



TRANSFORMING ENTERPRISE APPLICATIONS WITH DISPERSED AGILE NAVIGATION

Abstract

The COVID-19 pandemic has changed the course of project implementations across the globe. Organizations must replace traditional methods with a dynamic mindset and agile culture in order to embrace continuity. This requires systematic as well as systemic change in addition to a redefined set of tools, processes and infrastructure. Many world-leading organizations are already using a dispersed delivery model to meet their implementation requirements. We can expect this model to persist in the foreseeable future. However, reimagining existing business processes and shifting from co-location to remote approaches comes with certain challenges and risks. This paper provides a defined and systematic process for implementing a dispersed agile delivery model along with key success criteria to measure its efficacy. It also proposes a framework that can merge existing investments with modifications so organizations can continue to meet their business goals.

Overview

Key challenges

- Globally, industries are faced with unprecedented challenges due to the coronavirus pandemic
- Most organizations lack processes to address these
- Implementing the shift into remote operations is often difficult
- Need to develop mutual trust during project execution in this new environment
- Complete virtual deployment is an evolving scenario and more complex than traditional go-live

Recommendations

Business managers require a set of defined processes to optimize their decision-making and become resilient over time.

This must include:

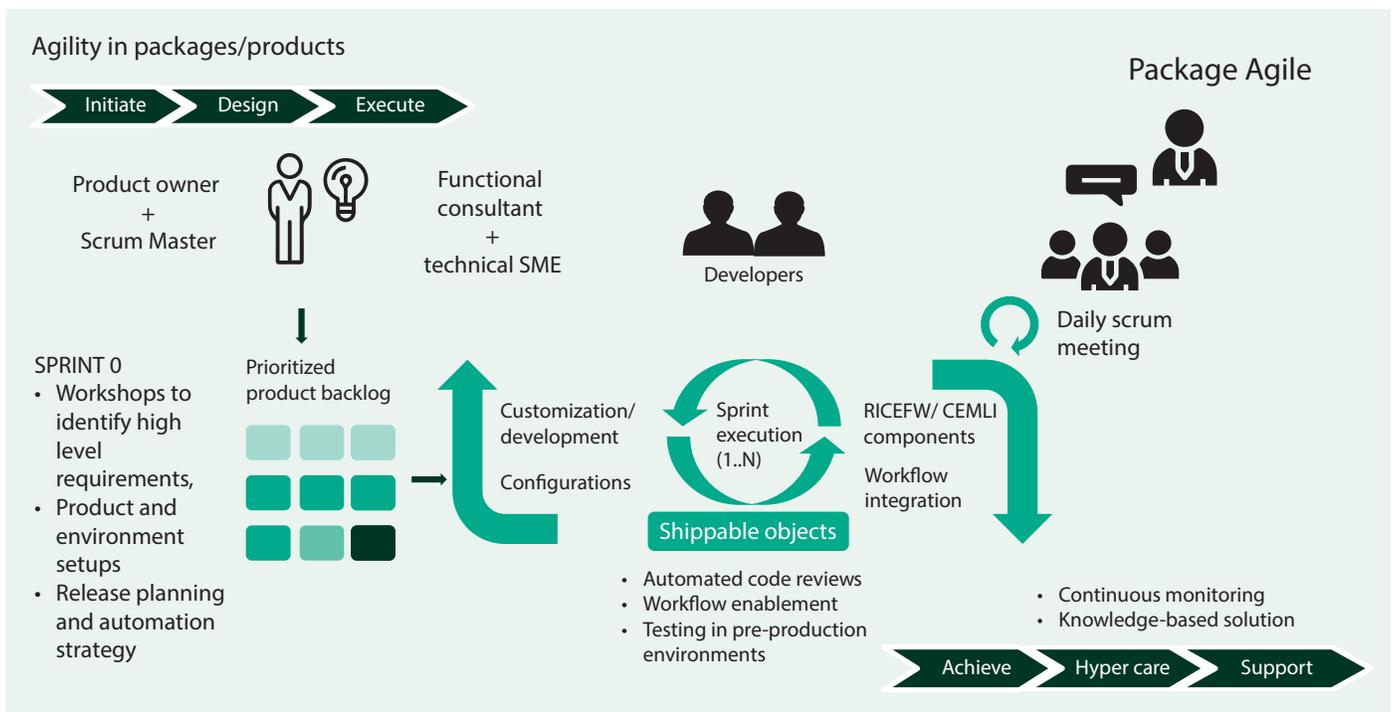
- A framework-based approach with well-defined pre and post operating processes
- A defined set of metrics to embrace the new model
- A cohesive approach that considers people, process, infrastructure, and culture when dealing with the current disruption

Introduction

Typically, package implementations require a mix of co-located and geographically distributed teams for seamless execution. However, in a world disrupted by COVID-19, this model is no longer viable. Executing such projects will require new ways of working based on new guidelines and principles. Companies may consider building frameworks that leverage existing processes along with modified activities and tools. This approach can deliver similar benefits as measured through engineering and qualitative metrics. Executing projects in such a dispersed and flexible manner improves consulting productivity and creates a unified, buoyant and agile delivery environment. This new process involves an orchestration of activities, an agile framework for the new normal and a host of metrics.

Current model

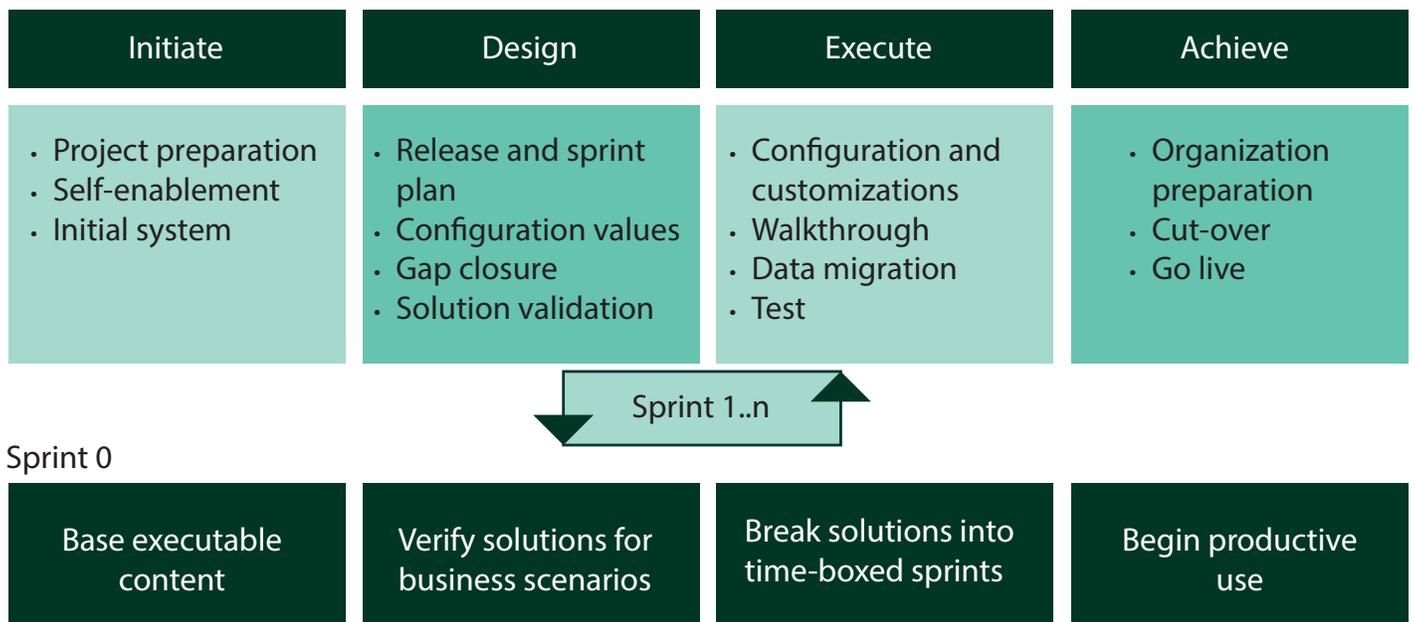
Fig 1: Phases within the enterprise agile model



The enterprise agile model is based on a hybrid framework. Most of the standard Oracle configurations are done during the 'Initiate' and 'Design' phases. The agile process happens during the 'Execute' and 'Achieve' phases. This framework also has a provision to leverage DevOps. One of the key features of this model is how it changes manually-intensive work that requires cross collaboration as shown in Fig 2. This illustrates the work stream lifecycle view. Agility is achieved across design and execution stages.

Fig 2: Automation of work across phases and work-stream lifecycle views

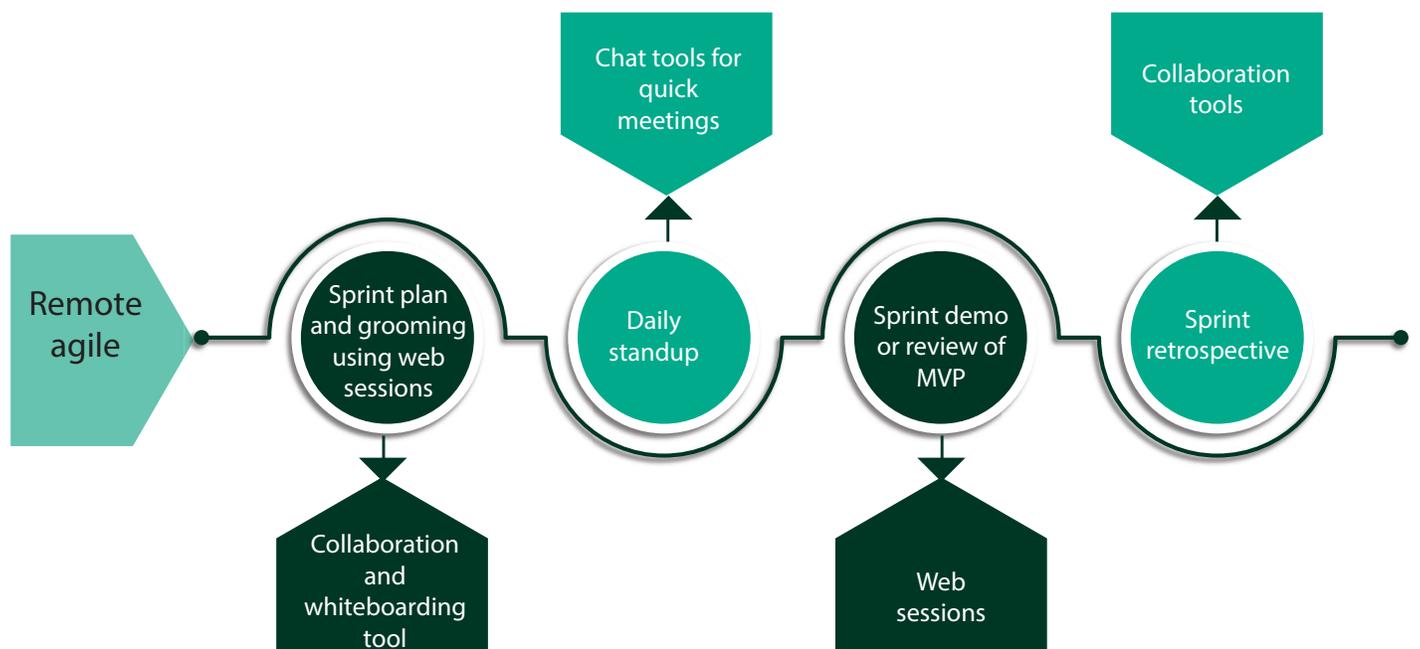
Methodology - Framework



Agility in remote working

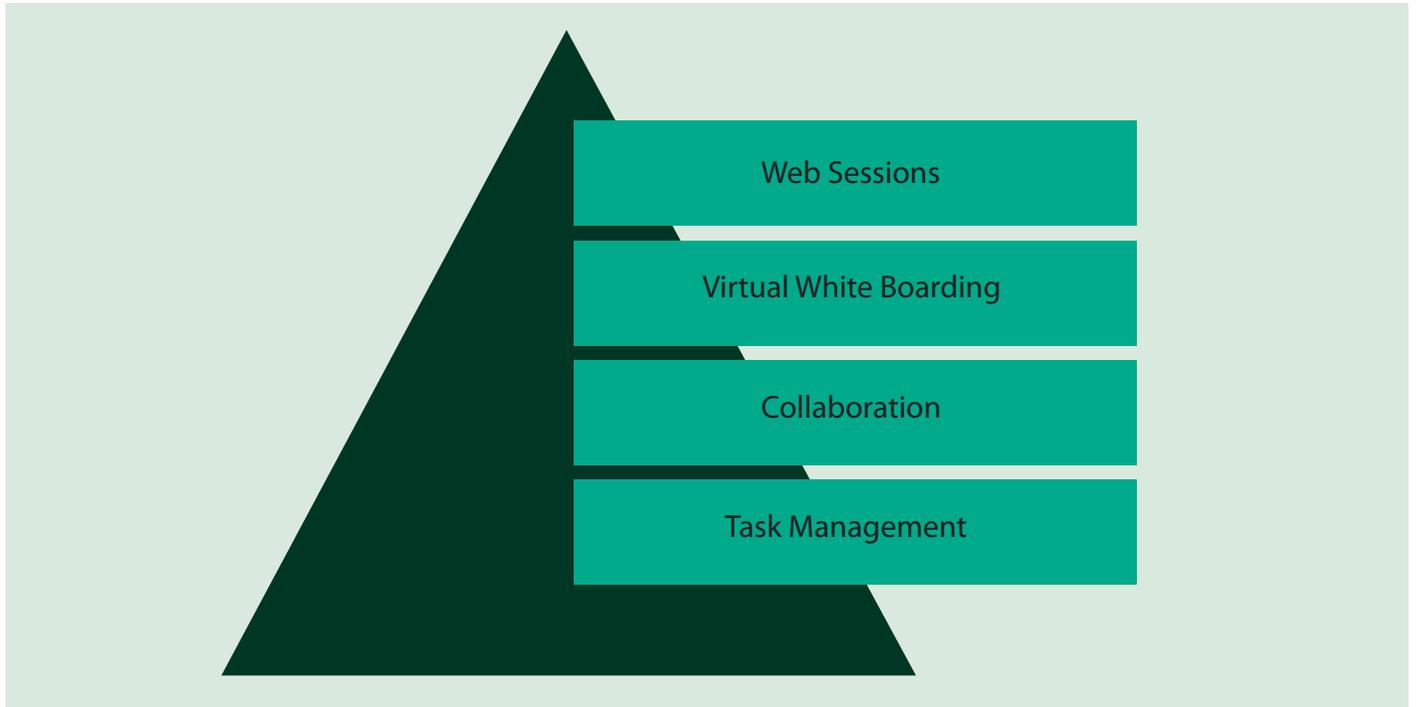
In a dispersed agile model, remote working is supported by shifting most of the co-location activities to specific individuals. This is augmented with web-based communication tools.

Fig 3: Proposed structure for dispersed agile



There are many communication and collaboration tools that can improve productivity during remote working. For instance, some of the Oracle package implementation activities that require collaboration with key business users can be carried out remotely using such tools.

Fig 4: Types of communication tools to improve remote collaboration



Dispersed way of agile deployment in the new normal

Life cycle phase	Activity	Existing processes	New model processes
Initiate	Project set up	In-person discussions with infrastructure teams for machine, login, access, etc.	Use the proper access format to request and coordinate discussions over emails. The service desk tool can be used for this
	Project kick off	Full-day workshop at the customer site	Conduct a short session for 2-3 days with relevant groups Conduct a one-hour project charter presentation using Web sessions
	Scrum team set up	The entire team meets at a single location. Initial training and scrum discussions are conducted within a group	Form a virtual team Conduct short web-based sessions Define clear roles and responsibilities
Design	Product visualization	Organize a two-day walkthrough for BKUs, typically conducted within a conference room. Map all the existing processes as the demo progresses	Organize business process-wise and perform web-based demo Set up short sessions to map the process using the screen share mode
	Epic/story/feature finalization	A 2-3 day activity involving product owners, agile coaches and consultants	Conduct a virtual session of epic and story with estimation details using web-based white boards. Task management and ALM tools are useful here
	Design document review	While the design is created independently, it is reviewed in a room with a brainstorming session	Perform a prior review using comments shared over email Organize short web sessions to finalize the documents
Execute	Sprint execution	A closed room event whether in-person or distributed. It requires physical white boarding and sticker-based approach	A dispersed event with web-based discussion and stand-up calls. Digital tools like collaboration rooms, digital metrics on cloud ALM and digital task management are needed
	MVP demo	An in-person demo is organized with 3-4 key users at the end of each sprint. Feedback and remarks are gathered At the end of the build phase, a final demo is held for a large group in a single location	Conduct short online demos. Multiple sessions can be scheduled to provide a better feel of the product in addition to practice sessions. Use email for feedback
	Scenario testing	Testing in small groups with business and product owners around	Perform remote testing with user convenience. Screenshots and log files can be used to manage feedback. ALM tools can be used to capture details
Achieve	End-user knowledge sessions	A week-long classroom session, conducted with multiple users across all levels Hands-on demos and simulations Creating and amending business documents using scenarios	Conduct web sessions with the remote team on all business process areas Develop well defined e-learning documents and a preventive maintenance guide along with a problem resolution handbook
	Warranty support system	Usually, a few critical people at onsite help the customer in a smooth rollover over 2-3 months	Schedule regular calls and implement: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Log analysis • Alert mechanism • Digital Kanban for incident management
	Critical support	One or two maintenance persons are stationed at the client location to manage this by providing direct help	Establish a 24/7 support system with a remote hotline facility. Enable extensive support for the eLearning handbook for all business-critical areas

Measurable index

While this remote implementation model for Oracle solutions is new to many large organizations, it is a viable approach in the current global climate with tremendous benefits to enterprises. Measuring its early success is important for further adoption and sustainability.

A basic assumption made here is that the engineering and quality metrics along with productivity remain stable as before. However, there is a proposed set of new KPIs that can cater to qualitative measurements. Additionally, it is important to look into the pace of the new paradigm.

Here are the collective indices that can be used to measure outcomes in the new scenarios:

- Collaboration – Number of WebEx or MS Teams calls. A rising graph indicates greater collaboration among team members
- Transparency – Number of logins to ALM tools like JIRA/RALLY, etc. These tools act as a single source of truth. Hence, higher number of logins demonstrates greater usage of digital dashboards
- Orchestration – Number of user demos. Higher demo instances translate to better BKU interaction
- Learning and sustainable organization – Number of times a developer or PM refers to best practices, existing code, design docs, or case studies. Higher numbers indicate a self-sustaining team and lower dependencies



Conclusion

Industry disruptors are leveraging new models and agile practices for enterprise package implementations. Success depends on how fast they adjust to the new normal while ensuring adaptability. The early adoption of this model has demonstrated good results and correlations. A dispersed agile model for package implementation should encompass best-in-class offerings with leading metrics in order to reshape their journeys. This will help customers easily adopt well-defined processes for better business outcomes. This model is particularly useful for those organizations that are already using agile practices and have a roadmap to augment their Oracle digital transformation in areas like supply chain, human resource management and digital manufacturing.

Write a mail to Oracle_mktg@infosys.com to begin your transformation.



About the Author



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Pravas is an expert in DevOps with a specialization in dispersed agile for enterprise applications services. He has over 20 years of experience in IT process quality management for large-scale organizations and has led many successful process transformations with SAP and Oracle using new generation frameworks.

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