ReleaseTEAM

December 2015

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As a firm that specializes in DevOps, we often get asked why DevOps is so important. To assist you in understanding our thinking, here is a brief primer on DevOps. The following is adapted from an article written by Gareth Daine, a link to the entire article is listed at the conclusion of this posting.

Born of the agile software development movement, DevOps emphasizes communication, integration, collaboration and automation, while measuring cooperation between software developers and IT operations, as well as other IT professionals within an organization.

DevOps is about experiences, ideas and culture. It's about the close collaboration between IT operations and development, and how they can improve the products and services that they produce by thinking differently about how they work together, using a new mentality.

DevOps is also about communication, helping what should be tightly integrated disciplines understand each other's roles and challenges better. It's about working together toward a common goal, and enabling businesses to succeed by helping them release quality and stable products and services, faster and with fewer failures and bottlenecks.

DevOps is an evolving organism, and open to change but the best practice approaches and frameworks (Agile, Lean, ITIL, etc.) underpinning DevOps are not new.

Why You Should Care About DevOps

1. We All Have Challenges, Let's Collaborate

Every individual and every single team, whether it's development, operations, quality assurance or the support team, all come across challenges on a daily basis. These challenges impact the business and its operations, and an incident or blocker in one department could resonate in another. Without collaboration, this process takes longer and can create further problems that may not be immediately apparent. Working together and communicating efficiently allows you to implement solutions that help prevent similar incidents in the future.

2. Improved Speed to Market

Increased speed to market will allow you to gain a competitive edge in an industry where software and tools are outmoded almost as quickly as they are released. It also lets you free up resources to concentrate on improving your software and infrastructure, meaning that you can get ahead of your competitors by releasing new features and functionality sooner.

3. Continuous Integration & Delivery

Continuous integration is a development practice that involves deploying code to a shared repository several times per day. Using an automated build process in combination with automated testing helps to verify each check-in, which produces more stable software.

This process allows developers to spot problems earlier, letting them implement fixes sooner. Detecting issues early means they often tend to be smaller and less complex, making the process of debugging and fixing them easier.

4. Stability

Traditionally, keeping server hardware and operating environments stable was the role of IT operations and systems administrators. Functioning as a single team of cross-functional team members including database administrators (DBAs), business analysts, developers, quality assurance (QA) and operations engineers, DevOps delivers many benefits. Deploying often and in smaller, indivisible groups allows engineers to troubleshoot and resolve issues faster. Such practices reduce Mean Time to Resolution (MTTR) (an important measure of speed when applied to stability), thus restoring stability (service) more rapidly after a critical infrastructure failure.

5. Faster & Easier Fixes

Due to the agile nature of a DevOps environment, DevOps teams can introduce new functionality in smaller, more modular deployments. Because these deployments are more targeted and isolated, bugs are easier to spot and in turn, fixes are often faster and easier to implement.

6. Breaking Down Silos

By combining multiple teams and disciplines into one lean, mean DevOps team that have cross-functional skill sets and communicate efficiently, you automatically break down traditional silos created from departmentalization. No longer is each specialist a single point of failure. Everyone in the team takes responsibility for the business goals and because of the close collaborative nature of DevOps, team members can tackle multiple challenges in various areas of operation and development.

Why You Should Care About DevOps

7. Resource & Cost Reduction

By implementing a DevOps approach, you will be able to reduce significantly, the costs and demand for resources associated with traditional IT implementations. Traditionally, IT was seen as a cost center but the implementation of DevOps has shown that this approach provides real business value.

When you use continuous delivery and lean management practices, you get higher quality results and shorter cycle times, further reducing costs. These practices contribute to reducing the resource requirements in terms of both manpower and hardware.

8. Increased Performance

Standardized production environments and automation tools help make deployments predictable. These processes free people from routine tasks, allowing them to concentrate on the most creative aspects of their role, adding value to the business and benefiting everyone. The type or complexity of systems these practices get applied to is not a significant factor. As long as software is architected with testability and deployability in mind, high performance is more than achievable.

9. Innovation & Creativity

As mentioned above, the introduction of continuous integration, standardized production environments and automated deployments allows practitioners to focus on the more inventive and creative side of their role. More time and resources spent on experimentation and innovation allows teams to develop and release improved software, and this directly translates into achieving business goals. The environment and culture that DevOps produces and nurtures is one that encourages a deeper understanding and implementation of best practices.

Please note: This article is adapted from a post on LinkedIn by Gareth Daine. To view the article in its entirety please go to: https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/devops-changing-culture-enterprise-11-reasons-why-you-gareth-daine

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Version Management Best Practices

By Mark Warren, Director of Product Marketing, Perforce Software

While version management is as fundamental to software development as writing code itself, the technology also plays a fundamental role in helping companies move toward DevOps and accommodate developers' preferred workflows. And as products grow increasingly complex, version management also helps incorporate new contributors such as artists and designers into project teams.

The new Best Practices for Version Management whitepaper from Perforce is based on years of our and customers' experience. Starting with the basics such as what makes a good check-in, it provides practical advice on how to get the most out of your version management environment.

Take a look and let us know what you think. We welcome your feedback!

ReleaseTEAM's Spotlight

Cory Vander Jagt- Channels at GitHub

Seldom do I see ReleaseTEAM's Channel Partner liaison get extremely excited about signing up a new Business Partner, but when we signed the agreement with GitHub, our partner manager Heather was beside herself. Not only is GitHub a very solid, well-known version control tool, but the employees are all a delight to work with! Cory Vander Jagt, responsible for working with ReleaseTEAM and a handful of other Business Partners has been a delight to work with. He has been very responsive, knowledgeable, and I feel has gone above and beyond the call of duty to ensure ReleaseTEAM has all the tools and training needed to be a highly successful partner.

Earlier this year, GitHub realized that although their product was a stellar version control product, they did not have the bandwidth to provide professional services when needed. They did some research and found ReleaseTEAM to be the perfect fit for SCM and DevOps consulting engagements; and thus the relationship began. From that day forward Cory has provided our sales team, Channel Partner liaison, and Services Consultants with an abundance of training sessions, power points and webinars to bring us up to speed. He is always there to answer any question and help out with any obstacles we encounter.

Cory is no stranger to working with partners! He has been in the Channel Partner role for 11 years now at GitHub, GoodData, Astadia, and Salesforce. He thoroughly enjoys working closely with the partners and the clients; coaching, training, mentoring, and loves Agile software development. People who have worked with him in the past feel:
"Cory is a rock star. He is our go to guy".

"He provided resources as requested (usually faster than expected), and was always available to help us out; he went above and beyond to suggest additional tools or solutions we had never considered. It speaks volumes that many internal conversations ended with, "Don't worry; Cory can take care of that".

Prior to his Channel Partner career, Cory was a Web Developer for 5 years, dabbled in consulting work, performed software integrations, and designed custom plug ins. He graduated from the University of Michigan with a BSE in Industrial and Operations Engineering.

Cory has been married to his beautiful wife for 12 years and they have 2 wonderful girls, ages 9 and 6. In his spare time he loves spending time with this family skiing, camping, and fishing. Of course swimming and soccer are also a big part of his life as his daughters are very active in these sports!

Cory, it is truly a pleasure working with you. Here's to another 15 years of being partners!

Thanks Cory for all you do!

Special Offer from ReleaseTEAM:
50% off one-week evaluations

Are you having bottle necks that are slowing down productivity? Are you considering other tools to put in your tool stack? Have you always wanted to do a complete tool stack evaluation? For the first time ever, ReleaseTEAM is offering a 1/2 price one week evaluation.

The offer expires December 31, so please contact us soon if you're interested.

One Week Environment Discovery to come up with a plan of action to help you with your needs.

New customers purchasing this one week evaluation will receive a 50% discount on 5 days of consulting.

Buy before December 31 to take advantage of these limited-time offers. Consulting services must be delivered before March 31, 2016.

Atlassian Summit 2015

Atlassian hosted more people than ever before at Summit 2015. Attendance was at max capacity, with over 2600 attendees. Check out the keynotes and sessions here.

We learned about an amazing effort at the Atlassian Summit. It is called the Pledge 1% Program. It is to help companies get more involved in the community. ReleaseTEAM is happy to announce that we have joined the program giving 1% of our profit to charity.

Check it out here

The Puzzler

Now for this month's HOLIDAY puzzler:

At a HOLIDAY party, a grandfather, a grandmother, two fathers, two mothers, four children, three grandchildren, one brother, two sisters, two sons, two daughters, one father-in-law, one mother-in-law, and one daughter-in-law, sit at a table.

How many people are in this family?

Here is last month's question:

Why did no one stop that guy from shooting Gerald the Turkey?

Solution:

Because he shot him with a camera!

The winner of November's puzzler was **Brad M**.! Email us at puzzler@releaseteam.com and let us know where to send your $27 gift card

Send us in your answers and we will randomly pick a winner from all the correct answers to win a $27 ReleaseTEAM gift card. If you'd like to send us puzzlers of your own, feel free to do so!

Send your answers to puzzler@releaseteam.com.