



LIQUID MACHINES

Customer Success Story

Just one year ago, Liquid Machines was struggling to integrate their various agile teams. With each team using its own version of agile and its own agile tool, the overall software development picture was a bit chaotic. Today, Liquid Machines has teams in multiple countries, all working together with one process and one tool; and, according to Jeannie Vineyard, VP Engineering for Liquid Machines, “Yes, VersionOne is definitely a part of that success.”

THE CHALLENGE

When Vineyard joined Liquid Machines, the engineering shop was in a bit of a jumble. In her words, “The methodology wasn’t standardized across teams and neither were the tools. One team was using an open source tool and the rest were using spreadsheets. None of the spreadsheets were the same. There was no central repository and the backlog was spread all over the place.” It was clear to everyone that the current system could not continue.

The group got together and decided to make three changes:

1. Consolidate the backlog into a centralized location where it could be organized and prioritized.
2. Standardize teams on the same methodology.
3. Find a common toolset that would provide visibility into projects for all stakeholders.

After evaluating several tools, the team narrowed their choices to two enterprise-level agile project management tools. In the end, Vineyard says she chose the vendor that she felt had demonstrated the best customer service throughout the evaluation, sales and support phases: VersionOne.

Liquid Machines is actively developing nine products, each of which has up to four releases every year. In addition, we’re working on a separate, internal automation project. Each project has a dedicated team that is spread across multiple countries and timezones.

With VersionOne, it all works! It’s amazing!

*Jeannie Vineyard, Vice President, Engineering
Liquid Machines*

SNAPSHOT

LIQUID MACHINES

- A leading provider of Enterprise Rights Management Solutions, Liquid Machines creates products that enable enterprises to protect their sensitive data at rest, in transit and in use without changing the way users work.
- Customers include: Goldman Sachs, Philip Morris International, SolidWorks, SOCEUR, Pioneer, Cutter Associates, SAIC, United States Marine Corp. Community Services, Dow Chemical, Wood Group, Chicco, Symantec Corporation and Department of the Interior

BUSINESS ISSUES

- Lacked a standardized agile methodology, with teams using their own processes
- Needed to support dedicated teams that spanned multiple countries
- Required a single tool that would replace the variety of existing tools different teams were using
- Mandated a consolidated backlog from a myriad of separate files and folders
- Stakeholder visibility needed into multiple projects at all times

RESULTS WITH VERSIONONE

- At-a-glance visibility into current project status
- Standardized agile process across teams promotes collaboration and communication
- Centrally-located 650+ product backlog items to ensure consistency and data security
- Virtual taskboard and notes features support better communication – and daily standups – across globally distributed teams
- Community site, training tools and discussion group helped ensure a stable rollout and made adoption easier

CUSTOMER SUCCESS

THE CHOICE: VERSIONONE

Did Liquid Machines make the right choice? Vineyard thinks so: “Now that we’re using VersionOne, it’s fabulous. I use the tool many times a day and can see the end dates on various projects, what sprint the team is in, and when they’re going to implement a particular Product Backlog Item (PBI).”

Getting up to speed on VersionOne was fairly straightforward for Liquid Machines. Like many other companies, they chose to start small and then scale.

At first, Vineyard and the Director of QA spent time learning the tool and setting it up in a manner that suited their reporting requirements and specific project parameters. They made use of VersionOne’s community site, including the detailed product training videos, to help them get up to speed on the tool’s various capabilities.

When they were ready, they began to train all of the development directors in how the tool worked. “From there,” says Vineyard, “it grew organically. As a team started a project, it would begin using VersionOne, transferring its existing product backlog to the tool. Now just about everything is run through VersionOne .”

RESULTS

Liquid Machines uses VersionOne on a day-to-day basis. With about fifty people distributed across more than one country and timezone, communication is critical to their success. Products aren’t split by country but shared among team members in all locations. “When we do a project, we plan sprints, PBIs, and tasks. Then our daily scrum meetings run with the VersionOne tool up. The Daily Standup Dashboard really helps facilitate meetings by phone. You can have it up and see what everyone is talking about, what they did yesterday and what they’re focusing on for that day. In that way the tool is very lightweight—individual contributors can look at the project very easily,” explains Vineyard.

Vineyard says that spreadsheets, while very lightweight, just didn’t provide the degree of functionality that they needed. The learning curve for VersionOne was well worth it to gain the advantages of a single backlog and a standardized agile process. “There was a high degree of variability in how each Scrum team was being run. VersionOne helped compensate for that because it gave

us the agile framework we needed, especially in terms of centralizing the product backlog and associated tasks,” says Vineyard.

While they can’t point to hard data yet, Vineyard has no doubt things have improved since moving to VersionOne. As Vineyard describes it, “We have a general sense that things are running more smoothly. We have consistency across teams. We have greater visibility into where projects are at any given time. And we have one place to store all of our more than 650 PBIs!”

One process, one tool, and three big improvements: greater visibility, more consistency, and increased communication. These are the kinds of results Liquid Machines has seen so far with VersionOne. And as for the customer service that originally sold them on VersionOne? Vineyard says it best, “I chose VersionOne partly because the Account Executive was responsive and helpful, even late on New Year’s Eve day when I was trying to make my final decision. I felt that if VersionOne was available on New Year’s Eve, then I could count on VersionOne to be there whenever we needed them. I’m confident we made the right choice.”

ABOUT LIQUID MACHINES

Liquid Machines combines centrally-defined data access and information usage policies with its patented Policy Droplet™ control interface to simultaneously promote a collaborative environment and protect sensitive information without changing the way users work.

Document Control and Email Control solutions enable global companies in the consulting, financial services, government, manufacturing, and healthcare industries to share information securely within any application, wherever it goes, throughout its lifecycle.

For more information, visit www.liquidmachines.com.

ABOUT VERSIONONE

VersionOne is recognized by agile practitioners as the leader in agile project management tools. By simplifying the planning and tracking of agile projects, we help teams deliver better software faster. Since 2002, companies such as Adobe, Dow Chemical, Lockheed Martin, Motorola, Novell, Sony and Symantec have turned to VersionOne. Today more than 30,000 teams from over 170 countries use VersionOne.

Start small. Scale smart. See for yourself at www.VersionOne.com.