



T-Mobile under pressure to accelerate the delivery of Android applications

TechDiscovery dramatically reduced T-Mobile Android applications time to market.

T-Mobile was under significant market pressure and needed to accelerate their development and delivery of Android-based phones and applications.

The Client

T-Mobile USA is the US operating entity of T-Mobile International AG, the mobile communications subsidiary of Deutsche Telekom AG (NYSE: DT). T-Mobile USA is a national provider of wireless voice, messaging, and data services serving 33.2 million Americans.

The Challenge

In October 2008, T-Mobile released the highly anticipated G1, the first Android™-powered mobile phone. With this release, T-Mobile became the first operator in the world to launch an Android-powered mobile device. The T-Mobile G1 combined full touch-screen functionality and a QWERTY keyboard with a rich mobile Web experience, dozens of Android Market applications, and popular Google products that millions have enjoyed on the desktop. T-Mobile found strong pre-sales demand and a significant number of customers who traded up to the G-1 from a basic handset, illustrating the leap many consumers are taking to a rich, accessible mobile Web experience.

It did not take long for the reality of the highly competitive mobile communications landscape to set in. Within a few months of the G-1's release, Research In Motion released two new models. In addition, Apple and AT&T continued evolution of the iPhone and Palm announced a long-anticipated smart-phone.

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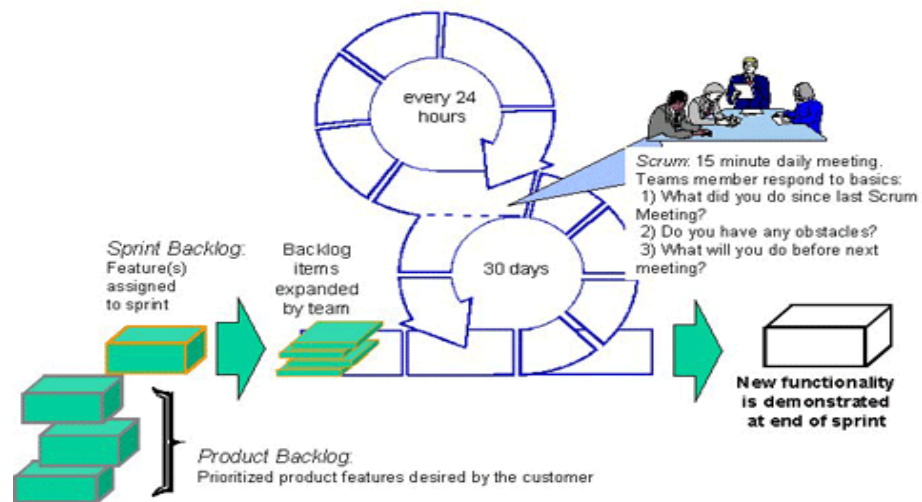
TechDiscovery's Android team did "a lot of good work in a short time."

Production deployment of the My Account application would not have been on schedule if it had not been for TechDiscovery's on-time deliveries.

The Solution

In December 2008, T-Mobile brought in TechDiscovery to jumpstart their Android development activities. Although T-Mobile had begun to build a fledgling Android team, they found that the pace they could grow organically was insufficient. T-Mobile had also learned from previous projects that TechDiscovery rapidly establishes top notch software development teams. TechDiscovery developed two different Android applications for T-Mobile. A multi-media backup application was built from scratch and delivered in production-ready form. TechDiscovery also built version 2 of T-Mobile's My Account application now available on the Android Marketplace.

TechDiscovery established an Atlanta-based Agile delivery team led by a development manager with a technical account manager on-site at T-Mobile. Onshore and offshore software engineers and quality assurance testers were quickly added to ramp up the team to expected size. The TechDiscovery team ran daily Scrum meetings and participated in weekly Scrum-of-scrum meetings and architecture review meetings.



Month-long Sprints were held according to T-Mobile's program plan. TechDiscovery's team worked with T-Mobile product managers and product owners to refine business requirements, collaborated with architects to validate design approaches, and delivered monthly end-of-sprint demonstrations and code drops. Using TDFlex as a foundation, the project methods were tailored specifically to meet the Android development goals set out by T-Mobile. TechDiscovery worked closely with Carla Rogers, a T-Mobile vendor liaison, to ensure continual and effective teamwork who stated "...TD rocks!..." when asked about TechDiscovery's project deliverables.

TechDiscovery first developed a visual prototype showing the key user interface allowing the user to step through the screens.

so that requirements adjustments could be made without undue negative impact. In addition, an end-to-end vertical slice was developed to ensure that all components of the front-end and back-end of the application were understood early in the project. Further development work then concentrated on fleshing out functional breadth and user capabilities. Implementation was followed by a thorough functional test, performance test, and regression test. After several sprints, a production-ready Android application was turned over to T-Mobile for launch.

Based on the solid team performance on the first application, TechDiscovery's Android team was asked to assist in bringing version 2 of the My Account application to market for T-Mobile's second Android phone release. "My Account" gives T-Mobile customers easy-to-use tools to manage various aspects of their account directly from their Android phone. T-Mobile's project lead carved out two thirds of the project scope and assigned it to TechDiscovery. Over the next two months, TechDiscovery became the "goto" team on all technology analysis, issue resolution, and scope additions.

Once again, TDFlex was tailored to match the three-month project cycle. As requested, the high level design (HLD) document became the primary working document encapsulating business requirements, design, screen shots, and functional specifications. The first project delivery included HLDs for each feature followed by a second phase of working code for each feature. T-Mobile then worked closely with TechDiscovery's Android team to integrate our code with theirs. The integrated code was then tested and finalized by T-Mobile's rollout team.

The Result

TechDiscovery dramatically reduced the time to market of two T-Mobile Android applications. TechDiscovery's Android team was recognized as having done "a lot of good work in a short time".

TechDiscovery handed the code to T-Mobile's internal Android developers for follow-on work. The hand-off and technology transfer went smoothly with T-Mobile's expectations exceeded.

Production deployment of the My Account application would certainly not have been on schedule if it had not been for TechDiscovery's on-time deliveries. TechDiscovery adapted to a myriad of minor and some major scope changes throughout an already compressed schedule while still delivering quality deliverables on schedule.