

Release the Kraken

Speeding Up Your Release Process



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Disclaimers

- Every app has different requirements
- No silver bullet here!
- Caveat emptor, void where prohibited, etc

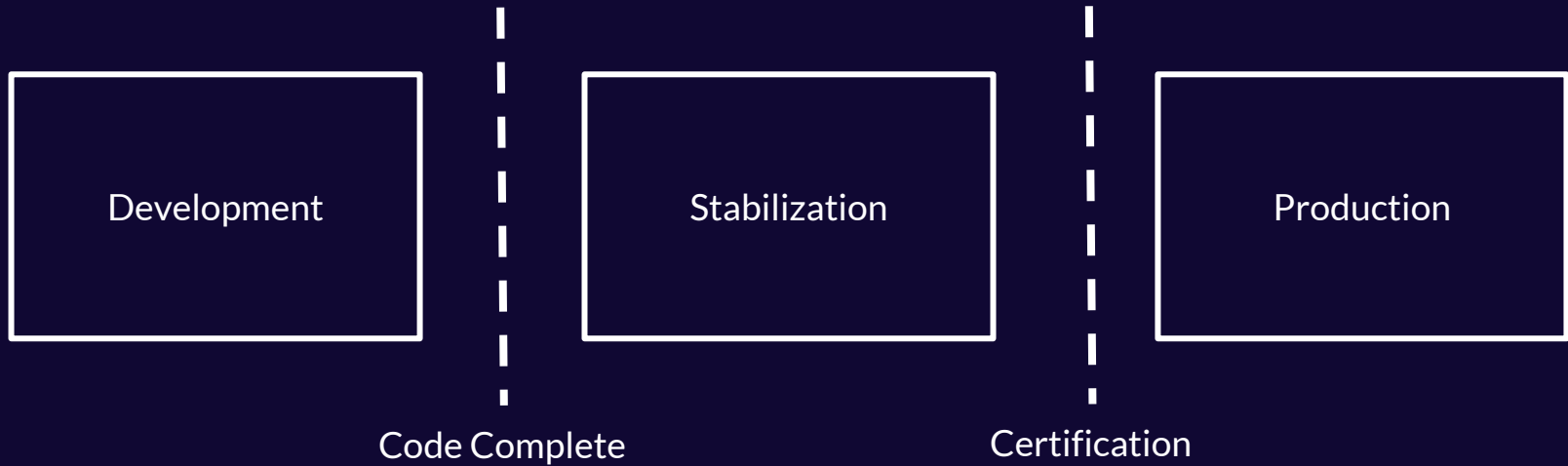
Properties of a Release Process

- Predictable
- Stable
- Automated
- Low Latency

Code Latency

- Time between commit and live deployment to users
- Costs of high latency
 - More drift in code -> harder to diagnose issues in the wild (“Works on my machine!”)
 - Out of sight, out of mind - easier to forget features
 - Impact on business metrics

Lifecycle of a Release



Lifecycle of a Release



Continuous Deployment

- Every commit deploys directly
- Many releases
- Short-to-no stabilization
- Minimal code latency

Milestone Release Model

- Released on an annual cadence
- Few releases
- Longer stabilization period
- Higher stability



Releases at Blue Apron

Release Cadences

- Ad-hoc
 - Builds cut “whenever we feel like it”, followed by stabilization
 - Maximum code latency: undefined!
- Monthly - ish
 - Builds cut on 1st Monday, released on 3rd Monday
 - Maximum code latency: 7 weeks!
- Weekly
 - Build cut every Monday, released to 100% by the following Monday
 - Maximum code latency: 2 weeks!

Challenges

- Very short stabilization period
 - Monthly regression tests
 - Use continuous deployment to team
- Requires confidence in the state of master
 - Lots of automated tests!
- Separate binary release from feature release
 - Aggressive use of feature flagging!
- Automate release mechanics where possible
 - Used to require developer to build locally...
 - Now just requires merging 1 pull request and pressing a button!



Takeaways

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- Make your schedule predictable
- Code latency is a critical metric - minimize as much as possible
- “Soak time” for stability is great - but make sure it’s actually valuable
- Get builds into the hands of your team as fast as possible
- Automate everything that can be automated

An abstract background featuring a network of thin, light purple lines connecting small dots, creating a complex, web-like structure. The dots and lines are more prominent in the upper half of the image, fading into a solid dark purple background towards the bottom. The overall aesthetic is modern and technological.

Go forth and release the kraken!

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