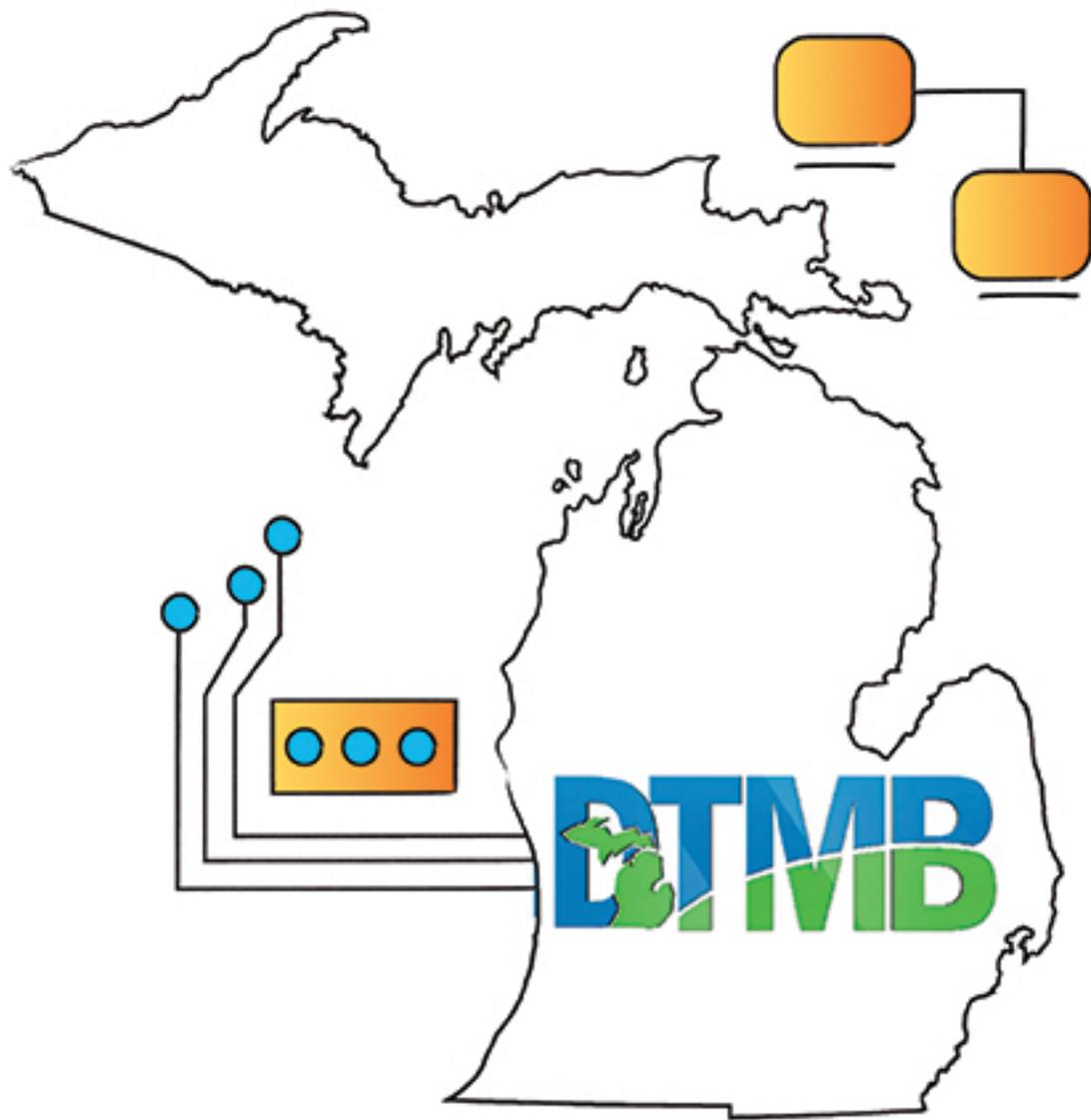


An Agile Success Story





The State of Michigan Department of Technology Agile Integration Program

A Success Story

The Challenge

The State of Michigan's Department of Technology, Management, and Budget (DTMB) was experiencing difficulty delivering projects that were considered successful by their agency business customers.

In addressing the problem, the DTMB centralized the function of Project Manager into an Enterprise Portfolio Management Office (ePMO), and established the position of Professional Project Manager. As things progressed, they inadvertently introduced too much bureaucracy, documentation and process debt into the system. From the added bureaucracy arose a level of frustration, particularly concerning the barriers to receiving the Professional Project Management designation.

The State of Michigan needed a good alternative to the bureaucracy while still maintaining a high level of professionalism in delivering projects.



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The Decision

A decision was made to integrate key aspects of Scrum, a framework based on Agile values and principles, while establishing a more disciplined and structured approach to projects and programs.

Several barriers had to be overcome for the transition to this style of “disciplined Agile” to be successful. While each of the many agencies had its own unique culture, the overall culture at the highest level was one of risk aversion. Teams had become accustomed to managing and reducing risk through additional documentation and bureaucracy – ideas that are antithetical to the core Agile principles of “fail-fast,” “lighter, leaner,” and a focus on collaboration. As new, younger professionals entered the state’s IT workforce, it was obvious that they did not share the state’s risk aversion strategy, and it became more difficult to attract and retain top talent.

The Solution

Ward Beauchamp, the Director of Enterprise Portfolio Management Office at the DTMB, was committed to establishing an Agile environment to adjust the balance and address the need to make progress while still effectively managing risk. His vision included systematically and gradually reducing the amount of bureaucracy while still being able to produce predictable results. He set out to reduce the level of risk aversion by delivering systems iteratively and incrementally, and producing results using Agile methods that would help them build more trust and collaboration with their agency customers.

The Impact

Identifying the deepest need as one for culture change, Mr. Beauchamp decided to bring in Broadsword, a performance innovation firm known for integrating Agile methods with CMMI, to help his team become more agile while continuing to leverage the best of their existing approach to managing IT projects (SUITE), and adopting both CMMI and Scrum to transform into a lighter, leaner organization while still maintaining discipline and structure. He felt that Broadsword understood how to help him balance the way they wanted to run Agile projects while still demonstrating a high level of Project Management capability, and without losing their investment in CMMI and process maturity while they made the transition to Agile.



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The Approach

Broadsword assisted the DTMB with their program to offer hands-on, learner-centered training that acclimated their Agile teams to an integrated “Scrum + SUITE” approach, as well as prepared practitioners to sit for the Professional Scrum Master certification exam. In one- and two-day onsite classes, State of Michigan IT professionals that attended the “Scrum + SUITE Learning Experience” training learned to make the transition to Scrum, and also how to integrate Scrum and SUITE into their project environments.

Take-aways included the following:

- Learn how to be part of a Scrum Team
- Learn how to be a Scrum Master and Scrum Product Owner
- Learn about Scrum Elements, Ceremonies, and Artifacts
- Learn Epic and User Story development
- Learn the Project Manager and Business Analyst role in Scrum at the DTMB
- Learn to use SUITE to make Scrum even stronger

The Result

The State of Michigan is successfully managing the complexity of culture change. By learning to take an Agile approach to improving their SUITE implementation for managing projects, as well as how to make SUITE work with Scrum, the DTMB has been able to cut through the clutter, set agile goals, solve problems, communicate and transform in a positive way, leading to better outcomes for Michigan’s citizens.

“Broadsword helped us be able to say, ‘We can do this,’ ” Mr. Beauchamp said. “They taught us how to get there.

“We had other vendors who weren’t willing to listen to the challenges that we felt we had. Broadsword was able to listen to our main concerns, and provide some tailored training to accommodate that.

“I’ve gotten some great feedback from executives who said they were really happy with the training.”



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