

An Agile Release Train in a Campus Solutions world

- > StAART - Student Administration Agile Release Train @ RMIT



Introduction

Who we are

Catherine Haugh

Senior Portfolio Manager - Release Train Engineer

Terence Le Grange

CS Team Lead - Iteration Manager

Claire Sanders

Lead Functional Analyst - Functional Chapter Lead

How we're doing this

- Our presentation Kanban wall - we'll track our progress and keep a backlog of questions to answer
- Time boxing - each section will run for 10 mins and then we'll have 15 mins for questions
- Tweet your questions if you like – [@rmitstaart](https://twitter.com/rmitstaart)

What to see next

Going Agile

Maddy McMaster

RMIT Academic Registrar - StAART Business Sponsor

Fri 7 November - 10.20 - 11.05

“This session will describe what has been learnt so far - trials and tribulations, managing the zealots, and making ceremonies work - with a non-technical introduction to the world of agile projects.”

Alliance 2014 Kanban Wall

Backlog

Doing

Done

Architecture

A day in
the life

Agile & train
intro

Deployment

Tech
foundation

Environments

Squads

why change?

SAFe

Release
cycle

Iteration
cycle

Feature
wall

Bundles

AUTOMATED
TESTING

Defining the
work

Stories

INTRODUCTION

Why did we need to change?



Imagine if you could increase productivity, eliminate waste, release value faster and increase staff engagement.....

@rwbrown: #Agile Irony:
People who used to wait a year for the wrong thing now can't wait four weeks for the right one.

Agile in 60 seconds



What is a release train?

“A long-lived, self-organizing team-of-agile-teams that delivers solutions.”

“The purpose of the release train is aligning a group of teams to a common vision.”



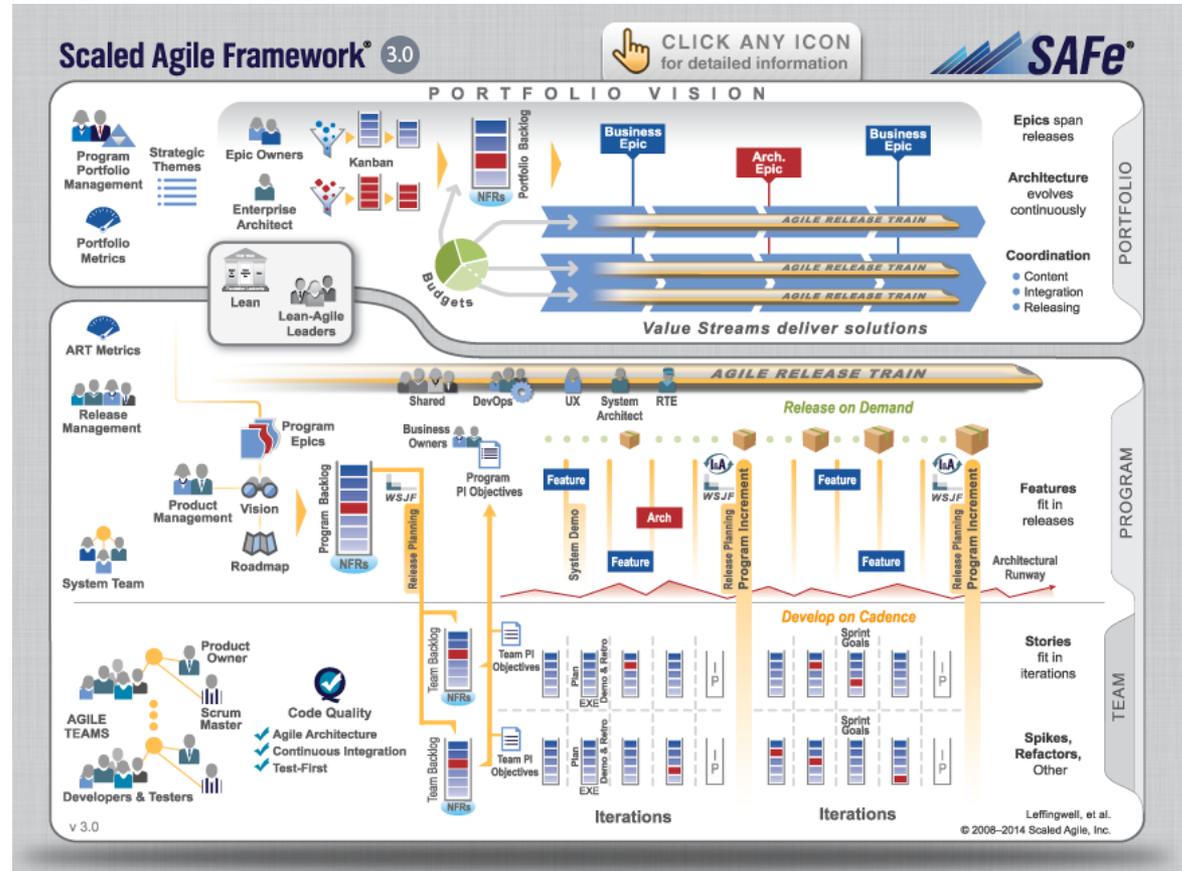
What is SAFe?

We use a delivery framework called "[Scaled Agile Framework](#)" (SAFe).

SAFe is designed for organisations that have teams delivering work across multiple, interlinked projects.

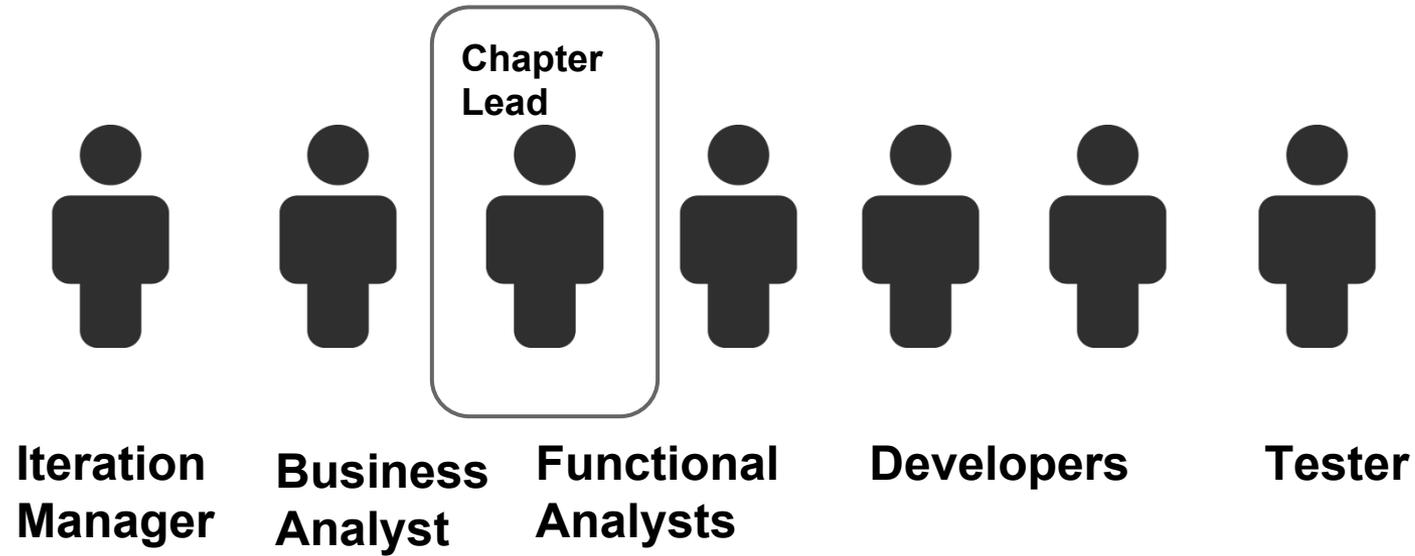
- Kanban
- Lean
- Scrum
- Kaizen
- Servant leadership

Teams are at the heart of SAFe



This image is known as [The Big Picture](#). It describes the structure of a SAFe working environment, from the grassroots level of squads doing technical delivery (Team level) up to the management of major projects across the organisation (Portfolio level).

Squadification



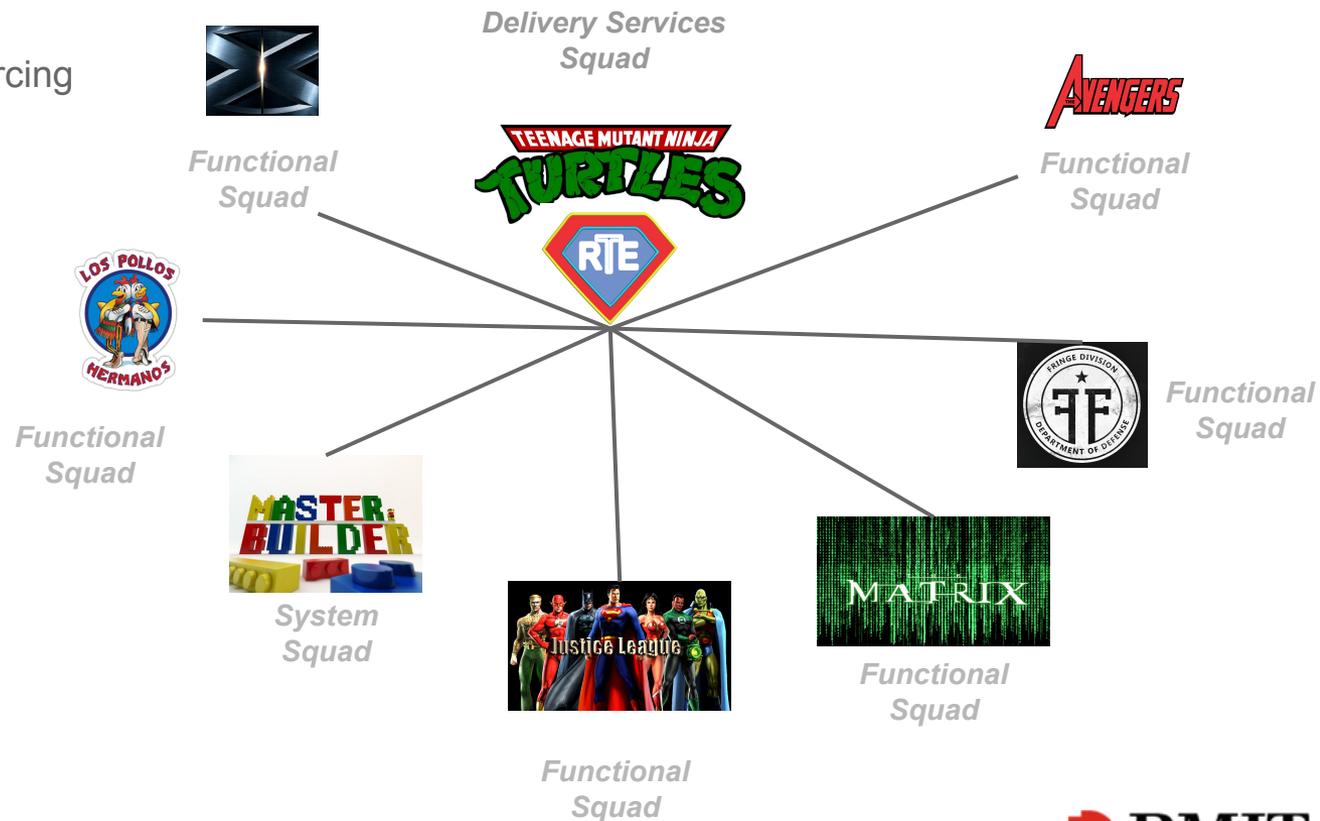
6 squads with a functional focus
1 system team with technical specialists

StAART - A System with a Cast & Crew & a Theme

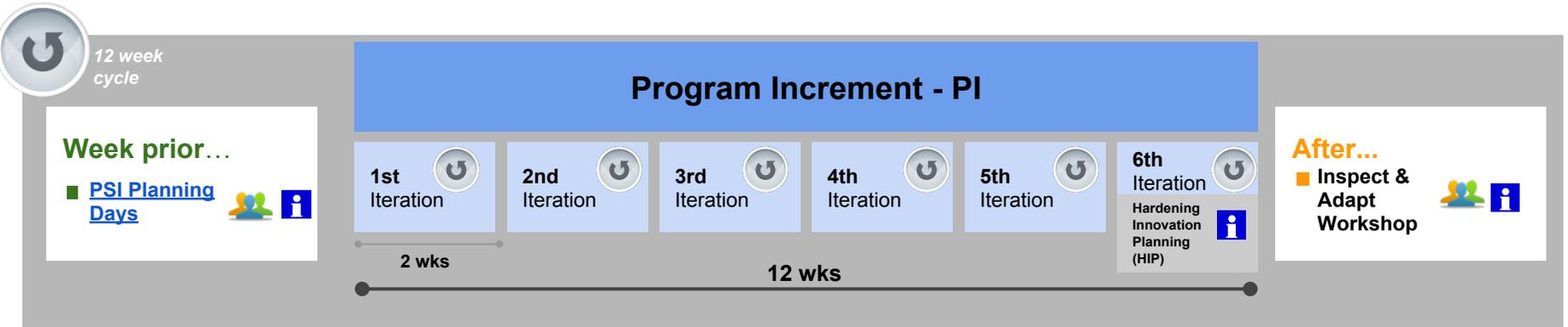
The *system* of the Release Train drives the train.

The Release Train Engineer leads and fosters a culture that enables the system to work:

- open
- building cross-skilled resourcing
- collaborative
- an end-result attitude



Release Train Cycle Timeline & Rituals



- Cadence
- Synchronisation
- Conversation
- Capacity
- Velocity
- Fast feedback



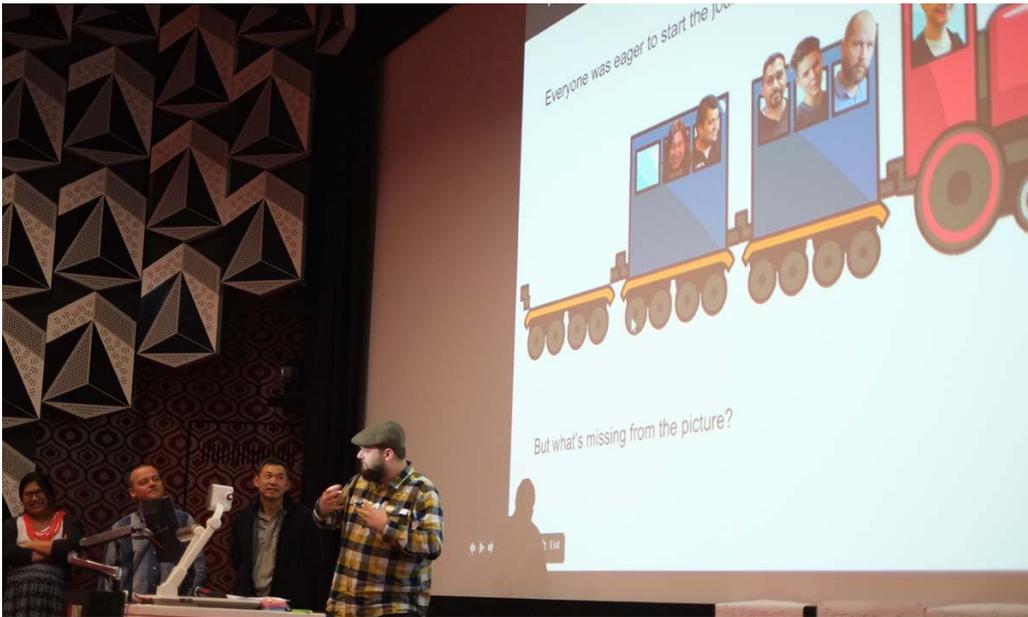
- Continuous collaboration
- Visibility
- Transparency
- Shared understanding

Release Planning



Back

Inspect and Adapt



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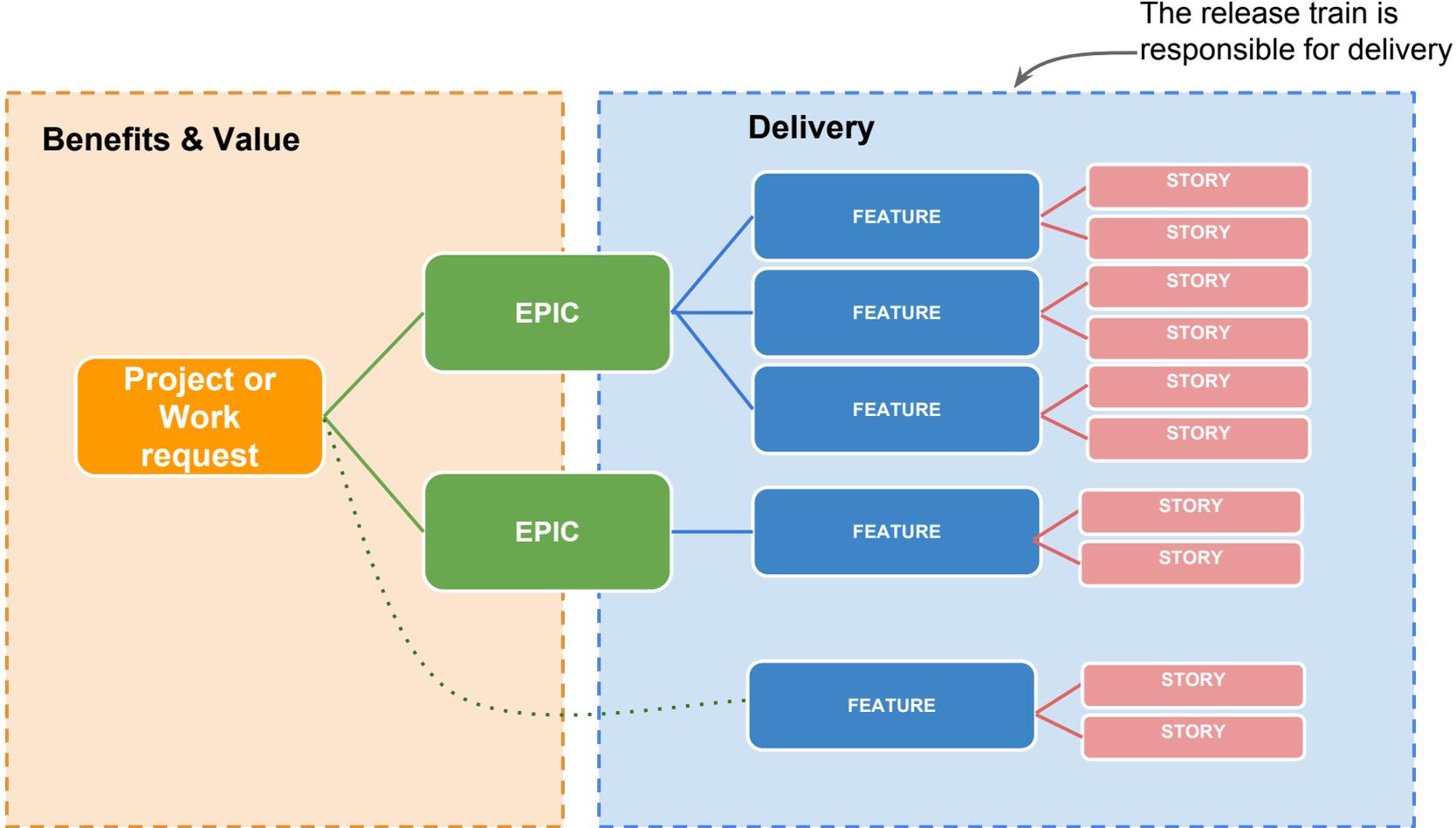
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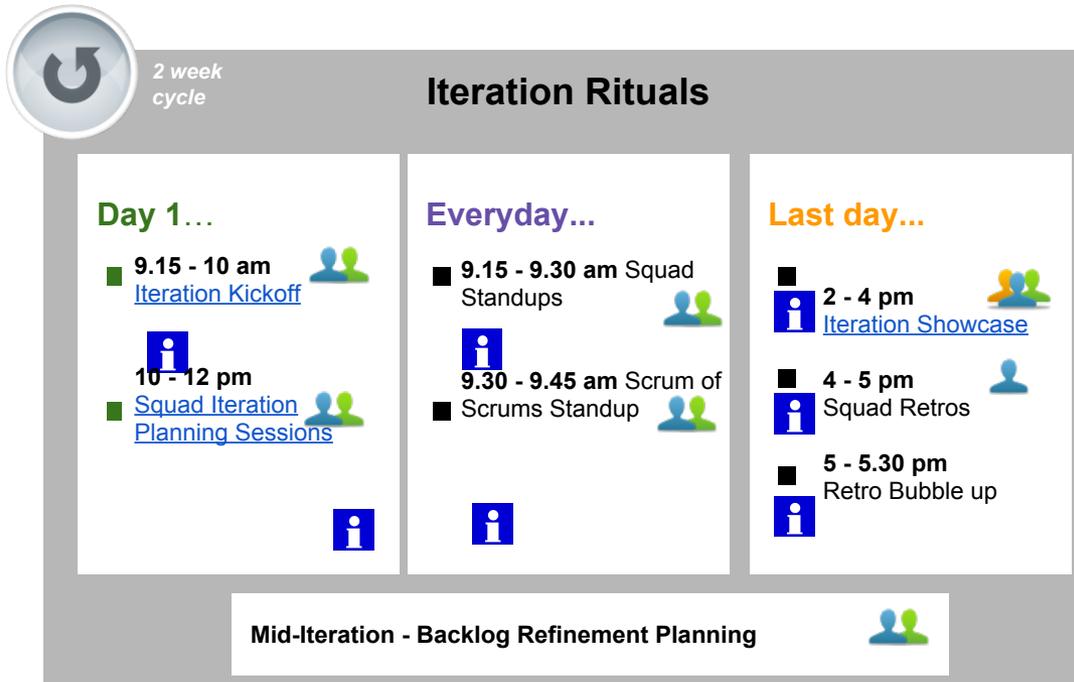
Feature wall



Scrum of Scrums



Release Train Cycle Timeline & Rituals



Iteration Kick-off

Day 1 of iteration..



Iteration Planning



A day in the life of a Squad

Everyday...

9.15 - 9.30 am Squad Standups

- Face to face
- Story progress
- Coordination
- Blocker resolution/escalation

Story example

As a Customer Service team member

I need Campus Solutions to stop me generating a request for an Academic Statement if the student has an NSI

so that I can efficiently serve students without having to check multiple pages

Story evolution

Prior to StAART we would have written a long specification...



Story evolution

With StAART we have a conversation



We need this page to error under these conditions

Can we have different messages for the different reasons?

Sure, but we need variable data; where do I get that?

On this sub-page. It's required data so you can rely on it.

Great! Let's update the acceptance criteria, documentation and get back together for a desk-check later

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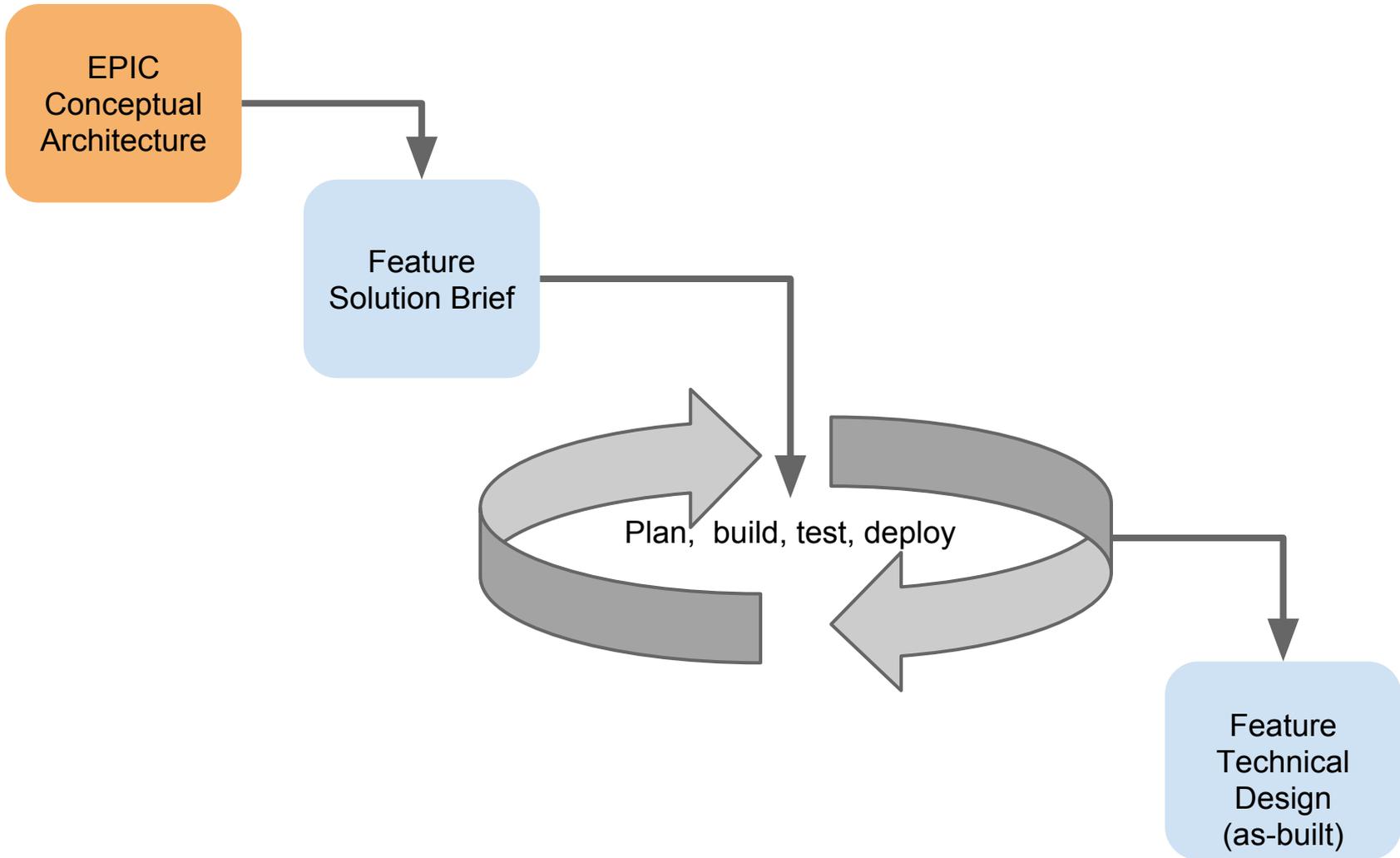
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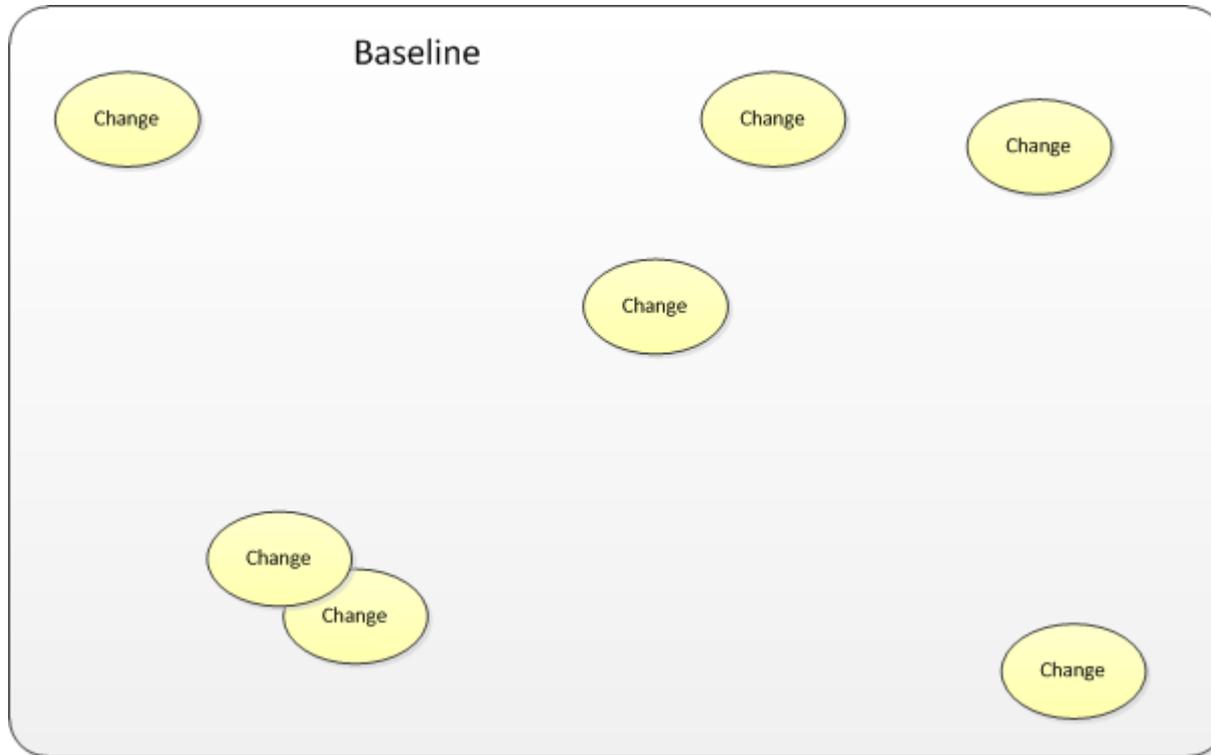


A stable foundation

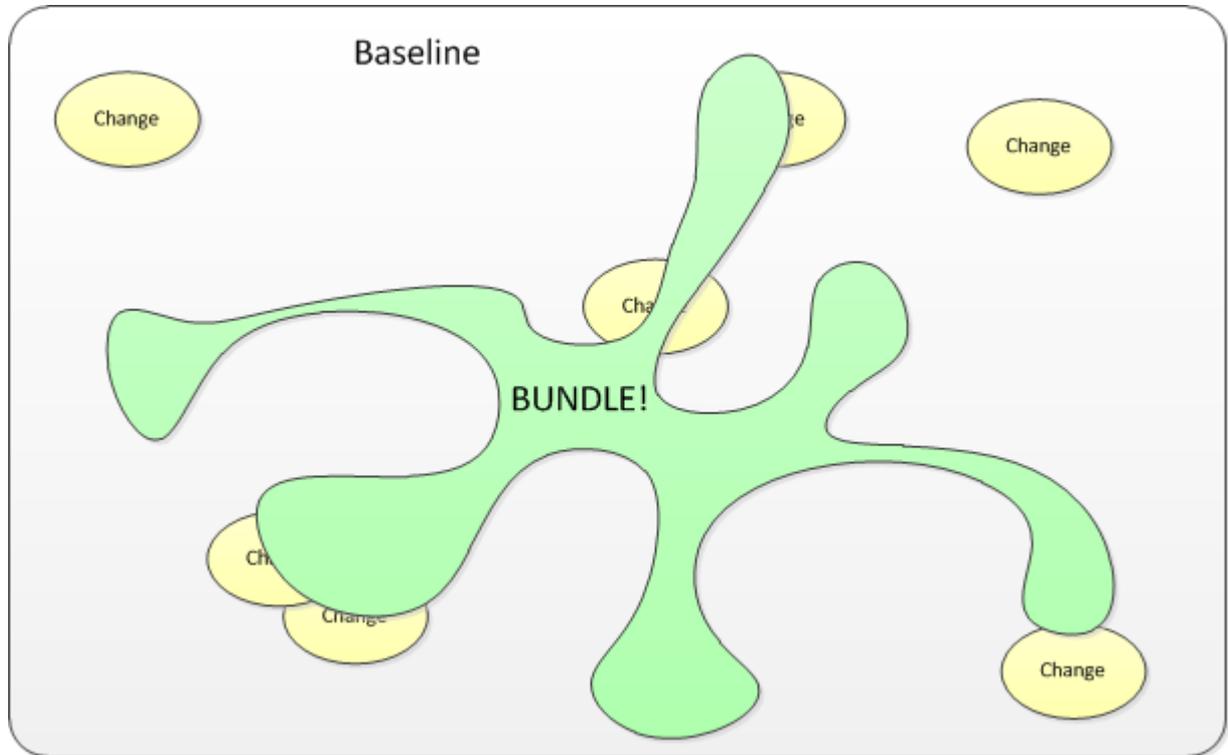
- System team to manage platform
- Unix, DBA, PS Sys Admin
- We achieved a lot:
 - Storage
 - DR
 - Database Upgrade
 - OS Upgrade
 - Bundles 21-34 (and others!)



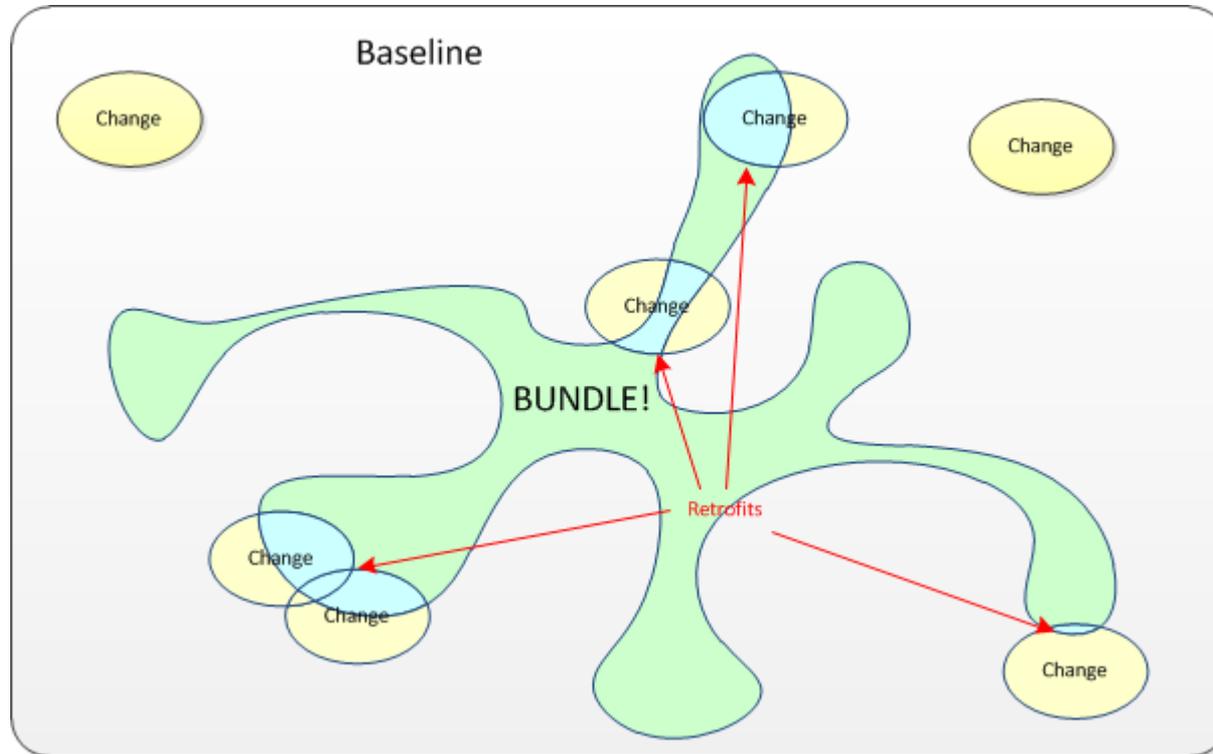
The challenges Oracle presents us



The challenges Oracle presents us

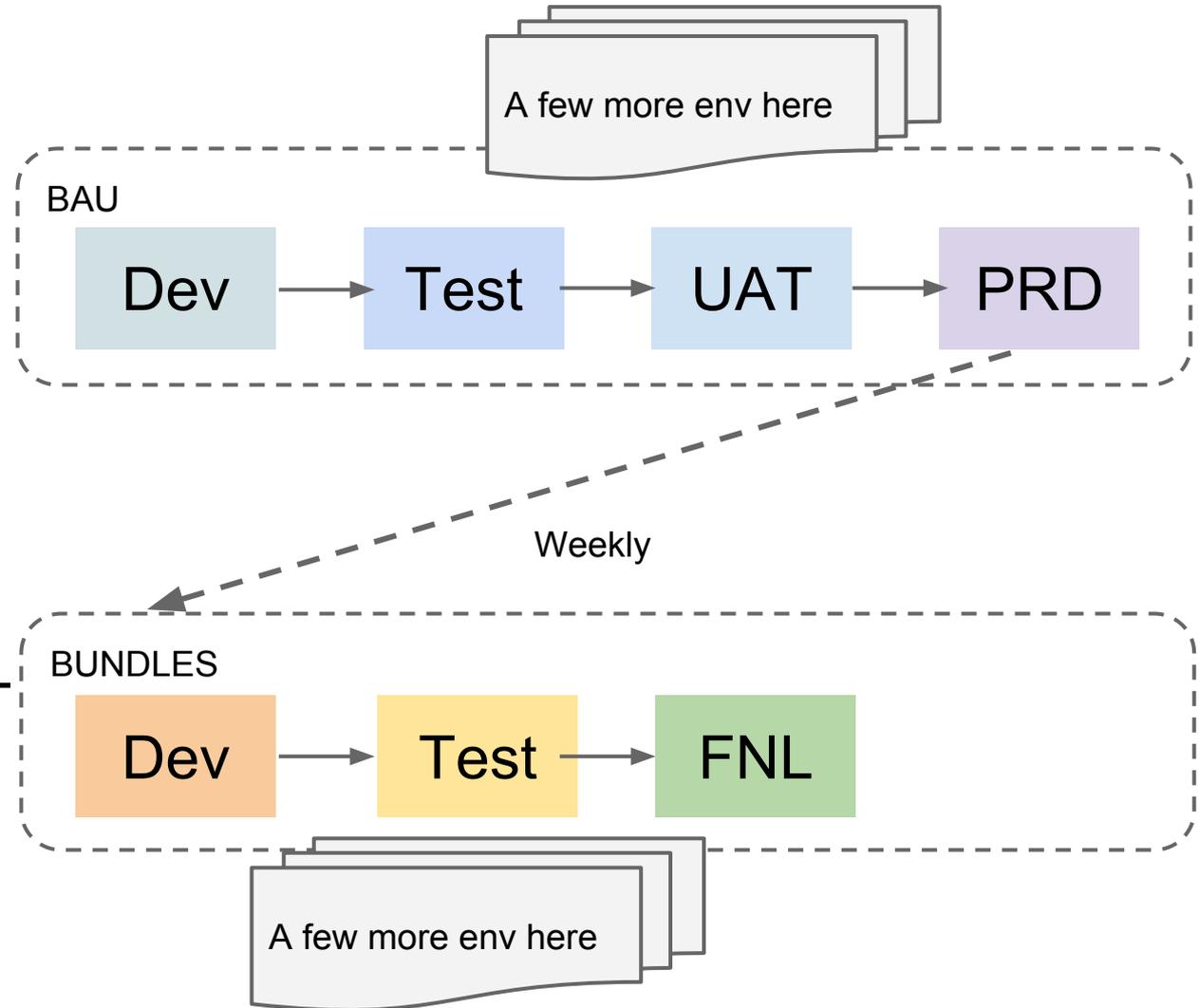


The challenges Oracle presents us



Continuous Development

- Allow multiple teams to develop despite challenges of bundles
- Retrofit often
- Release into PRD from FNL during go-live

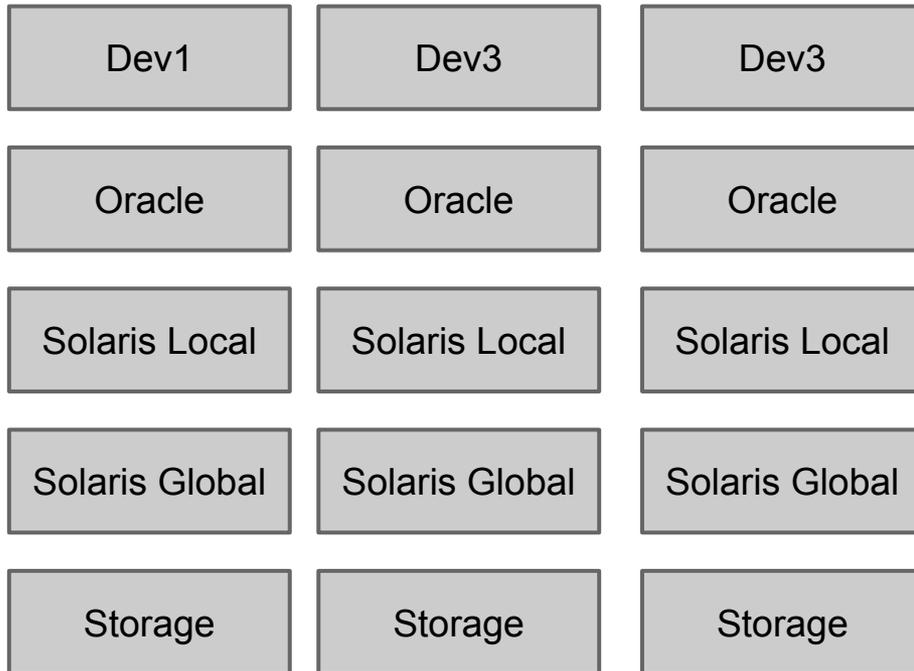


Squad demands on environments

Before:

Many Solaris Zones

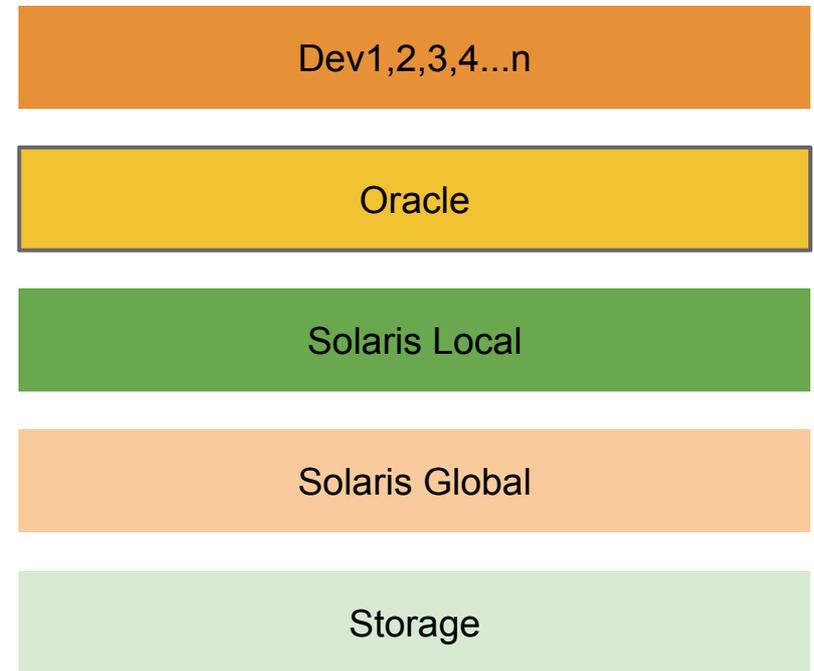
Days / weeks to provision



After:

Consolidation of zones

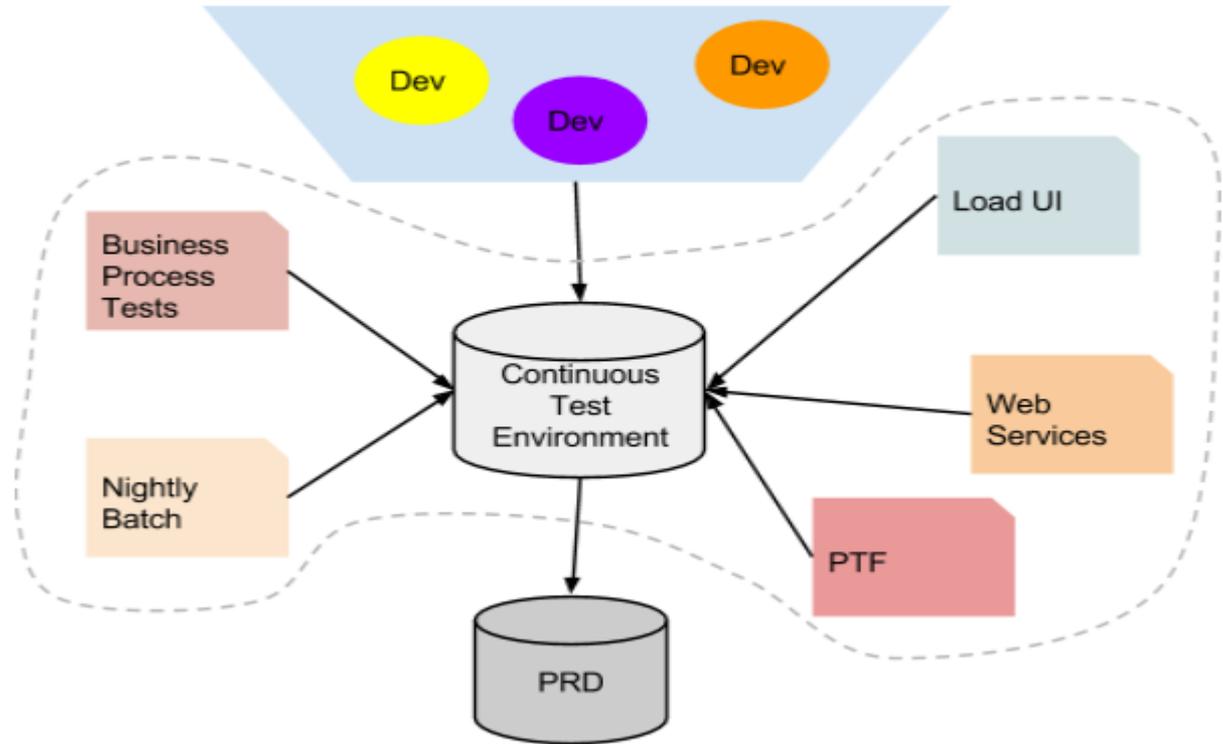
Hours to provision



Continuous Testing

Test automation remains a challenge

- We have a plan to automate:
 - BPT
 - PTF
 - SoapUI
 - etc
- On a daily / reqd. basis



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- Iteration cycle
- Agile & train intro
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- Architecture
- Release cycle
- Squads
- SAFE
- Defining the work
- Feature wall
- Environments
- A day in the life
- AUTOMATED TESTING

How work gets onto the train

- Current projects
- Work requests to enhance and support Student Administration systems

Program Increment (PI)
Pipeline & Demand Management

Prioritisation

PI Planning Days

Program Increment (PI)
Delivery



Continuous deployment

- User Business Value
- Time Criticality
- Risk Reduction/Opportunity Enablement Value
- Job/Batch Size

Cadence

Program Increment - PI

Iterations

1	2	3	4	5	6
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2

wks

12

wks

[More info](#)

Lessons and challenges

What have we learnt?

- 2 week iterations work at scale
- Conversation is key

Challenges

- Shifting culture
- Being iterative in a fixed world e.g. funding
- Organisational disruption
- Business driven development

Getting better

“High performance isn’t, ultimately, about running faster, throwing harder, or leaping farther. It’s about something much simpler: getting better at getting better.”

from Better All the Time, by James Surowiecke, in
The New Yorker, November 10, 2014



Questions?

From the backlog ...

From the floor...

Ask @rmitstaart questions throughout HEUG!

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Contact us

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About the conference



What is the HEUG?

The [Higher Education User Group \(HEUG\)](#) is an international organization consisting of Higher Education institutions that use application software from the Oracle Corporation.

The HEUG's objectives are:

- To provide a mechanism for sharing information and experience among Higher Education customers on selection, implementation and cost-effective use of Oracle application software.
- To provide a means by which the HEUG can speak with a common voice to Oracle on matters of common interests, thereby improving its members' communication and influence regarding product expectations and recommendations for improvement in Oracle products used in Higher Education.
- To provide opportunities for communication between Oracle management, developers and business partners and the HEUG, in order to keep HEUG members informed as to product plans, new developments and directions, and other areas of concern.

What is the HEUG Alliance Downunder 2014?

The [Australian New Zealand Higher Education Users Group \(HEUG\) 2014 Alliance Down Under Conference](#) was held at the Gold Coast on November 5 - 7 2014.

The program catered for the interests of all aspects of the use of PeopleSoft and Oracle technologies in and was supported by key vendors. In addition to the main conference program, there was an Executive Forum and Academic Registrars' Forum held during the course of the conference. There were also pre-conference workshops held in the days leading up to the conference.

There were keynote speakers and presentations across five tracks: Technical, HR, Finance, Student and CRM.

RMIT uses the Oracle Campus Solutions student administration system.