ADAPTING AGILE IN A HISTORICALLY NON-AGILE ENVIRONMENT

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2020 Project Management Symposium

The Three Projects

- Two projects involved conversion of print magazines to microsites (*inChemistry* and *The Chemist*)

- One project migrated and reimagined the Professional Education catalog from an external website to internal microsites

- Microsites are subsites of acs.org

- The scope of each project included developing a new look and feel and user experience for each of these products.
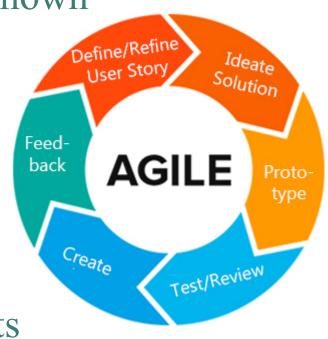
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The Primary Players

- Web Strategy & Operations (WSO)
  - Responsible for digital channel including websites
  - Part of Membership and Society Services

- Education Division
  - Supports educational materials and courses
  - Owner of products (the business unit)
  - Internal web team
- Both groups are within the Society pillar at ACS

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Why Agile?

- The complete nature of the new product was unknown
  - Design
  - Site Functionality
  - Content Migration
  - Content Workflow
  - Analytics
  - Other areas not initially realized
- Needed an iterative cycle to develop requirements

Introduction of **Agile Mindset**

- Began project with Agile presentation
- *Agile Manifesto* to clarify values
  - Usually applied to software development

- Apply values to web development
  - Collaboration among entire team
  - Team determines how to get the work done.
  - Self-motivation and sustainable

We don't 'do' agile – We ARE Agile

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Methodology: *One size does not fit all*

- Wide diversity of tasks benefitting from collaboration
  - from visual design to functionality development
- Design process (IA, visual) is more Kanban
- Technical team uses scrum
- **Used Agile Principles as guidance**

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12 Principles of Agile*

- Our highest priority is to satisfy the customer through early and continuous delivery of valuable software.

- Welcome changing requirements, even late in development. Agile processes harness change for the customer's competitive advantage.

- Deliver working software frequently, from a couple of weeks to a couple of months, with a preference to the shorter timescale.

- Business people and developers must work together daily throughout the project.

- Build projects around motivated individuals. Give them the environment and support they need, and trust them to get the job done.

- The most efficient and effective method of conveying information to and within a development team is face-to-face conversation.

12 Principles of Agile*

- Working software is the primary measure of progress.
- Agile processes promote sustainable development. The sponsors, developers, and users should be able to maintain a constant pace indefinitely.
- Continuous attention to technical excellence and good design enhances agility.
- **Simplicity--the art of maximizing the amount of work not done--is essential.**
- The best architectures, requirements, and designs emerge from self-organizing teams.
- At regular intervals, the team reflects on how to become more effective, then tunes and adjusts its behavior accordingly.

from Agile Manifesto

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Challenges of Introducing Agile

- Resources – non-dedicated teams
  – Competing projects/activities

- Resistance to Agile
  – "Just tell me what I need to do"

- Diversity of team
  – Different expectations

- ENGAGEMENT

Engagement through Communication

- Project Meetings
  - Large group at regular intervals
  - Inclusive – invitees decided if they should attend

- Confluence 'dashboard' for project
  - Includes summary and any important documents

Pages / Home / WSO Projects   328 view(s)

Edit ★ ◉ ⤴ ⋯ ⤢

GP Chemist (Conversion to Digital Magazine on AEM)

Created by Christine Schmidt, last modified on Sep 19, 2019

Upcoming Meetings:

- no regularly scheduled meetings

Important Links

UXpin of Designs and Sitemap

List of Post-live fixes

Heat maps

Meeting Slides

September 18

August 15

August 8

August 1 slides with notes

July 25

Project Description: *The Graduate and Postdoctoral Chemist* currently exists as a print-based publication which is disseminated as an online flip-book reader. The project will transform the magazine to a web-based digital publication managed through the ACS CMS. The hope is to be able to increase the touchpoints with graduate student and postdoctoral populations.

The GP Chemist is meant to present career and professional development resources to graduate students and post docs. Most of the content is meant to be presented within these pages, i.e. linking to sites outside of acs is minimized.

Current Status:

September 18, 2019 - Site is live. Hard launch (e-mail announcement) planned for Sept 20 or following week.

Meeting Summaries

- **September 18 -** covered fixes in this week's deployment including addition of new meta data field "Deadline date" for opportunities. This is the last regularly scheduled meeting. Will reconvene to celebrate and to do retrospective work.
- **Sept 4** - update on the week's deployment plans.
- **August 15 -** pre national meeting/soft launch discussion, including slides on bugs, what is released, what will be released after meeting, etc. See deck.
- **August 8 -** reviewed Naitonal meeting page. Talked about launch date, testing. See deck.

Project Meetings

- Regular project meetings – usually weekly
- Planned
  - What would be presented
  - What questions needed to be answered
  - Allowed for input from non-core members
- Emails provided agenda and slides

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Between Large Project Meetings

- Several smaller meetings between large project meetings
  - Review of large meeting
  - Determining what needed to be done
  - Preview work to be presented
  - Assess what information was needed
  - Working meetings

- One-on-one
  - Check-ins – understand individual challenges

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Collaborative Working Sessions

- Late in project - efficient way to get work done quickly
  - Team was in Tuckman's "Performing" stage

- Multi-hour sessions in a conference room
  - Developers (visual, front end, and back end designer) sessions
  - Education Web Team with Developers
    - Entering content
    - Immediate bug fixes

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Launch of MVP

- Launched with a minimum-viable product
  - Business needs for launch
  - Risks of technology development
    - Temporary solutions as a bridge to permanent
    - Consequences of late changes

- Enhancements/fixes after launch
  - Allowed data to be collected to inform enhancements

Projects

- inChemistry – inchemistry.acs.org
  - 12-13 months
- Professional Education – proed.acs.org
  - 9 months
- Graduate and Post-doctoral chemist – gpchemist.acs.org
  - 7 months

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UMD Project Management Symposium
May 7-8, 2020   Slide 17

Benefits of Agile

- Products created met the business needs and expectation even as these changed or evolved

- Product owners (BUs) had a better understanding of their product and were able to plan more realistically for future enhancements
  - Data/experience showed some functionality requests were not realistic
- Both teams gained a sense of understanding and respect for each other – better partners in future interactions

Using Agile Principles means:

- Facilitating good communication

  – requires work and discipline

- Developing rapport and trust

- Enabling deep learning about product and development

- Getting through a project successfully using a little creativity and flexibility

Questions?

- Email me:
  - C_schmidt@acs.org