

TRANSFORMING FROM TRADITIONAL TO DISCIPLINED AGILE DELIVERY

Business Agility | Higher Throughput | Better Quality

Panera Bread

Panera Bread has over 1,700 bakery-cafes in 44 US states and Canada, delivering fresh, authentic artisan bread served in a warm environment by engaging associates.

Mike Nettles, VP IT Processes and Architecture

“Our business partners found our historical IT development practices punitive and mysterious. DAD changed this perception entirely by building a level of transparency and accountability into not just our software development projects, but also in our everyday working relationships with our business stakeholders. The credibility gains this has provided our IT team has been immeasurable and immediate. SA+A’s coaching was particularly invaluable to our team, providing highly personalized instruction for our new agilists. The program has been so well received that our business leaders personally requested their own Product Ownership training. DAD has been a perfect fit for the Panera cultural values of operational excellence.”

Bryan Griffith, Chief IT Process Architect

“After retaining Scott Ambler + Associates to train our IT and Business teams on the DAD process and to mentor them through several iterations, we can now say unequivocally that our alignment with the business is stronger and that their satisfaction with both the process and the solutions we’re building is greater than ever.”



The Business Need

Being a high-growth company in a competitive industry, Panera needed to improve their ability to quickly deliver and adapt high quality IT solutions to support its rapidly changing business. These solutions include a mixture of custom development, package implementations, and mobile applications, built in-house as well as outsourced.

The Solution

Panera engaged Scott Ambler + Associates (SA+A) to assess their current IT solution delivery practices and create a roadmap for their agile transformation. Through a mixture of workshops and agile coaching, Panera successfully piloted the new approach on two critical projects. Panera is now rolling out the Disciplined Agile Delivery (DAD) process decision framework across the enterprise.

The Benefits

Adopting DAD at Panera has resulted in tangible benefits in many areas, including increased frequency of solution delivery, higher quality, and a much better working relationship between IT and business. The transparency inherent in the process of all work across teams has reduced the need for unnecessary meetings and the risk of miscommunications.

SCOTT AMBLER
+ Associates 

The Approach

Assess the Organization and Teams

Context counts. DAD is a pragmatic approach to adopting agile at scale in the enterprise. A fundamental aspect of the framework is to adapt the process for the situation at hand. SA+A spent three days assessing the existing processes at Panera and then produced a roadmap for transforming the organization from a traditional solution delivery approach to the Disciplined Agile model.

Train the Executive Team

A transformation from traditional approaches to agile will fail if there is not adequate support at an organization's executive level. SA+A conducted a 1-day workshop with senior executives to ensure that everyone understood the new model of intense and ongoing engagement that would be required between the business and IT in order to be successful.

Train the Delivery Teams

The next step was to train the delivery teams on the approach just prior to launching two pilot DAD projects. SA+A conducted their 3-day DAD workshop customized for Panera to include labs based on one of Panera's in-flight projects.

Train the Business

A prerequisite for successful adoption is engagement and buy-in from the business. SA+A conducted Product Owner training for a large group of business stakeholders. Panera's use of DAD champions from both business and IT was critical in maintaining the positive adoption momentum that had been established.

Pilot the Approach

SA+A supplied an agile coach for two 2-week iterations to kickstart their agile projects, one of which was for their new back-of-house implementation. This project used three teams geographically dispersed in the US and Brazil. Just-in-time coaching accelerated the lessons learned and demonstrated immediate results which were critical to ensure buy-in from all stakeholders.

Inspect and Adapt

After several months Panera had SA+A conduct health checks of their agile projects to help them to refine their processes and address any issues that teams were still struggling with. Success breeds success. One clear observation has been the increased level of energy, focus, and enthusiasm of the agile teams.

Scale Up

Being successful with scaling agile requires a disciplined approach for agile teams to interact with each other as well as other stakeholders such as operations, infrastructure, data, and shared services. SA+A helped define an engagement model to streamline these interactions, minimizing bureaucracy without increasing risk. This included advising the agile PMO on a streamlined governance model including a set of agile metrics and guidance on implementing agile tooling.

About Scott Ambler + Associates Inc.

Scott Ambler + Associates is a boutique IT management consulting firm that advises organizations to be more effective applying disciplined agile and lean processes within the context of your business. We combine strategic thinking with innovative technology and business acumen to achieve outstanding results for our clients.

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