CASE STUDY

DISTRIBUTED AGILE PRACTICE FOR THE HEALTHCARE SOLUTION

Client Background

Allscripts is the leader in software, services, information and connectivity solutions that empower physicians and other healthcare providers to deliver best-in-class patient care, safety, clinical outcomes and financial results. Nationwide, more than 160,000 physicians, 800 hospitals and thousands of other healthcare providers in clinics, post-acute care facilities, and homecare agencies, use the client's solutions to automate and connect their clinical and business operations.

Business Challenge

As a joint effort, Allscripts and SoftServe designed a Homecare system to improve the clinical quality of care, financial performance, and operational control for large, integrated home care organizations, as well as small home care agencies.

softserve

The SoftServe team also provided full maintenance to Allscripts Homecare throughout the entire project on a release-by-release basis.

In the early releases, product development followed a traditional, Waterfall development model. As the product became more complex, a more advanced methodology became critical. Allscripts and SoftServe agreed to move from a Waterfall to an Agile software development approach.

Benefits of Agile include:

- Collaborating between cross- functional teams, which include business analysts, developers, test engineers and technical writers

- Providing immediate feedback from the product owner and end-users on newly developed parts of the product

- Ensuring a business approach that aligns development with customer needs and company goals

- Delivering high-quality software

- Demonstrating ongoing progress that reduces surprises

Project Description

Agile methodology included conducting regular meetings with the SCRUM teams and a Product Owner. The Product Owner played a critical role in achieving the project success in scope of Agile methodology, he/she:

- Defined and prioritized the user stories of the product
- Defined the Product Backlog content on a release date
- Adjusted features and priority before each sprint
- Performed acceptance testing of every user story
- Accepted or rejected the work results

Another important player in Agile development is the Client Focus Group that helped the Product Owner prioritize the user stories. The Focus Group role was even more critical during the product demonstrations, since they generated immediate feedback on the newly developed product features or functionalities, while capturing the most valued parts of the product. The Product Owner was the link between the development team and the client, ensuring the product development complied with the customer's requirements, as well as meeting the customer's needs.

The SCRUM Master's meetings were held to encourage maximum collaboration among teams, coordinate cross-team priorities, and provide more flexible change management.

In the scope of Agile, the SoftServe team, with the Product Owner, conducted 15-30 minute SCRUM meetings. The daily meetings helped to identify any task issues. At the beginning of each sprint, the SCRUM team had a planning meeting to do the following:

- Discuss and prioritize user stories
- Assign tasks for completing a user story to the team of developers, test engineers and technical writers
- Define the acceptance criteria for each user story

After completing the discussions and clarifications, the team presented their vision of functionality that was to be implemented within the sprint to the Product Owner to ensure alignment.

A retrospective meeting was held at the end of each sprint to discuss what was accomplished and the results.

Typically this took the form of a demonstration of the functionalities implemented within the user stories.

Each new project started with a Zero sprint so the team could analyze, prioritize, and estimate each user story.

The teams used the following online communicators and video conferencing tools to enable frequent and easy communication:

Microsoft   **icq**   **S**

ooVoo   **msn**®
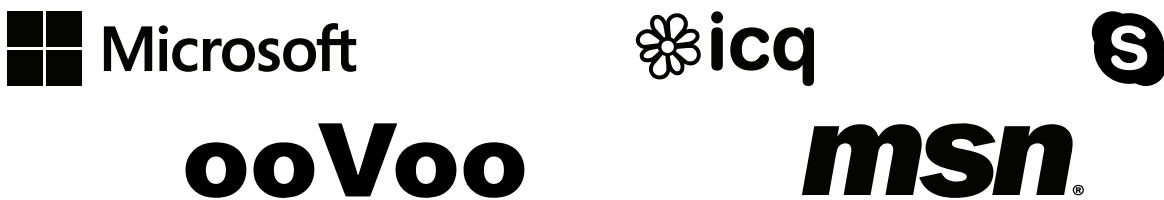
Additional tools included:

- MS SharedView
- SharePoint

- WebEx
- CollabNet

Value Delivered

As people are at the heart of every SoftServe project success, it is important to have the right people, in the right place, at the right time to keep the project moving smoothly beyond the techniques and processes.

Agile methodology was the basis for strong communications between our integrated teams, and fostered continuous feedback and collaboration.

As the result of Agile we were able to successfully integrate the work load of developers, test engineers and technical writers. We conducted frequent team meetings allowing SoftServe to deliver the transparency Allscripts required.

"Moving to an Agile team model from a Waterfall model can be disruptive and somewhat intimidating for team members. Whereas with Waterfall, most communications between Allscripts business analysts and SoftServe were through senior-level team members, with Agile, all team members are in regular communication with each other and about people and communication. I'm proud that the team members at Allscripts and SoftServe adapted to Agile so collaboratively and quickly, taking advantage of the benefits an Agile process can bring to improve both the quantity and quality of the deliverables for our customers", says Dave Staudenmaier, Director, Product Development at Allscripts.

Both Allscripts and SoftServe recognize the benefits of using Agile methodology on their complex and long-term projects. Agile development methodology increased communication between customers and business analysts, and eliminated needless work load for the development and QA teams, which in turn reduced the product development cost. With an Agile approach a significantly higher percentage of the projects were delivered on-time and on-budget.

Overall, Allscripts valued the increased responsiveness to change, the accelerated time to market, and the improvements to quality and efficiency.

ABOUT US

SoftServe is a digital authority that advises and provides at the cutting-edge of technology. We reveal, transform, accelerate, and optimize the way enterprises and software companies do business. With expertise across healthcare, retail, media, financial services, software, and more, we implement end-to-end solutions to deliver the innovation, quality, and speed that our clients' users expect.

SoftServe delivers open innovation—from generating compelling new ideas, to developing and implementing transformational products and services.

Our work and client experience are built on a foundation of empathetic, human-focused design that ensures continuity from concept to release.

We empower enterprises and software companies to (re)identify differentiation, accelerate solution development, and vigorously compete in today's digital economy—No matter where you are in your journey.

Visit our **website**, **blog**, **Facebook**, **Twitter**, and **LinkedIn** pages.

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