storyteller

Business Alignment Through the DevOps Loop

Introduction

CIOs are more focused than ever on moving from project-based, Waterfall projects to continuous delivery of working software. Agile, Lean, and DevOps approaches are at the top of their agendas.

Developing and supporting software in today's complicated business and technology environment is exceedingly complex. Every project is different, as is every product. Numerous stakeholders are involved, and business needs change mid-stream. Assembly lines, without input from the business and planning functions that drive product success, aren't equipped to handle these factors.

Additionally, a robust assembly line depends on an automated integration of activities. That's where efficiency and quality consistency improve. But to automate and integrate, you must first understand the tools people use to perform the activities that support production.

This is a challenge for most CIOs.

Because teams have historically chosen their own development tools, most IT departments have a myriad of solutions to support business analysis, development, testing, release management, and support. There is little consistency. Tools don't talk to one another. There are overlaps and gaps in functionality. Automation and integration is virtually impossible.

This is where DevOps became valuable. Organizations across industries began adopting DevOps methodologies to bridge the gaps between disparate tool sets.

In a recent report, Gartner refers to these collections of siloed development tool ecosystems as "tool islands." If CIOs want to achieve continuous delivery of high-quality software, they must build bridges between these islands, because these tools must work together seamlessly.

DevOps has failed to identify and bridge one of the most crucial gaps preventing the automation of the end-to-end delivery cycle. The Business-IT value gap continues to widen across product development lifecycles.

The DevOps Loop Falls Short

Our team recently commissioned a study through Forrester to evaluate the effectiveness of the DevOps toolchain. The results found that organizations agree that DevOps should drive business value.

The problem? We also found that while organizations believe this, they are not measuring value.

62% of organizations
still rely on speed to measure the success of their DevOps initiatives

Only 45% measure value

Only 33% measure the ROI
generated from their DevOps practices

Right now, there is an assumption that if you can achieve speed through Agile and DevOps you will be successful in driving business value. The reality is that DevOps alone does not lead to better business outcomes without more effective focus on the essential business-IT value gap.

Learn more about how to drive business-IT alignment with BizDevOps from some of the world's most knowledgeable business analysts - Read our **Forrester Research** report here.

DOWNLOAD NOW

How to Bridge the Business-IT Value Gap

To drive business value downstream, we must integrate the Biz loop into the broader BizDevOps toolchain. The Biz loop drives upfront business-IT alignment protecting business value as the product flows through the DevOps loop.

The traditional DevOps loop
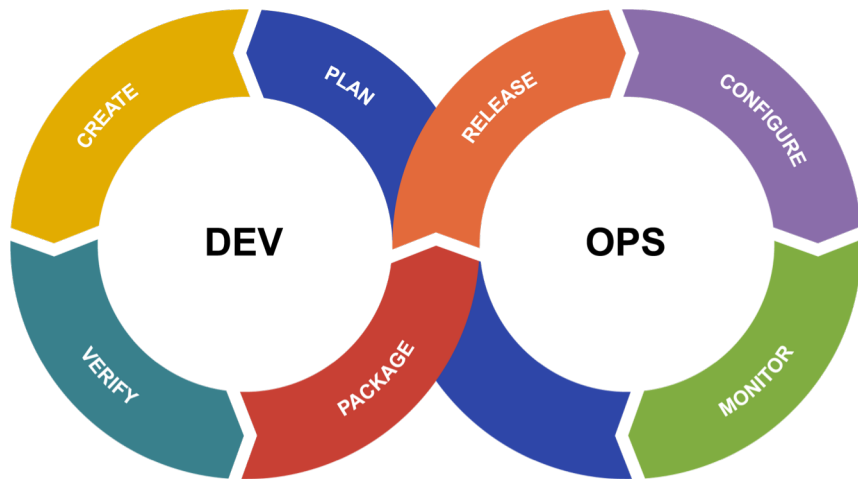
BizDevOps Value Cycle

The traditional DevOps loop

1 **PLAN**
An ongoing set of activities that encompasses requirements definition, metrics development, prioritization of new and enhanced features, security planning, and release planning.

2 **CREATE**
Includes activities associated with the creation of a code release candidate, including design, coding, builds, functional testing, and release management.

3 **VERIFY**
Quality assurance activities, including the variety of testing types like acceptance testing, regression testing, and performance testing.

4 **PREPROD**
The activities that take place when a release is ready for deployment, including staging, approvals, and configuration.

5 **RELEASE**
Includes activities needed to move software into production, including release and fallback/recovery activities.

6 **CONFIGURE**
An activity that occurs through the DevOps Toolchain that includes provisioning and configuration of hardware and software.

7 **MONITOR**
Activities focused on the health of production environments, including measurement of performance, availability, and other nonfunctional requirements, as well as monitoring of the end user experience. Feedback from these activities is factored back into Planning activities.

This model does not have an explicit connection to the business. For organizations to be successful in driving business value throughout the DevOps toolchain, four key phases are required upfront, before the product teams begin developing code. These upfront phases make up the Biz loop:

Storyteller Drives a High-Performing BizDevOps Toolchain

An abundance of tools exist to support each phase of the tactical DevOps loop. Storyteller is the only product that drives Business-IT alignment from the Biz loop down throughout the entire BizDevOps toolchain. It is key in automatically aligning all downstream activities with the goals and objectives needed to deliver the expected business value. To facilitate this, Storyteller integrates with many other development, testing, and operations tools to keep the continuous delivery engine turning.
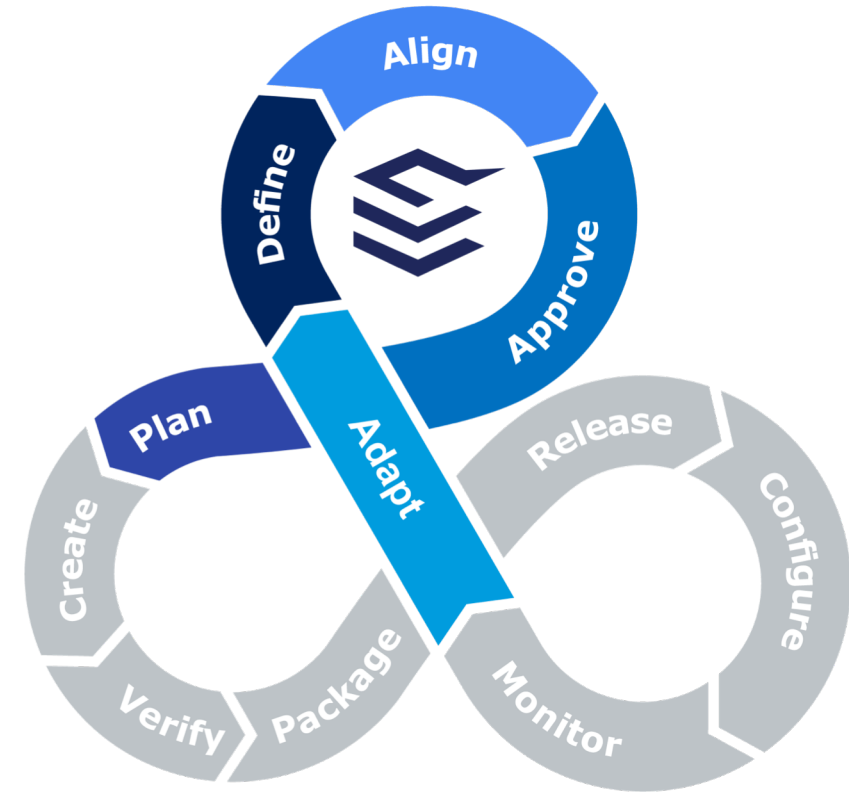
Storyteller Drives a High-Performing BizDevOps Toolchain

Here are some key ways that **Storyteller** automates Business-IT alignment throughout the BizDevOps value stream:

ADAPT	DEFINE	ALIGN	APPROVE	PLAN
Incorporating the latest customer, business and market feedback facilitates the definition of business initiatives, road mapping, and upfront planning. Traceability and impact analysis reports enable users to adapt to changing internal priorities as business objectives evolve. Framework accelerators and legacy redesign features support evolving business needs as organizations adapt to the changing Agile environment.	Storyteller's visual modeling enables business and IT stakeholders to define their vision through a visual, well understood solution model. The solution is then decomposed into functional components that define the various activities at each stage of the toolchain. Storyteller accelerates delivery and enforces standardization through the centralization and reuse of validated content, and the automatic generation of user stories, test scripts and acceptance criteria.	Upfront alignment is key in driving business value throughout the SDLC. Storyteller facilitates alignment by providing standardized, automated workflows, a visual walkthrough feature for an intuitive design review and collaboration, and a myriad of integration capabilities.	Easily generated and shareable reviews are key to the approval process in a business-driven application lifecycle. A wide breadth of stakeholder feedback helps to reduce rework and keep teams aligned throughout the value stream.

This is value stream management, which analysts define as a solution that enables companies to extend automation, value delivered, costs, burn rates, and other management reporting capabilities for a given value stream to the business. | Storyteller extends into the DevOps loop to include all planning capabilities.

Storyteller's lean Kanban and Scrum work management module efficiently manages product backlog, development tasks, sprints, burndown rates and releases. Track work with confidence by automatically aligning strategic initiatives and product definition to the work being done. |

The Benefits of Storyteller and Value Stream Management Solutions

As a result of implementing value stream management solutions, large organizations reported that they expect to achieve efficiency early on, continuous value to the business, and visibility across the DevOps toolchain.

▶ Efficiency gains in the earliest definition and analysis stages

▶ Efficiency in managing product backlog, development tasks, sprints, burndown rates and releases

▶ Value delivered to the business through the value stream,

▶ Visibility into all components of the DevOps toolchain

▶ An improved understanding of the costs and budget burn rate

▶ Visibility into a user outcome of implemented features

▶ And finally, visibility into the automated governance and control points of the pipeline

All of this is made possible through automation of the front-end planning activities, which ensures that Agile and DevOps activities are aligned with business needs.

[Blueprint provides] centralization of process and rigor, allowing for a level of delivery standardization that our business partners previously were not accustomed to receive.

Mercedes Draffin
IT Vice President, New
York Life Insurance

How New York Life Insurance Company is leveraging Storyteller to drive better upfront business alignment

New York Life Insurance faced a number of common challenges:

- A lack of an intuitive, understandable product view to align business stakeholders

- A lack of a permanent system of record of what has been delivered

- A lack of complete documentation of what has been delivered

- Business stakeholders having difficulty understanding what is being worked on, and what has been delivered in a sprint

- High levels of time and effort required to manually write and coordinate user stories and test cases

- Difficulty managing key business imperatives like compliance and non-functional requirements (such as performance, security, usability)

- Difficulty tying development and testing efforts back to business objectives

New York Life
Insurance Company

Given these challenges, they hoped to accomplish these objectives using Blueprint products:

- Improve the success of product and application launches

- Increase business visibility into development plans, designs and progress before the product is released

- Increase maturity and agility of planning and requirements processes

- Remove bottlenecks at the front end of the development cycle

- Manage changes required by the business

- Stay ahead of regulatory and compliance issues

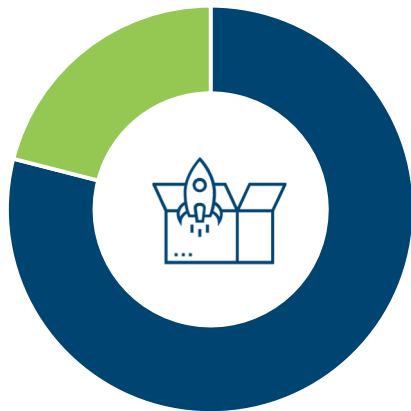"Using Blueprint products has increased the automation of previously manual tasks in our development cycle."

The results that NY Life Insurance achieved using Blueprint products were dramatic:

- They found that they complete projects more than **50% faster** when using Blueprint products

- They complete requirements and user stories of an average project with **41-50% less effort** since using Blueprint products.

"The average projects delivered using Blueprint products are much more aligned to our business and market needs."

Storyteller at the Front of your BizDevOps Loop

Customers who have leveraged Blueprint products have seen a dramatic improvement in business alignment and automation. A study of Blueprint customers by research firm TechValidate found that:

79%
The average project delivered using Blueprint products is much more aligned to business and market needs in 79% of customers.
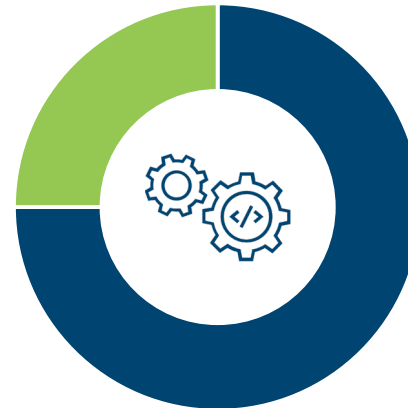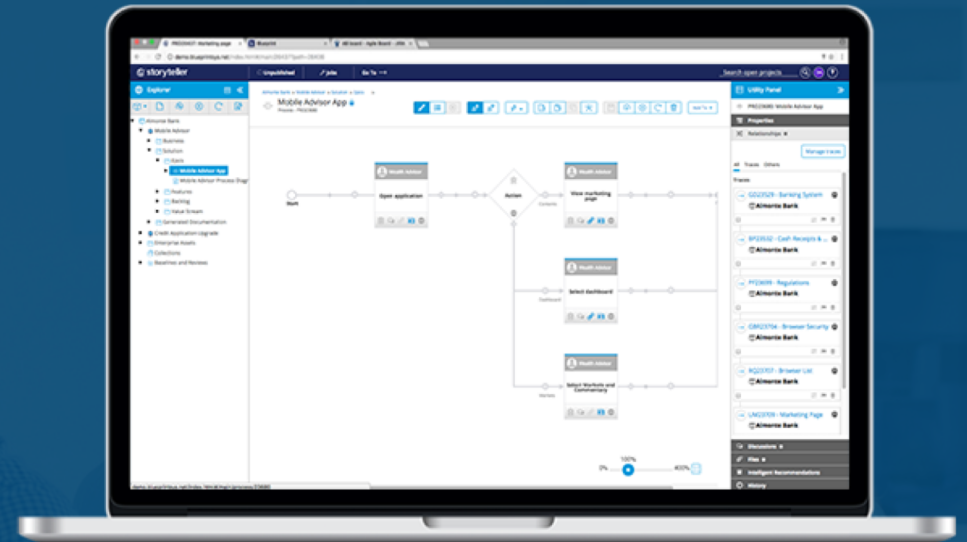
75%
Using Blueprint products has increased the automation of previously manual tasks in the development cycle for 75% of customers.

Source: TechValidate Survey. Published: Aug. 22, 2017

SIGN UP FOR A FREE TRIAL

See for yourself how we support the move to automating **business-IT alignment** through the BizDevOps value stream.

TRY IT FREE

blueprint®

Blueprint provides industry-leading Agile planning and compliance management solutions that accelerate and de-risk the digital transformation of large organizations. Our products – Blueprint Storyteller and Blueprint Regulatory Compliance Manager – resolve the complex development challenges many IT organizations face. These closed-loop solutions drive innovation, collaboration, and alignment; ensure regulatory compliance; and protect the business value of products from definition to delivery.