Austen Rhyce Erickson
CSD380: DevOps
Assignment 2.2: Case Study: Operation InVersion at LinkedIn
1/17/25

The chapter 6 case study of LinkedIn’s InVersion initiative is a prime example of the importance of technical debt management. In the case of LinkedIn, they had to halt development work for two months (a risky move) in order to address an accumulated technical debt that was big enough to get its own name, InVersion, and appear as a case study in the textbook. In 2011, after LinkedIn had gone public, the need for action came to fruition. They were having increasingly problematic deployments and had no choice but to halt development and do a major technical debt overhaul of their infrastructure and tools that lasted two months.

Some of the big challenges they tackled was refactoring their primary System called Leo. It was a monolithic application with problems making for a compelling argument for microservices (in my opinon). It had trouble scaling and crashed a lot.

During the InVersion initiative, LinkedIn also worked on a lot of DevOps improvements. They recognized that the infrequent biweekly deployments was not an effective strategy. They adopted a more iterative Agile approach with automated pipelines to achieve faster releases.

In the end, the InVersion initiative was a success. They increased their deployment frequency and decreased the amount of late-night troubleshooting/debugging sessions their developers experienced. The well-rested developers were then free to work on innovative features that made LinkedIn what it is today.

The InVersion initiative was a major strategic move that, frankly, saved LinkedIn. They experienced terrific growth as a platform in subsequent years. It was a great lesson for understanding the conditions in which tech debt arises as well as a lesson on how sooner or later tech debt must be paid back. It’s best to include tech debt stories each sprint so it doesn’t accumulate in such a horrific way. Luckily for LinkedIn, it turned out well and I’m sure those developers gained so much knowledge and experience.