Flux7

7 Ways Businesses Can Use DevOps to Improve Software Development

DevOps

Digital businesses rely on agility and scalability. Build competitive advantage and keep costs minimized by adapting to changes and using DevOps strategies.

In 2016, IT will be expected to drive more digital business innovation and that means an increased focus on application development and delivery. That may mean deploying new application development projects on cloud infrastructure.

Building architectures for scale, reuse, automation, and self-healing can free both developer and IT operations resources to focus on creating business differentiation, meeting customer demands and taking advantage of business opportunities. DevOps strategies can be put in place to reduce the overhead necessary to create an environment that fosters innovation while reducing risk from security, environment mis-matches and other issues.

The High Cost of Development Time

Software or Web app development time is often the biggest determinant of time-to-market, and represents the highest cost. With a shrinking labor market, improving the productivity of existing resources moves beyond business advantage to being a critical component of business health.

Applications are at the forefront of differentiation and growth strategies. Outsourced solutions that automate repeatable and iterative engineering and automation enables an increased focus on business differentiation allowing organizations to free resources and drive innovation, agility and speed.

What could you do with a 10% per-person increase in the productivity of your development and operations teams?

If you could save each developer in a four-person team **10 percent** of their time you could:

1. Reduce time to market and costs
2. Try more experiments that increase your chances of successfully addressing market changes
3. Delay hiring
4. Keep your burn rate under control; focus resources on services and products to deliver

Using DevOps best practices to eliminate inefficiencies in infrastructure provisioning and maintenance as well as application development workflow can directly impact your probability of success. Creating a high performance development model can be accomplished through relatively easy architectural changes.

Seven Ways Businesses Can Use DevOps to Improve Development Workflow and Lifecycles

1. Create a self-service IT environment where devs can provision approved resources via push button deployments, reducing the load on IT and reducing wait times for developers.

2. Optimize the local developer environment using container strategies to create frameworks that run quickly and efficiently without complex set up.

3. Set up continuous integration and delivery systems to speed application release and improve the quality of software.

4. Implement AWS best practices for security, high availability, and cost reduction.

5. Use cloud automation to preserve environments and ensure they can be dynamically instantiated and optimized with minimal maintenance.

6. Implement configuration management systems and processes for streamlined deployments.

7. Establish metrics and monitoring for continuous improvement

Improving overall operations in AWS should also be of high importance. It is tempting to think that security and high availability are a success problem, but in fact, it's not having proper security in place that can prevent a company from achieving success.

Your Developers Can't Fix These Issues

Your developers are smart and they have confidence that they can fix the issues being posed. You as the leader share the same confidence. However, while fixing these operational issues can be their job, is it the best use of their time? And, will their output be the best and all encompassing? The answer to both questions is likely a "no."

The value proposition of a software company is based on the features it provides to its end consumers.

Your developers know your code base, and they can add features faster than anyone else. If you take them away from feature development, and hand them code cleaning tasks, that can be done by an outside entity, it could be a mistake. Solving some of these v tasks are an art, not just a science.

It's about implementing best practices that are only learned over time from doing the same thing repeatedly

Why Pre-Canned Solutions Don't Work

If you subscribe to the Lean model, agility is the key. Agility can only be achieved if there is freedom and flexibility for innovation. Precanned, inflexible solutions that reduce agility will negatively affect your company's ability to respond to new opportunities. Your developers have likely not created a dozen AWS setups before and while they will likely reach a good solution, they may miss details that can come back to haunt you later.

Getting Outside Help

Getting outside help for DevOps and operational workflow setups makes sense. Vigilant assessment of what activities are helping your business to differentiate and deliver your customer promise, and external sourcing is a key trend Gartner notes in *The Five Characteristics of New Breed of CIO*

"Internal IT resources should be reassigned to focus on business differentiation. All other IT services and activities should be candidates for standardization and external sourcing, with a focus on acquiring agility, flexibility and adaptability for future digitalization efforts."

Flux7: AWS DevOps

We've conducted many DevOps assessments, over the course of which we've perfected a number of processes that we now follow as best practices and which enable us to move fast. To succeed, we work with our clients in three phases: Assess, Attune, and Engage."

The Assess Phase

In this phase, Flux7 assesses the state of the environment, workflow, and business requirements, and then designs future technology, workflow, and the game plan to get there. This is trickier than it may at first seem. If an organization moves too slowly, the move to DevOps can falter and stall. If the move is from zero to 60 in two seconds, oftentimes wheels spin and can't absorb the acceleration.

The Attune Phase

Here, we execute on the plans developed during the Assess phase, and create the DevOps infrastructure for internal consumption, and optimize the automated delivery of IT services based on the goals established. This is a way for organizations to rapidly move forward on cloud initiatives, including so-called "lift and shift" cloud migration, greenfield cloud infrastructure deployment, and specialized environments in the most stable, secure, compliant and auditable way possible.

Knowledge Transfer

This phase comes after the enterprise has reaped value from the DevOps initiatives built for them, and is ready to internalize its own expertise to create the same architectures. We provide coaching while your team gets hands-on learning.

Contact us today for a needs assessment: http://bit.ly/1GHDZvf

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