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Arm Holdings, PLC is a global leader in semiconductor IP with over 6,000 employees and an ecosystem of over 1,000 partners. More than 125 billion ARM-based chips have been shipped worldwide and its technologies impact 70% of the global population.

Visualizing Arm IT's Program Boards using ScriptRunner and VisualScript

Visualizing multiple Program Increment (PI) Program Boards for increased collaboration and efficiency

"We have always used a physical whiteboard to visualize Sprint dependencies, features and relevant milestones during our PI Planning. VisualScript Studio has provided us with a real-time dashboard in Jira to visualize this data. As a result, we have started to see improvement in collaboration and efficiency across globally distributed implementation teams."

Rob Negus, Director of IT Product Delivery, Agile and Delivery Management Office, Arm IT.

Overview

The large scale Program Increment (PI) Planning events held in Arm IT presented unique challenges for the group when they tried to maintain visibility of the outputs and outcomes once the planning event was over. It was proving increasingly difficult to monitor the agreed plan through the PI using physical planning boards alone.

The internal expertise of Arm's IT Delivery Management Office (IT DMO), Adaptavist consultants, ScriptRunner, and VisualScript combined to create a powerful solution to digitize the physical Program Boards that are being used across Arm IT.



Background

Arm IT has undergone a multi-year agile transformation with a globally distributed workforce. This transformation started with recognizing they were too slow to deliver, held back in part by their legacy processes.

To better support the execution of Arm's strategy, they recognized that they needed to become more productive, flexible (agile!) and scalable.

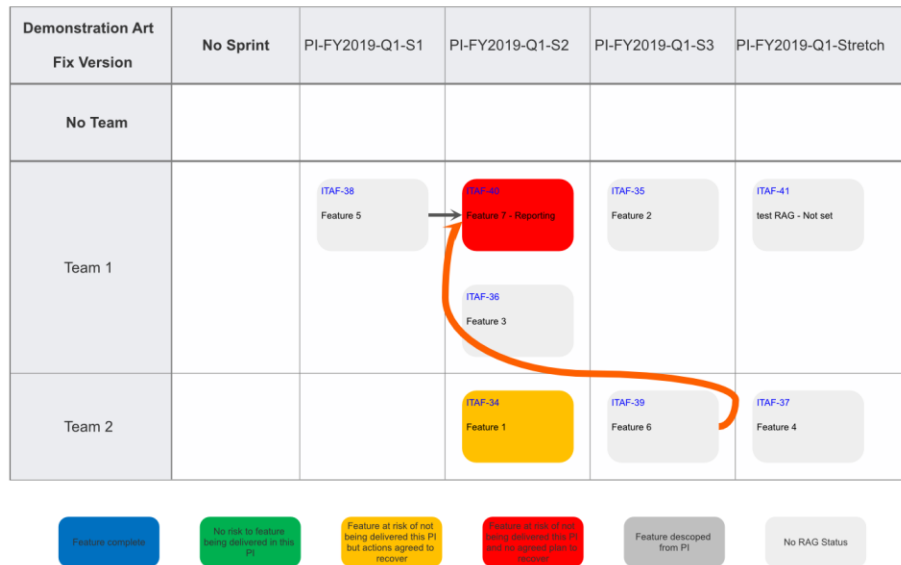
Arm IT used the Scaled Agile Framework for Enterprises (SAFe®) to help their agile transformation, adapting it to their needs. A key event within SAFe is PI Planning. In Arm

IT, this involves multiple Agile Release Trains (ARTs) all meeting simultaneously in Cambridge to plan once a quarter.

Challenge

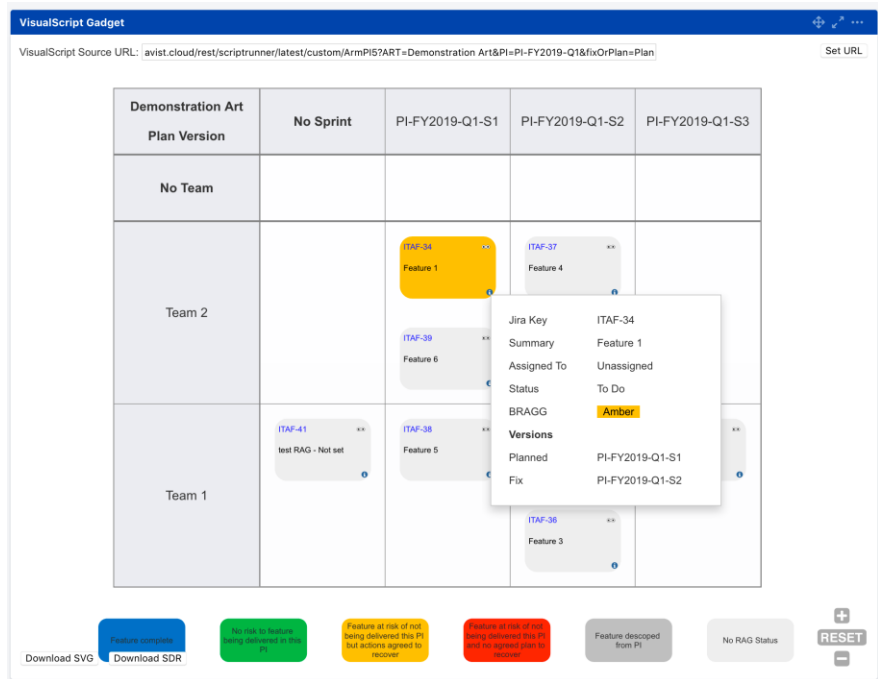
Amongst other things, PI Planning requires synchronizing globally distributed teams onto the same Sprint cadence, and the identification and agreement of critical dependencies. This enables a greater understanding of the overall risk to delivery of PI commitments developed during the two-day planning event.

One of the tools that visualizes dependencies through the planning event is the Program Board. Building each ART Program Board requires considerable effort during the already busy PI Planning event, with string and post it notes being used. While these boards are a great way to visualize commitment, dependencies and risk during the planning meeting in Cambridge, they go out of date quickly and require further effort to maintain. Added to which a number of people in each ART, are not necessarily Cambridge based staff.



Solution

Leveraging Adaptavist's expertise in ScriptRunner, and the visualization power of VisualScript, Arm IT was able to create truly digital Program Boards.



These new digital Program Boards visualize the planned and fixed versions of features for each ART participating in the PI. For each feature, the team sets a planned and fixed (forecast) version estimating when the feature is due to be delivered within the PI. ScriptRunner and VisualScript Studio use these fields to organize the features on the digital Program Boards.

Using standard Jira linkages, any stakeholder can quickly see the dependencies between features at a glance. This allows the IT Product Delivery leadership team, Product Teams, and customers within the business to see straight away if a predecessor feature occurs in a later Sprint, highlighting the dependency in orange. Other benefits include the ability to track the delta between planned and forecast delivery, and color coding of features to indicate risk to delivery, all from one dashboard.

Results

It is early in the journey of digitally visualizing activity in a PI, but there has already been traction. As other teams in Arm have seen the reporting done by the IT DMO, they have asked how they can learn from the work and bring it into their own group to suit their needs.

Stakeholders have better visibility of the Program Board and ultimately into the performance of each ART. This enables them to make adjustments in the PI, course correcting plans if necessary to achieve better outcomes.. For such a recent transformation, Arm IT have matured quickly in their operations, accelerated by the visibility ScriptRunner and VisualScript are providing them.