



SELECTING AN AGILE MANAGEMENT TOOL

Agile Project Management Tool Reference Guide

In order to maximize value from an Agile deployment, the following checklist outlines the key criteria to consider when comparing the benefits and features of agile project management tools.

Deployment & Configuration Flexibility

Enterprise agile management solutions should provide flexible deployment options for ANY team size and ANY agile methodology. The software should be easily customizable to reflect how your organization practices agile.

- On-Demand (SaaS) and On-Site (Local) options for teams of any size
- Subscription and perpetual pricing options
- Choice of customizable methodology templates (XP, Scrum, DSDM, AgileUP and Hybrid)
- Free trial software available On-Demand and On-Site
- Fully customizable project hierarchy or tree
- Configurable terminology
- Extensive customization options: fields, lists, values, grids
- Ability to manage feature accessibility such as goals, defects, issues, retrospectives, requests, teams, etc.
- Flexible Iteration / Sprint Schedules by project, team or release
- Team-based planning and tracking including support for cross-project teams

Comprehensive Reporting & Visibility

To address the continual need for real-time access to project information, agile management solutions should include several critical data views into work estimates, actuals, and trends. A wide variety of dashboards, metrics, and reports should provide overall, in-line, or specific reports and graphs at any point during development.

- Executive-level Dashboards with best practice metrics
- Storyboard with drag and drop tracking of story cards, work in process (WIP) limits & cycle time reporting
- Interactive drag-and-drop taskboard and testboard
- Pre-packaged best-practice agile dashboards: Project, Sprint, Program & Team Member
- Release forecasting helps predict a release end date and calculate the number of sprints required to complete the release
- Roll-up reporting for teams working across projects or projects with multiple teams
- Pair programming / multi-owner actuals
- Customizable 'My Home' Dashboard (display multiple projects, teams, and iterations)

Simplicity & Ease of Use

Using a tool with a simple user interface and built-in process navigation has proven to drastically accelerate tool training and user adoption for organization-wide deployments.

- Built-in agile process navigation
- Electronic, drag-and-drop storyboard, taskboard, and testboard
- Drag-and-drop ranking and whiteboard-style release and iteration planning
- Multi-select Options: Move; Close; Reopen; Delete; and Rank
- Drag-and-drop action (ranking, assignment, planning)
- Customizable dashboards team members can use to track their projects and work
- Ease of use features such as Recent Items, Quick Add, Split, Templates and Iteration Close
- Multi-level estimation such as at the story/defect level and the effort tracking level

Full Agile Process Lifecycle Management & Support

The best end-to-end agile management systems span the full range of processes from integrated customer feedback through code integration and delivery.

- Product, Release and Iteration Planning and Tracking
- Consolidated Requirement Backlog, Defect and Test Management
- Strategic Goals, Functional Rollups (Themes), Impediment Tracking and Retrospectives
- Integrated Customer Idea Management Platform

Enterprise Security

Security in an enterprise agile management tool should occur at multiple levels: At the application level for general access to the software; at the role level, which should control specific access rights within the overall system while additional project-level security should be established and changed on a project -by-project basis.

- Password authentication
- Project-level & Role-based Security
- Single Sign-On (SSO) Integration
- Windows Integration Authentication

Free, Open Integration Platform

Integrations should be free, fully supported and open-sourced for simplified deployment and customization. An open API and SDK's should be available to give developers greater access to the platform and their own data. Using these tools, customers can build a best-of-breed Agile ALM platform that meets their unique needs at a very low total cost of ownership.

- Open, web services API
- Java and .NET SDK
- Free platform and third-party connectors (IDE's, Defect Trackers, Testing Tools, Source Control, etc.)
- Free access to the connector source code

Organizational Scalability

An agile tool for deployment within an enterprise should be able to handle a sophisticated project structure, thousands of features and defects, and potentially tens of thousands of tasks and tests. Key concerns include both ease-of-use and support for thousands of items flowing through an agile lifecycle with minimal overhead.

- Hierarchical project tree (dynamically reconfigurable)
- Cross-project team planning, tracking, and reporting
- Program-level planning and roll-up reporting
- Multi-select actions for managing large backlogs (rank, move, delete, etc.)

Collaboration Capabilities

Enterprise-level collaboration capabilities should promote teamwork and expedite communication between individual team members, teams, and organizations. Collaboration features should not only support useful interaction among team members but also provide quick access to project-related content contained throughout the application.

- Cross-Project team planning & reporting
- Team burndown, burn-up, test trend
- User-generated messages between team members
- System-generated alerts from subscriptions
- System-wide announcements
- Subscriptions to system assets
- Threaded discussions
- RSS Feeds and Email options for accepting messages and alerts

Advanced System Assets

No two organizations operate in the exact same manner when it comes to organizational structure, terminology, product planning, project scheduling and tracking, and reporting. Any scalable management tool should accommodate much of this flexibility and allow organizations to define, organize, and plan according to their unique organizational needs.

- Requirements management & story planning
- Epic management & traceability
- Hierarchical themes / feature group rollups
- Defect management & tracking
- Task management & test case tracking
- Issues / impediments management & tracking
- Goal planning & tracking
- Program management & reporting

For a detailed review of the capabilities and benefits that all enterprise agile management applications should enable, visit www.VersionOne.com/Toolkit.asp.

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