

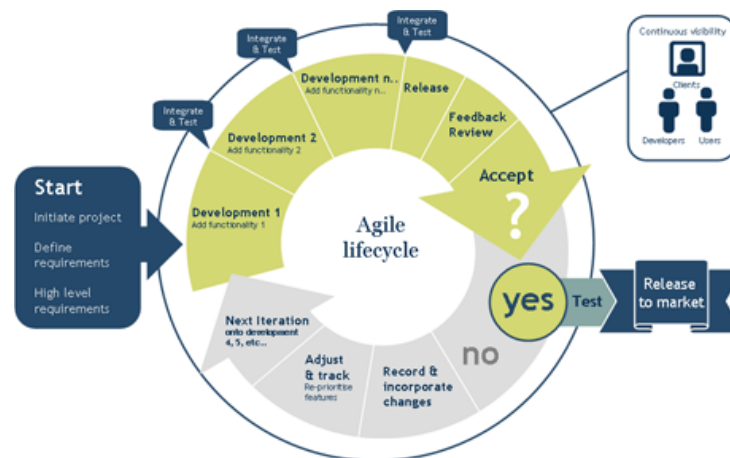
How Agile Development Serves the Needs of Customers Best

If you've ever asked yourself, *What new features can I expect to see from HubSpot in the next year?* or *How does HubSpot release new products so frequently?* then this e-book is for you. To keep up with the evolving demands of our customers, we have adopted an approach that ensures speedy, responsive, and flexible software development. Known as agile development, this framework is a key driver of our innovation, challenging us to continuously rethink, improve upon, and learn from our products. Read on to discover the many ways in which our customers benefit from HubSpot's agile development approach.

What is Agile Development?

Agile development begins with cross-functional teams working on separate components of a product. Each team releases its segment upon completion and the entire product is released through a series of constant iterations. Customer feedback is actively sought throughout the process and any bugs, flaws, or complaints are addressed as soon as they are uncovered. The guiding principles of the "Agile Manifesto" can be summed up as follows:

- Rapid delivery
- Continuous attention to technical excellence and good design
- Cross-functional teams
- Regular adaptation to changing circumstances



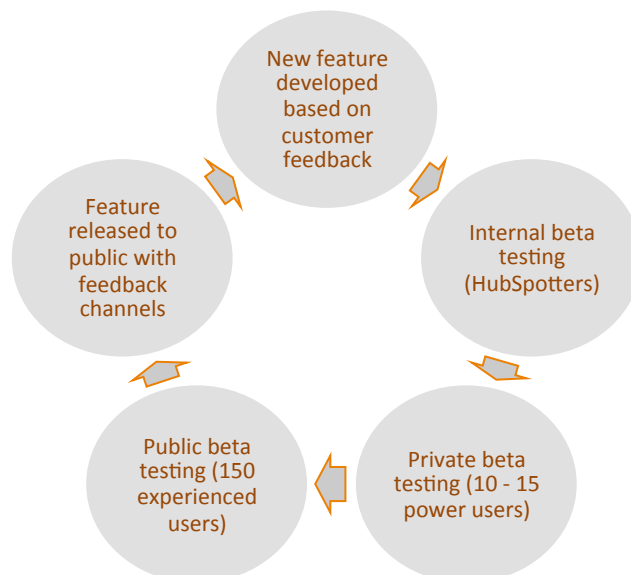
Source: <http://www.ixxus.com>

Constant Iterations Enable Speedy Product Development

We don't like making our customers wait for the next big thing. Instead, we release many big things all the time, constantly improving customer experience through new products and enhanced iterations of our software. Our cross-functional teams, consisting of engineers, designers, and marketers oversee complete product development - from design to market delivery. These self-sufficient teams release products as and when they finish working on them, bringing customers new features around the clock. A strict adherence to timeboxing (allotting a specific amount of time for each meeting and task) is key to how HubSpotters maximize efficiency and ensure speedy product delivery.

Increased Responsiveness Helps Us Give People What They Want

The best way to ensure we build relevant, helpful software is by listening to our customers, and agile development allows us to do just that. At every point in the lifecycle of a product, we value feedback from customers who can use the <http://ideas.hubspot.com> feature to convey their opinions and suggestions. Before we release a new feature into the open market, we allow a select group of HubSpotters to test it and offer their views. We then solicit feedback from 10-15 power users within our private beta group. These users spend one week using the new feature to discover potential bugs and issues, which HubSpotters work to resolve. Next, the product is released to our volume beta group of nearly 150 experienced users. Feedback received during each of these stages helps us modify our offering to suit customers' needs and, within weeks of its initial development, a new feature is released to our customer base. Our attention to customer feedback doesn't end there, however, as we encourage customers to identify bugs and suggest improvements by clicking on feedback buttons next to brand new features.



Agile is a More Flexible Approach to Problem-solving

In the old days, software developers addressed bugs one at a time and recalled entire batches of software until they got it right. This often led to massive delays and interruptions for customers. At HubSpot, we believe a problem should be solved as soon as it's discovered. With agile development, HubSpot has the flexibility to correct bugs and other issues as and when they pop up - throughout the life cycle of a product. The front-end experience for our customers remains seamless because our teams use customer feedback and internal testing to identify and fix problems on the back-end without interrupting our software's functionality. What does this mean for customers? HubSpot will take care of issues and bugs behind the scenes without affecting the experience of our customers.

Why Do We Use Agile Instead of a Long-term Roadmap?

The most common alternative to agile development is a linear, sequential approach to software design known as "waterfall." In this traditional approach, engineers first analyze a problem, then business requirements are translated into IT solutions, after which code implementation takes place followed by testing and release. However, in case a glitch appears, engineers must return to the beginning and start developing new code all over again. Building a new product from scratch takes a significant amount of time and the bureaucratic hurdles associated with approving such a monumental effort can compound delays. In a dynamic field such as inbound marketing, where new features and products must be released frequently, adhering to a rigid, long-term roadmap denies companies the flexibility to fix bugs and continuously improve user experience. In addition, teams working on different stages of the project are not cross-functional, heightening the risk of producing software that is overcomplicated and not well-rounded.

Agile Transforms Customer Suggestions into New Releases

Whether they call for minor copy changes or major redesigns, customer requests quickly translate into reality at HubSpot, thanks to our use of agile development. For example, one of our clients markets their service to students and posted on <http://ideas.hubspot.com> that they wished our software could send automated emails to students on their birthdays. Along with the 97 other customers who voted for it, we thought this was a great suggestion that could benefit a broad variety of HubSpot users. For example, businesses could use this feature to send emails to their customers on a range of important dates, from customer acquisition anniversaries to subscription expiration deadlines. A cross-functional HubSpot team jumped into action and within weeks, the feature was in beta testing. At every stage of development, our team's marketing manager made sure to keep customers updated on our progress on the ideas.hubspot.com page.



Have a way for a date field to trigger an email - so for someones birthday, or expiry date, or start date of a class...

We send birthday emails to our students - it would be great if hubspot automated this so that on the date thats in their record as their birthday, a personalized email goes out to them. This could also work with expiry dates, course start dates, end of semester dates, etc...

24 comments · Email Marketing · Flag idea as inappropriate...



IN BETA

· HubSpotter (Admin, HubSpot) responded

This is now in beta. Let us know if would like to start using it today.

Agile development allows us to efficiently implement not just major changes but small tweaks as well. For instance, a few months ago, we heard from customers that the “add another rule” feature on our segmentation page should be a button instead of a massive hyperlink. We knew from previous testing that users find buttons to be clearer, easier to identify and more visually appealing than hyperlinks. So, within hours of receiving this suggestion, a team of HubSpotters had developed and released the new button.

HubSpot is Among Leading Brands that Use Agile Development

Agile development is used by renowned brands that excel at quickly developing features and releasing iterations based on customer feedback.



Facebook values “small independent teams” consisting of designers, PM’s and marketing people to “build things as quickly as possible.” Similar to HubSpot, they’ll often times release a new feature on an opt-in basis before rolling it out to new users. Agile development allows their team and ours to respond quickly to user feedback.



In 2006, the R&D team at Salesforce.com adopted agile development and has reaped immense benefits including faster product development and greater customer satisfaction. According to a recent report put out by the company, Salesforce.com encourages customers to adopt agile development and “many such customers have reported comparable successes.”



Pivotal labs, the famed incubator that mentored a nascent Twitter and Gowalla, champions agile development as a critical factor for success in the software industry. We couldn’t agree more that it helps companies serve the needs of customers better.

Agile Development Helps Us Help You

At HubSpot, our commitment to serving the needs of our customers drives every decision we make and that’s why we’ve chosen to use agile development. Agile helps us constantly innovate, respond faster to customer needs, and retain the flexibility to troubleshoot problems as they arise.