guide their Agile transformation, following these six steps:

1. Introduced Agile and Scrum to the board of directors to enable their participation in the education process of product owners, product management and development teams. We aimed to address the disconnect between the strategy, tactics and operations of the company
2. Provided a Scrum workshop for the IT department to create an organization wide shared understanding of Scrum artifacts, events and roles. This facilitated effective working within the Scrum framework across departments and shifted the organizations' focus from work process clarification to value delivery

3. Set up a joint workshop for members of the board, business leaders and development teams to improve collaboration in product delivery
4. Directed the client in applying their Scrum and Agile knowledge to development processes, standards, performance metrics, and business culture. We provided continuous guidance with on-request Q/A meetings and individual coaching
5. Established a retrospective. Using a gamified and engaging approach, we led the exploration and evaluation of individual roles, artifacts, events, processes and values. We also guided the client in identifying areas of improvement for the company
6. Created a roadmap to continue their employee growth and extend the coaching program which consisted of workshops and mentoring sessions on Product Ownership and Quality Assurance including:
 - Product strategy
 - Product backlog management
 - Product owner and product manager roles and responsibilities
 - Design Thinking
 - Agile product delivery
 - Product backlog refinement
 - User story splitting patterns
 - Acceptance criteria and acceptance testing
 - Definition of Done and Ready artifacts

To guide our clients on their transformation journey, we used tactical Agile methodology of SCRUM and Kanban to build base line best practices. Through hands on assessments and team mobilization, we established a path to maturity, then used a phased approach to implement additional layers of value, working towards a scaled Agile framework throughout the business units and organizational structure.

Result

Scaled Scrum adoption and faster time-to-market

We provided our client with the technical expertise, methodologies and training to adopt an Agile approach for their worldwide locations.

This enabled them to:

- Reduce time-to-market by 50%
- Keep product owners and business stakeholders engaged in product delivery
- Ensure delivery teams understand the business needs and align their workflows and task prioritization with the business strategy
- Consistently deliver products and services within budget
- Set a reliable business strategy due to the predictability of delivery-team results

Working together, we were able to help our client scale Scrum adoption from the local delivery center to their global locations, aligning teams and enabling a faster time-to-market. The company recognized the local delivery center as a leader in Agile adoption. Seeing the promise of Agile business practices for teams working on complex insurance products, the chair of the board of directors invited us to speak about Agile at an insurance industry conference.

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