THE TRAVIS PERKINS GROUP IMPROVES BUSINESS VALUE OF IT

Rally's Products and Services Are Helping the Company Eliminate Waste and Move Forward on Its Agile Journey

Travis Perkins

INDUSTRY
Leading company in the builders' merchant and home-improvement market

DEVELOPMENT ENVIRONMENT
300+ people—160 engineers, 150 service, support, and operations, and 45 business delivery analysts

CHALLENGES
- Become leaner and improve performance
- Eliminate wasted IT effort and resources
- Change the company's approach to one of collaboration and empowerment

SOLUTION
Rally® Unlimited Edition and Rally Professional Services and Coaching

RESULTS
- Successfully completed first 12-week release train
- Delivering business value, such as reduced waste
- Inspiring team confidence, which enhances adoption and project success

BACKGROUND

The Travis Perkins Group is a leading supplier of building materials to the UK's building and construction industry. For more than 200 years, the company has grown to deliver more than 100,000 products through 600 branch locations nationwide. Changing market demands, shareholder expectations, and competition demand that the company continually enhance its performance. Yet, changing more than 200 years of tradition can be complicated. Traditional planning practices had led the company down the road to a bureaucratic project management office (PMO), and with the introduction of Agile and Rally, the once controlling environment has shifted into a service-oriented centre.

CHALLENGE: ELIMINATE WASTED WORK AND ACCELERATE ROI

To make sure that it's ready for the next 200 years of success, Travis Perkins Group's primary objectives are to eliminate wasted work and accelerate projects that deliver measurable return on investment. At the same time, the business wanted to increase motivation and empowerment across its teams. Traditional PMO approaches offered one way for the company to tackle the challenge, but PMO command-and-control approaches had delivered mixed results.

"Everyone agrees that transformation takes time," said Paul Bratcher, Director of Business Delivery for the Travis Perkins Group. "However, most of our team members had experienced transformation initiatives that required micromanagement, wasted extraordinary amounts of time, and were totally inflexible. At the same time, the number of projects actually ballooned in attempts to please all stakeholders. Enthusiasm for transformation was missing."

To undertake major changes, Travis Perkins Group decided to pioneer an enterprise Agile transformation based on implementing the Scaled Agile Framework® (SAFe®). After evaluating several solutions for enabling Agile development, the company chose Rally to help its teams get on the road to transformation.

> "For us, Rally is a transformation partner, not a software company. I think that's the best way to view what Rally does."
>
> **PAUL BRATCHER**
> Director of Business Delivery

"We chose Rally because it's a comprehensive solution," said Bratcher. "We didn't want to have to mash up a dozen things—creating yet another project and process. Rally's platform let us do everything we need, and Rally's coaching stays with us throughout our journey."

STEERING THE PORTFOLIO THROUGH SERVANT LEADERSHIP, COACHING, AND SUPPORT

Bratcher's focus in launching the transformation has three components. The first is a cultural component, which means introducing the organisation to Agile values. The second is making the concepts concrete and applicable to real projects and tasks. Finally, his goal is for everyone to enjoy the experience together.

One of Bratcher's first tasks was to help teams incorporating over 300 people move from a traditional corporate steering orientation to one of a programme service centre (PSC). That meant defining how roles change and how those changes are managed. Instead of a command-and-control approach, team leader roles now focus on providing servant leadership, coaching, and support. At the same time, the PSC is charged with facilitating collaboration between areas of the organisation that contribute metrics so that the information conveyed accurately describes the value of the work delivered.

Travis Perkins Group had used Rally Portfolio Manager since early 2013 to start to build its portfolio. Using the Risk & Issue register, the team identifies portfolio item notes and blocked stories. Roadmap tracking identifies IT-driven schedule work, backlogs, and process-driven projects to align the portfolio timeline with releases. Travis Perkins Group also uses Portfolio Kanban as a heat map for managing the investment portfolio of projects across the organisation.

APPLYING AGILE PRACTICES TO PROJECTS

Rally transformation services are helping to guide the Group through organisational change, provide Agile and Lean skills training, and apply those practices to its projects. The IT team is also using Rally coaching to help it coordinate teams, break down silos, and reduce risk.

"My portion of the process is servant leadership—providing coaching, guidance, and a point of contact for process," says Keith Halford, PMO Manager from Travis Perkins Group. "We're focusing on the Agile way of working. So for us, it's about using what is happening to move forward. We use the information that we put into Rally to help us navigate across all layers."

RESULTS: RELEASE TRAIN PLANNING LEADS TO SUCCESS

Travis Perkins Group is nearly a year into its Agile transformation. So far, the company is moving forward on building its PSC team, which will provide support and mentoring services—both technical and nontechnical—to set a standard of excellence for all other teams to follow. Bratcher says that his teams have completed their first 12-week release train and are beginning on their second one. He credits release train planning days with helping the teams be successful and gain confidence.

"For successful release train planning days, you have to trust your team to do the right thing," he says. "Planning days will give your own team belief in what they're trying to do. It offers direction, clarity, and a chance to achieve their own success. Ultimately, this is much more effective than me trying to force the journey."

As the Group progresses through SAFe, Halford functions as coach, guide, and point of contact for Agile processes. His teams are discovering that SAFe metrics and reporting are used to navigate processes—not drive decision making as in traditional command-and-control environments. Now they use metrics that work across all layers to identify important directions for improvement. This is a new realisation for many on the teams.

> "Rally gives us one place to collate data and have a consistent view of processes across the teams. The SAFe approach makes it easier for us to focus on what has the most business value. Instead of delivering perceived value, we're now delivering actual value."
>
> **KEITH HALFORD**
> PMO Project Manager

"Rally also gives us one place for all of our metrics," says Halford. "We can store and collate data and have a consistent view of processes across the teams. The SAFe approach makes it easier for us to focus on what has the most business value. Instead of delivering perceived value, we're now delivering actual value."

NEXT STEPS

As Travis Perkins Group continues on its Agile journey, Bratcher is excited to share the company's progress and findings with other companies. And at the same time, benefit from their experiences to help refine the Group's own direction.

"Rally is with us all the way," says Bratcher. "We value having the same people engaging with us across our coaching teams. We're not alone."

FOR MORE INFORMATION

To find out more about Rally, visit **rallydev.com**.

ABOUT RALLY

Rally delivers software and services that drive agility. Organizations worldwide use Rally's solutions and enterprise-class SaaS platform to navigate evolving market demands, improve performance, and accelerate innovation to deliver value faster.
rallydev.com

UNLEASH WHAT'S NEXT