



User Feedback at the speed of DevOps

How we incorporate user feedback @ Microsoft

Justin Marks
Principal Program Manager - Microsoft
@JustinCMarks

Miki Konno
Principal Design Researcher - Microsoft



Who is Justin Marks

Work

TFS & Visual Studio Team Services

15 years at Microsoft

Identity, Agile Project Management, Work Items



Personal

From Miami, Florida

Married (9 years), 2 kids (8 & 5)

Program Manager by trade...

Foodie by passion!

Who is Miki Konno

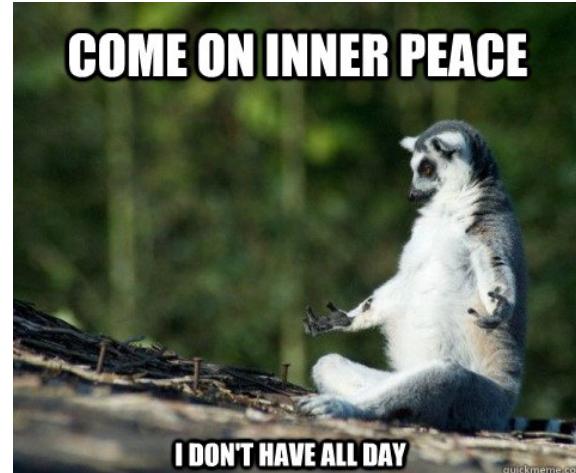
Work

- Currently working as a **Principal UX Research Lead** at TFS/ Visual Studio Team Services at Microsoft
- **Over 17 years experience** as a User Experience Research / Human Factors Engineer
- Worked at several **enterprise level companies** (i.e., Sony, HP, Google)
- Specialized for **Dev Tools**, Digital Media, Web/Mobile, Maps/ NUI UX, **Lean UX**, International UX

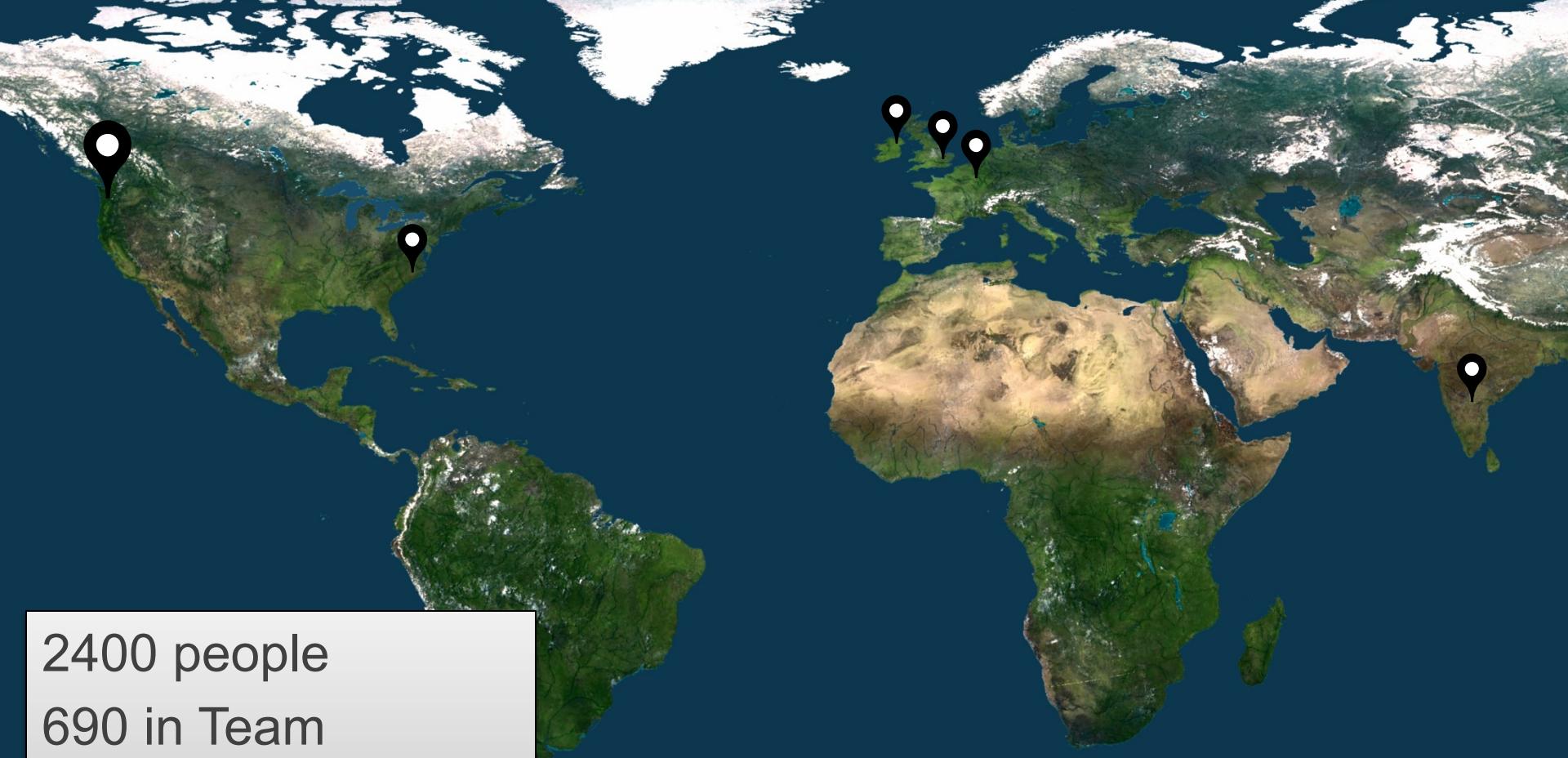
Personal



- International Travel, Sci Fi, and Meditation



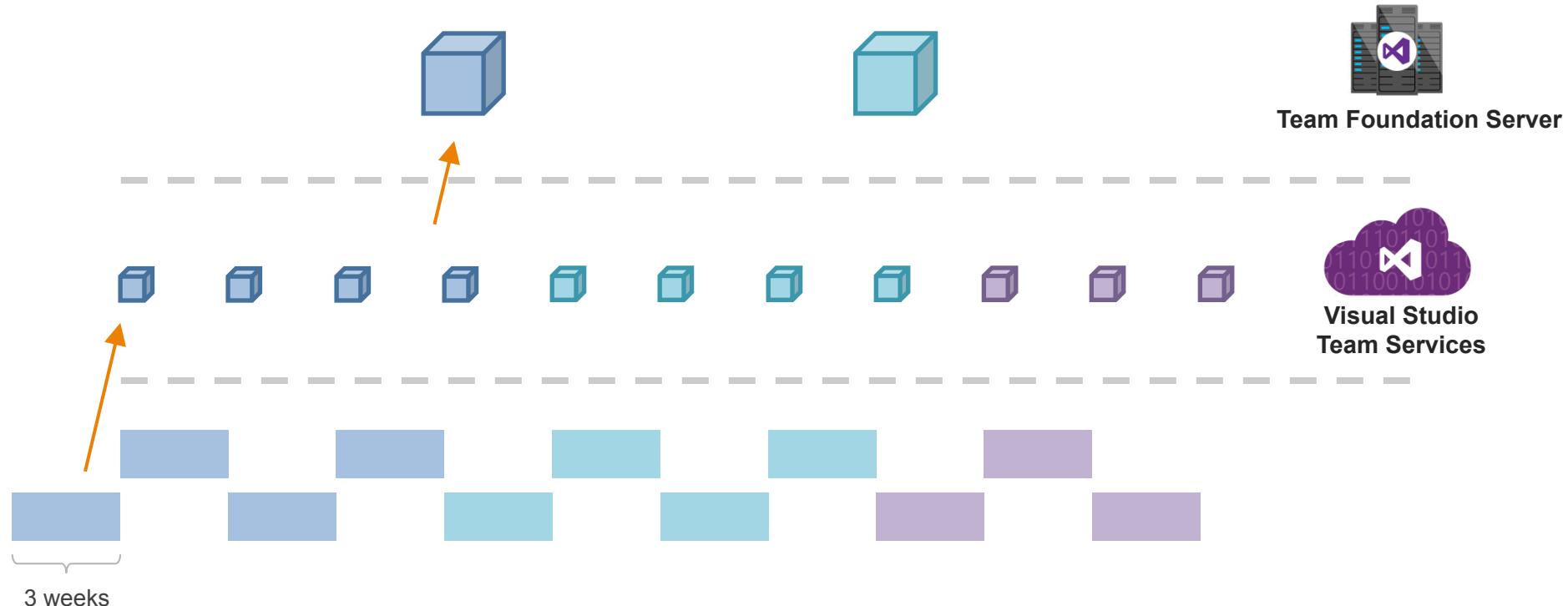
What is Visual Studio Team Service (aka VSTS)...



2400 people
690 in Team
Services

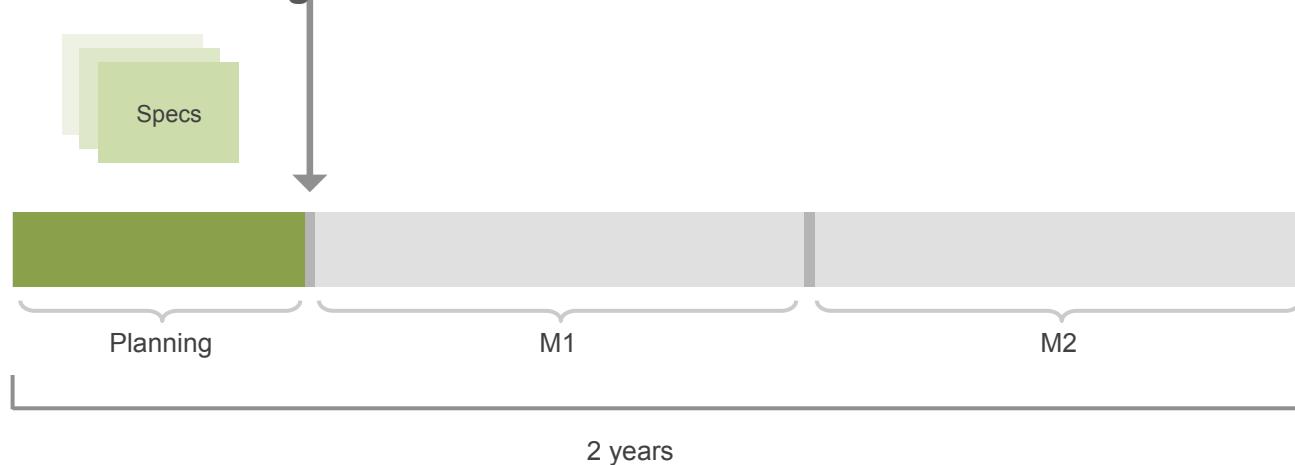
40 feature teams

The Destination



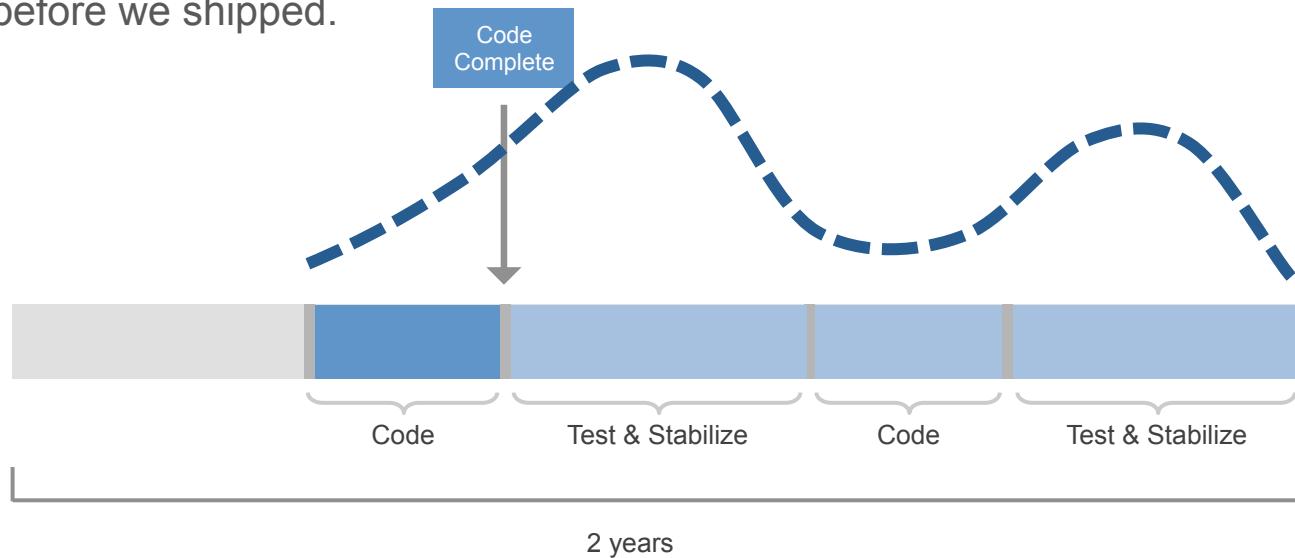
Planning

We knew **exactly what to build**, and we knew it was
right!



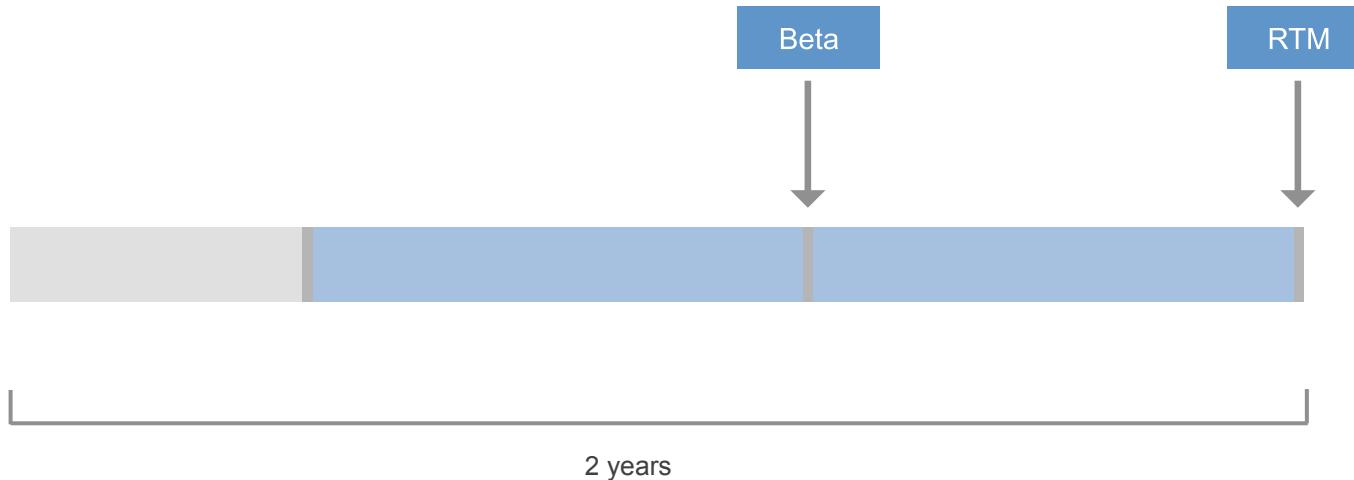
Code Flow

We wrote **all the code** months before we shipped.



Milestones

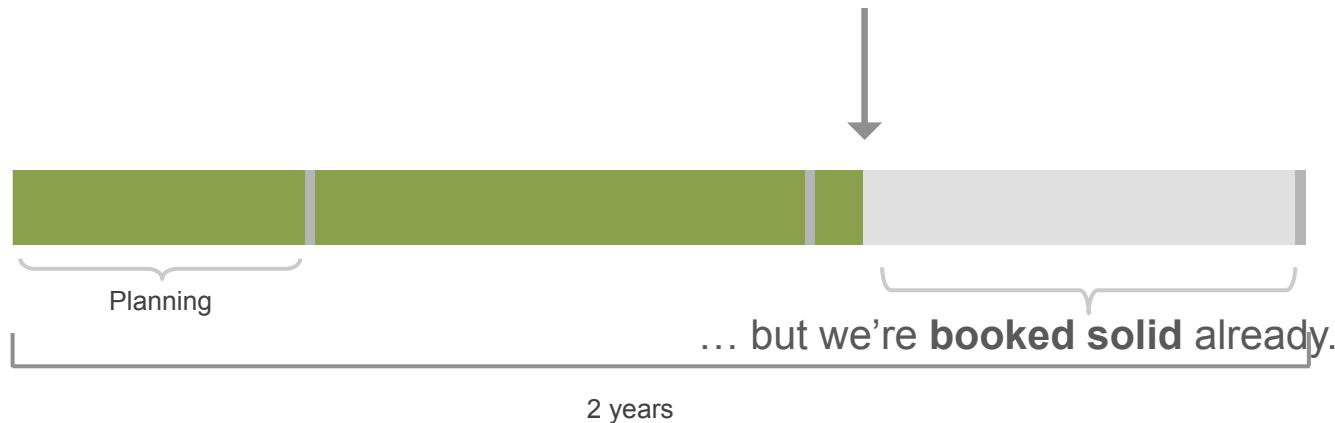
We had a **perfect schedule** and knew **exactly when it would be ready!**



Feedback

Customer feedback – we should
change the way a feature works.

We didn't get it *quite* right...



Feedback

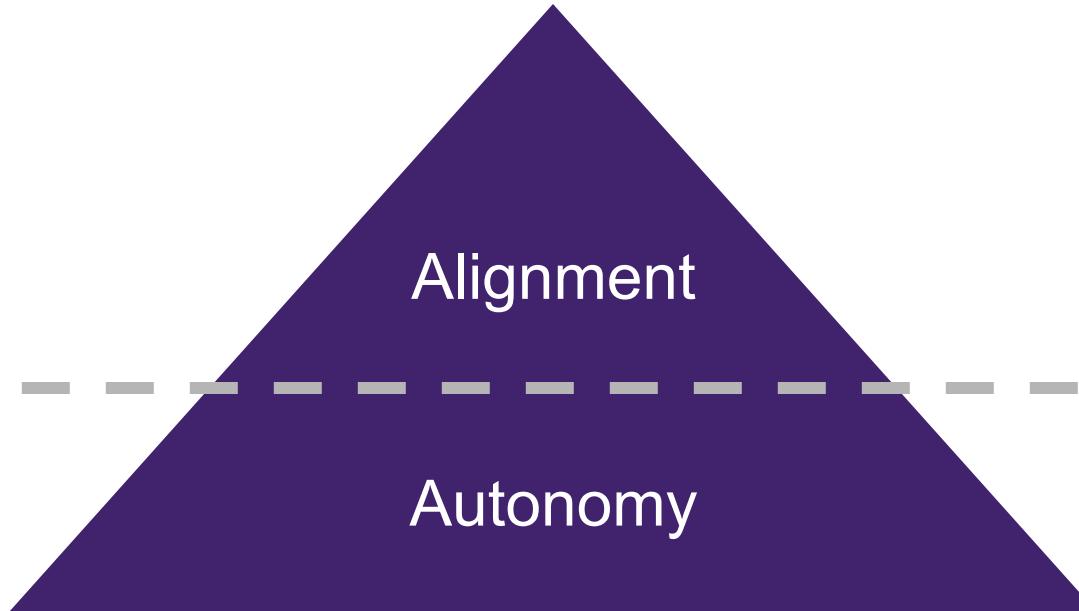
*“Great feedback. Thanks! We’ll take
a look in planning for the next
release. We should get it to you....
in a few years.”*



“ Individuals and interactions over...
processes and tools

Agile Manifesto
2001

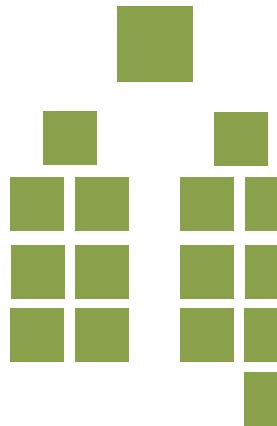
Aligned Autonomy



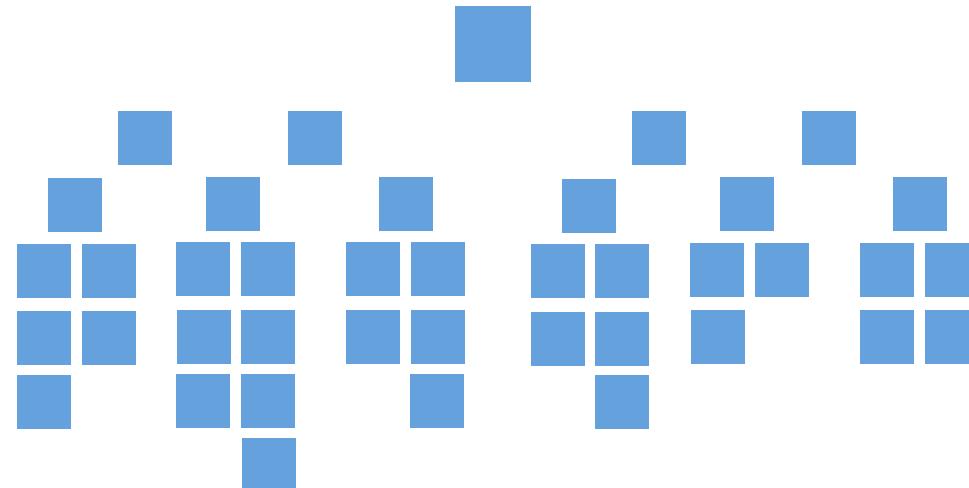
What does this look like
for real teams?

Roles

Program Management



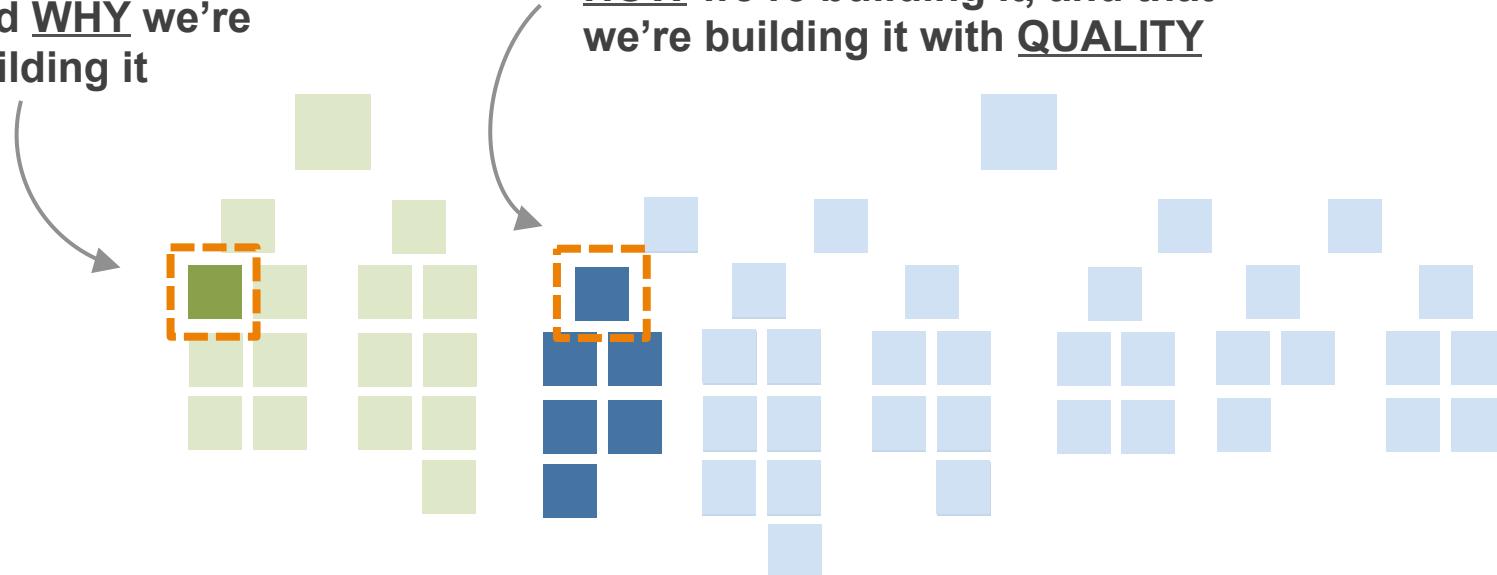
Engineering



Cross Discipline Ownership

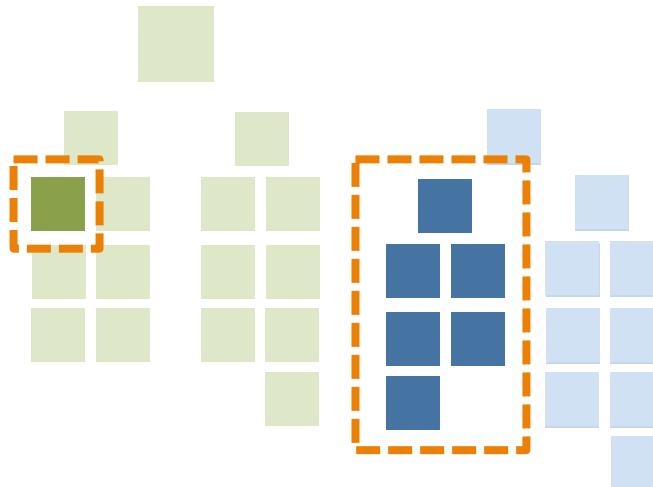
PM is responsible for
WHAT we're building,
and WHY we're
building it

Engineering is responsible for
HOW we're building it, and that
we're building it with QUALITY

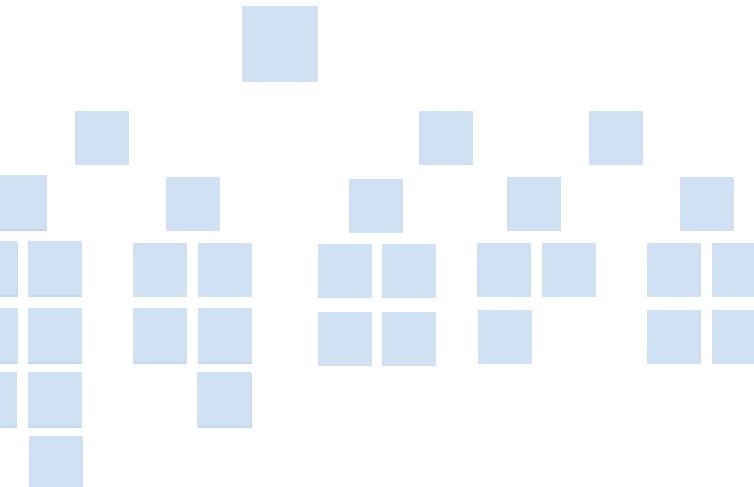


Teams

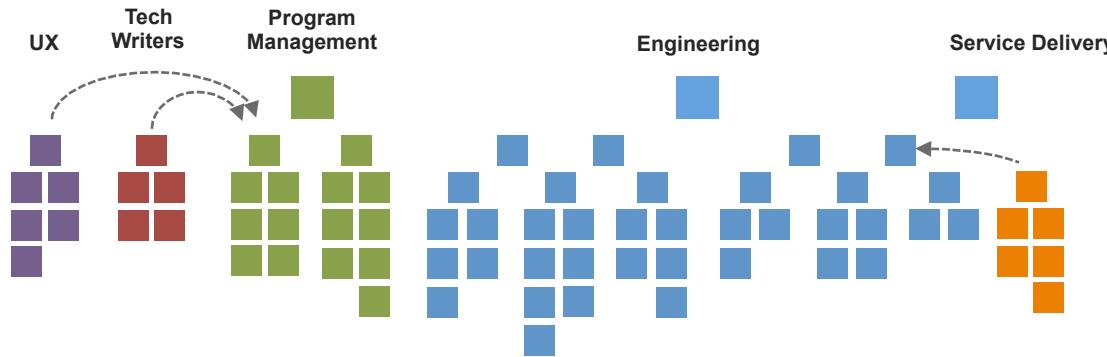
Program Management



Engineering



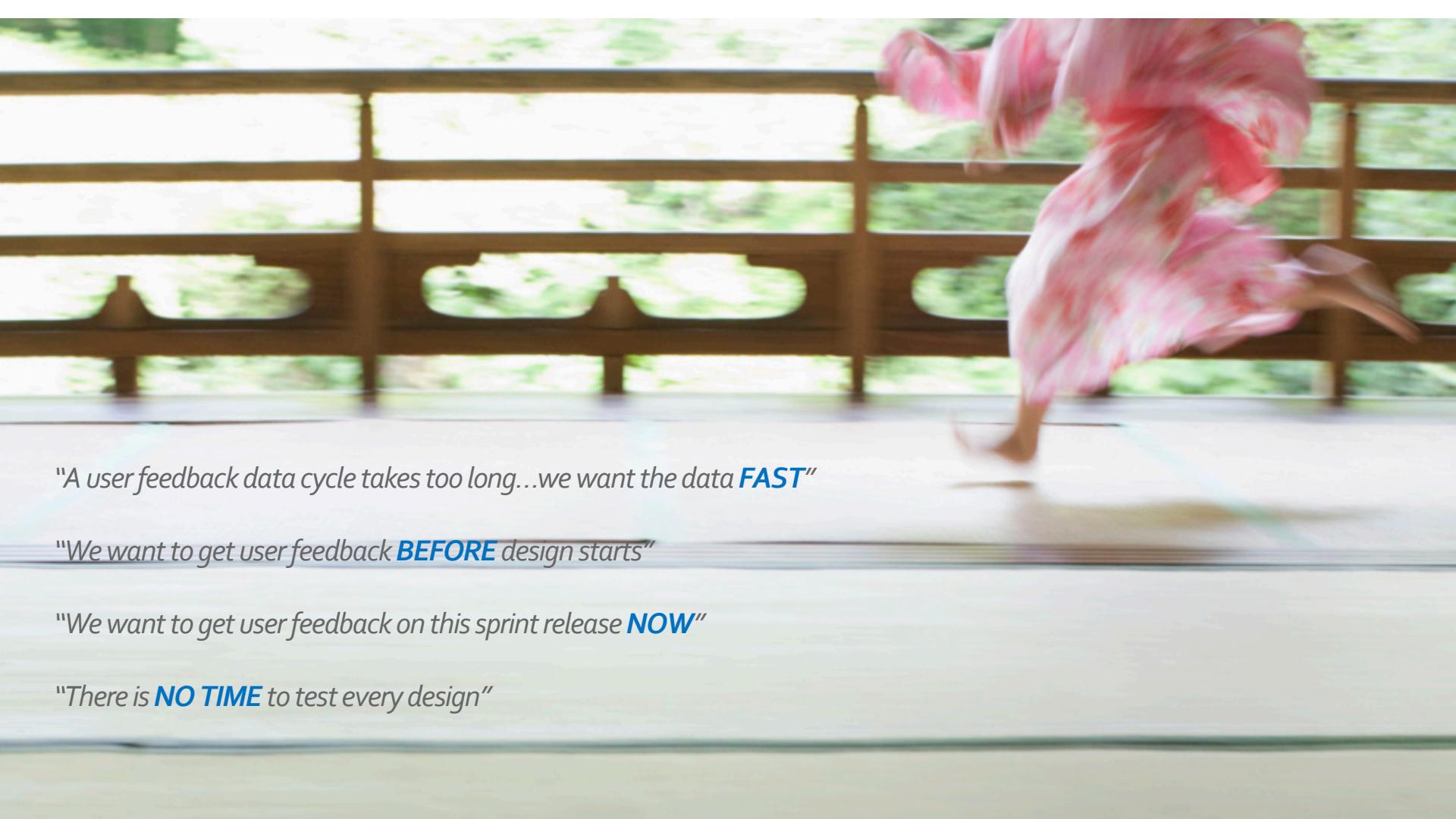
Autonomy & Responsibility



How do User Researchers collect feedback?



OLD User Feedback Acquiring Cycle

A blurry photograph of a person in a pink and white patterned dress running across a wooden bridge. The bridge has a railing with vertical slats and circular cutouts. The background is a lush green forest.

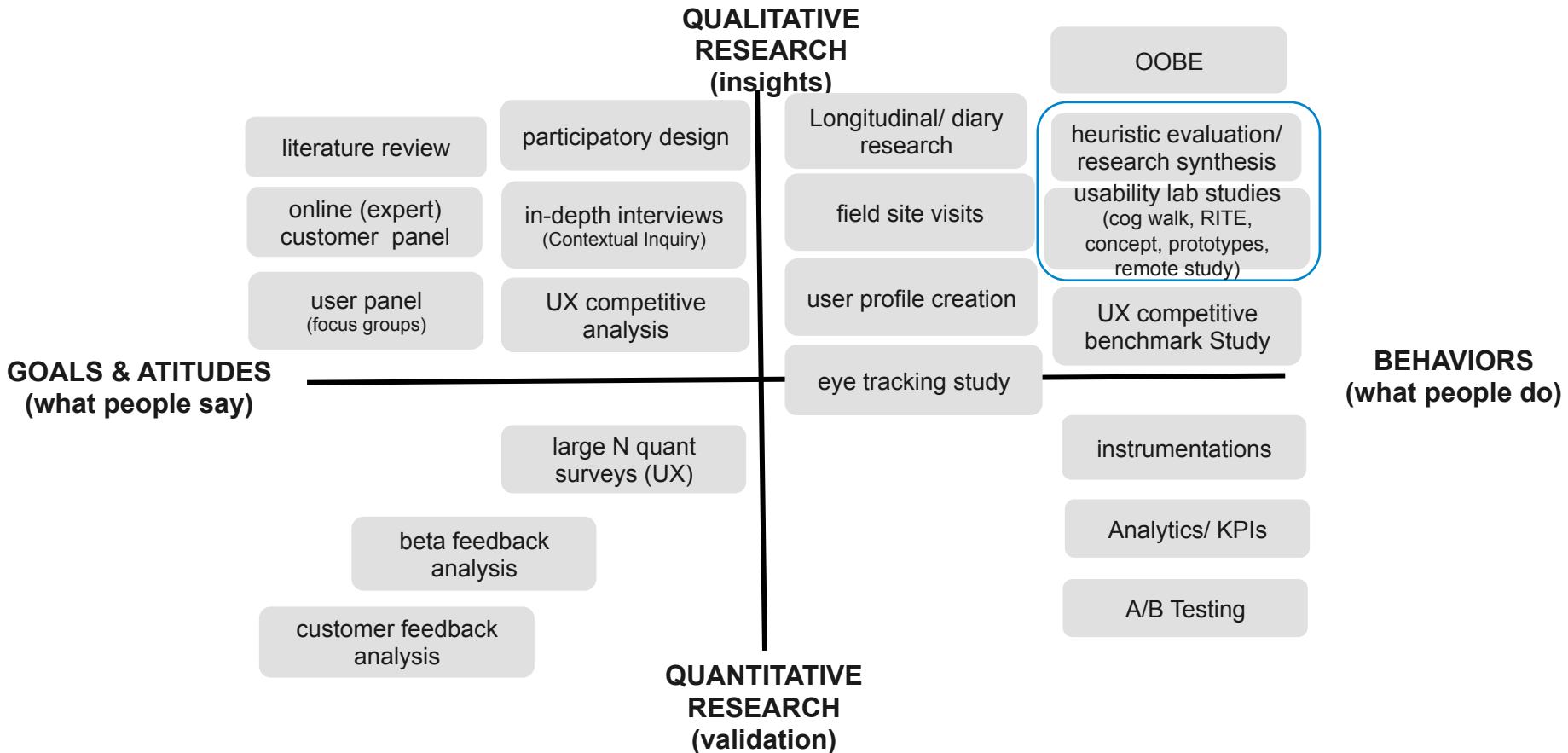
"A user feedback data cycle takes too long...we want the data **FAST**"

"We want to get user feedback **BEFORE** design starts"

"We want to get user feedback on this sprint release **NOW**"

"There is **NO TIME** to test every design"

Landscape of User Research

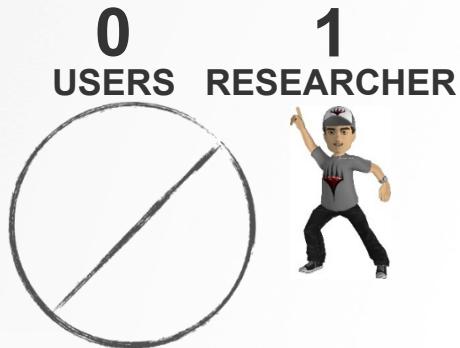


Lean UX Research Methods Examples

- ✓ Heuristic Evaluations
- ✓ Remote Study
- ✓ Café Study
- ✓ RITE Study
- ✓ FAAST Study

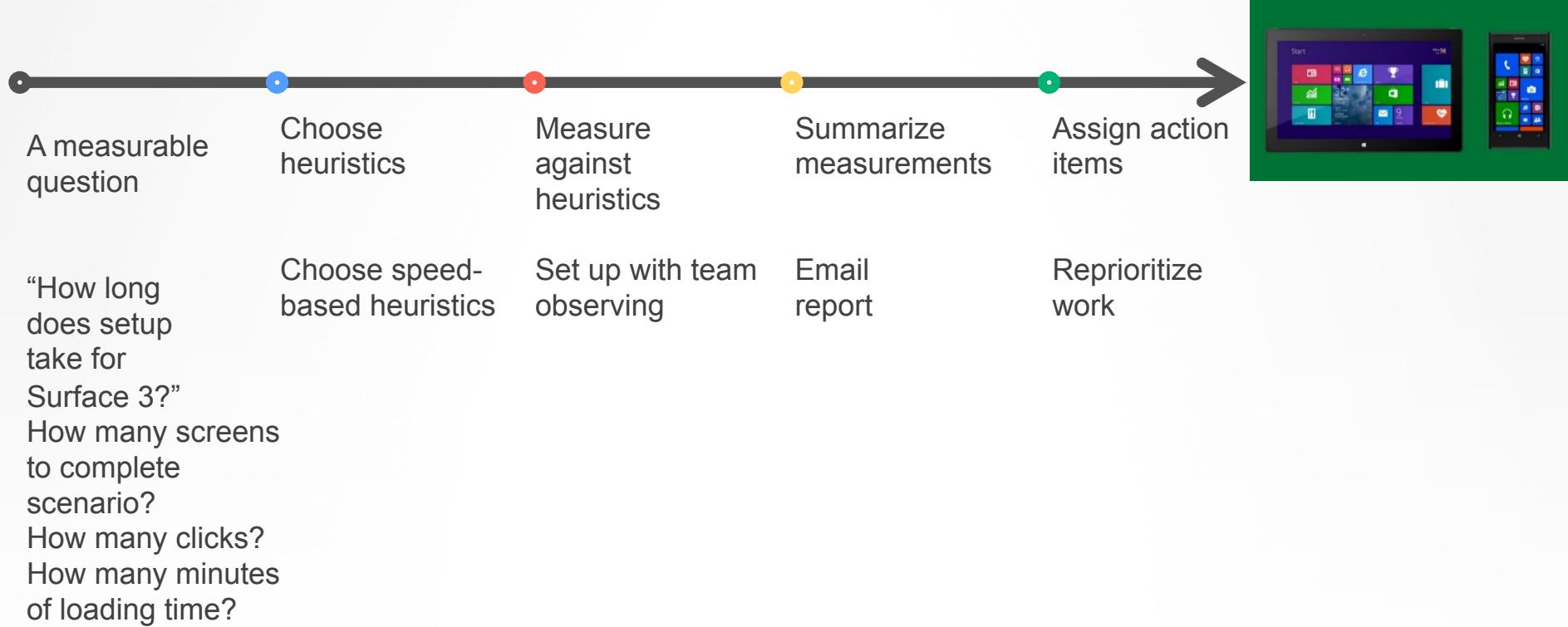
Heuristic Evaluation

- Expert review against a set of principles
- Few hours



Evaluation through principles

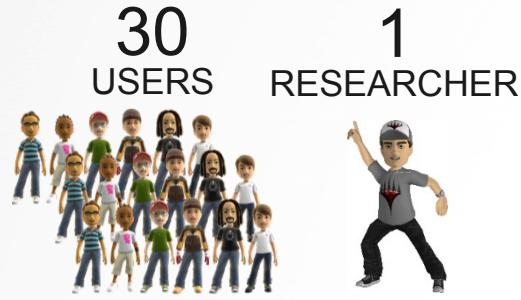
Heuristic Evaluation Process Example



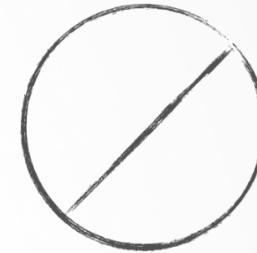
Remote Study

- Unmoderated Remote Testing
- Half-day





No lab/ office setup



Unmoderated, Cloud-sourced

Remote UX Testing Tools

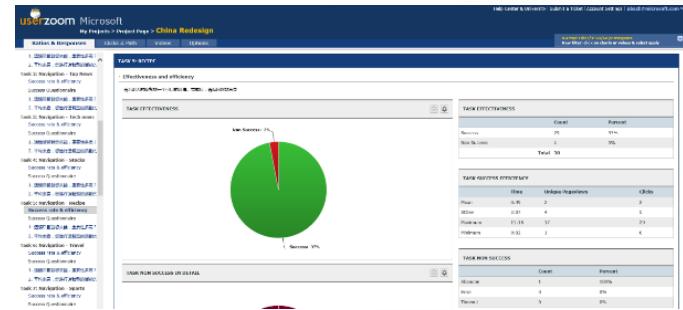


Prototype, website, real-code feedback
Task-based studies (w/benchmarking metrics)
15 min with each user with recorded verbal

A screenshot of the UserTesting interface showing a task for Kickstarter.com. It includes a "FIVE SECOND TEST" section with three questions, a "TASK" section with a donation scenario, and a "VERBAL RESPONSE" section where users can type their frustrations.



Click (screen) testing
Interactive prototype, website testing
International participants (multi-language)



Cafe Study

- Fresh eyes on small, isolated usability issues
- Half day



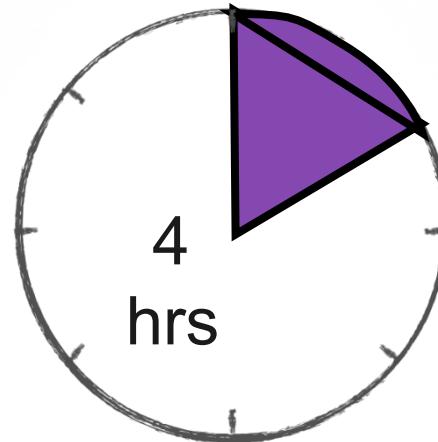
18
USERS



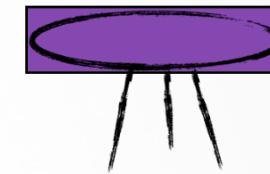
1
RESEARCHER



1
HELPER

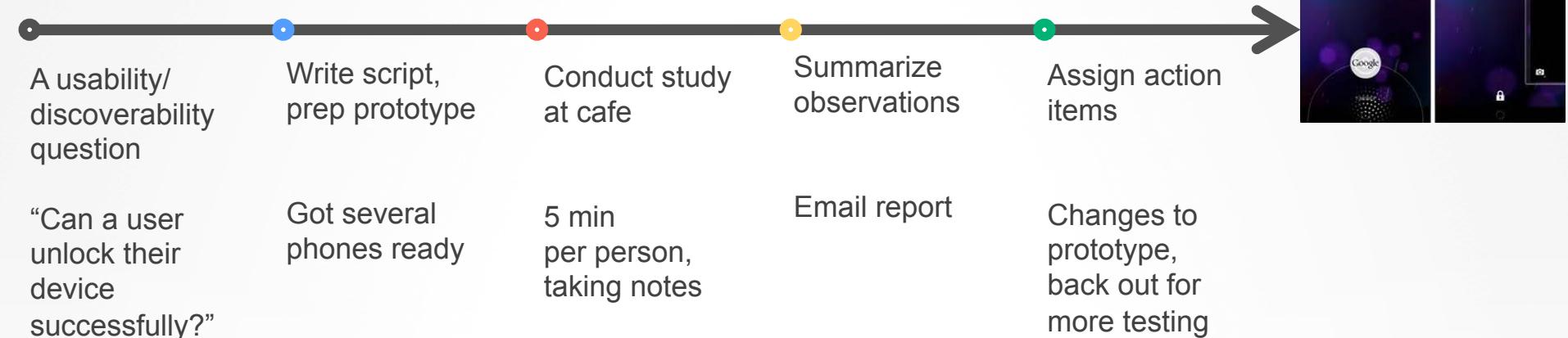


Café table



Focused UI, Quick
Decisions

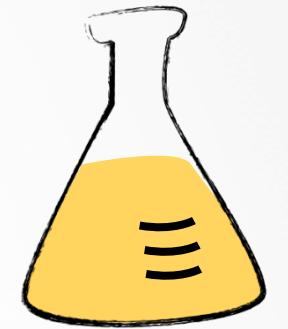
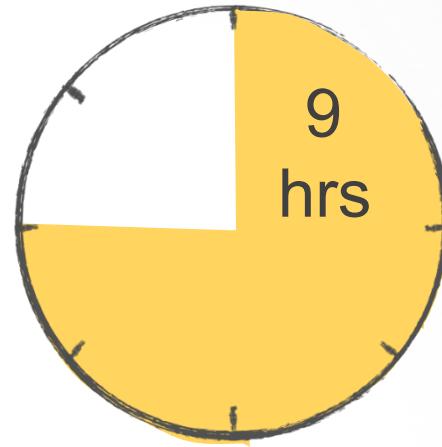
Cafe Study Process Example



- Rapid Iterative Testing & Evaluation
- 1-2 days



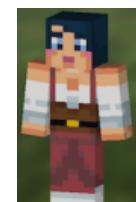
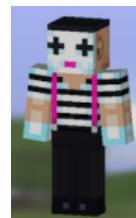
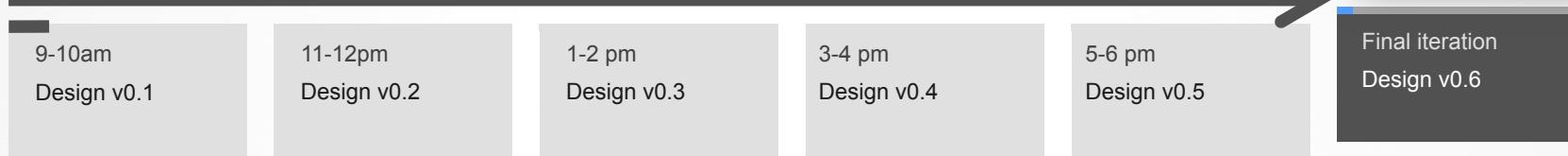
5-6
USERS
1
RESEARCHER
1
DESIGNER



USABILITY LAB

Focused Change

RITE Study Process: One day Example



RITE Study Process: Two-day Exam

Day 1

9-10 am

Design v0.1



11-12 pm
Design v0.1

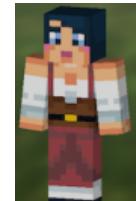


1-2 pm
Design v0.1



Day 2

11-12 pm
Design v0.2



1-2 pm
Design v0.2



Final iteration
Design v0.3



FAAST study for a weekly pulse check

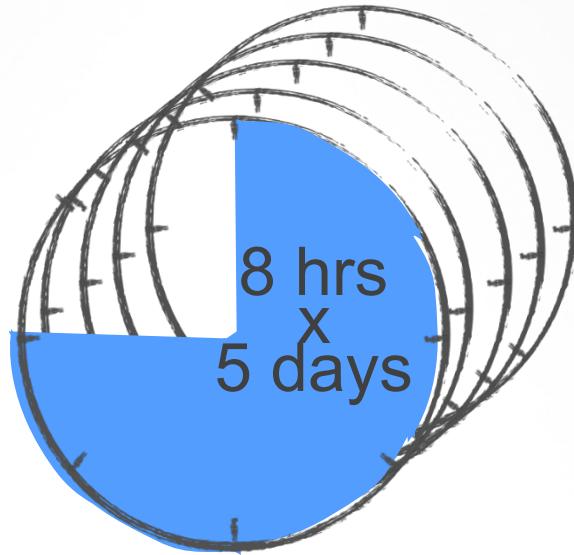
- Sprint cadence
- user feedback
- 1 week



4-6
USERS 1
RESEARCHER OBSERVERS



The icons include a group of five diverse people standing together, a person pointing upwards, and a group of four people gathered around a table with a laptop and other equipment.



USABILITY LAB

Flexible Research Framework

FAAST Study Deep-Dive

FAAST = Fast, Agile, Ad-hoc, Swift, Tactical

FAAST Study Process

		Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Researcher	FAAST Scrum: Discuss what to test this week	Collect study materials	Write script + proto setup+ lab setup	Run 4 users + debrief with team	Data analysis/ Report creation	
	PM/ Design	FAAST Scrum: Discuss what to test this week	Prep materials with researcher	Finalize scenarios/ prototypes w/ researcher	Observe sessions + Debrief	Send out the key findings/ action items

Triage

Prep

Review

Study

Report

FAAST Scrum with Kanban Board

Screenshot of the Microsoft VSTS Kanban board interface for the FAAST team.

The top navigation bar includes: VSOnline / FAAST, Dashboards, Code, Work, Build & Release, Test, Wiki*, Engineering, ..., Search code, and user profile.

The main navigation bar shows: Backlogs, Queries*, Plans, State Visualizer, Bug Bash Pro, and Wiql Playground.

The backlog is organized into columns:

- New: Supporting AAD B2B (placeholder - nothing to test yet) by Angelos Petropoulos and Hemant Kumar.
- Prioritized: Baseline usability of Azure portal tasks by Andrew Brenner, Jared Bauer, and Hemant Kumar.
- Prep for next week: Doing: Alt-Auth Experience by Justin Marks (MSFT), Hemant Kumar, and Jared Bauer.
- Prep for next week: Done: (empty)
- Studying this week: End of Trial experience - continued by Zack Avitan, Commerce, and Hemant Kumar.
- Completed: End of Trial experience by Zack Avitan, Commerce, and Hemant Kumar.
- Completed: Sign in flow: 401 Error Experience by Peaky Yuter, Hemant Kumar, and identity.
- Completed: Licensing admin invitation by Ali Tai, Hemant Kumar, and User Engagement.
- Completed: Account-wide purchase walkthru by Andrew Brenner and Jared Bauer.
- Completed: Revamp of Acquisition Flows by hariag, Commerce, and Marketplace.

A detailed view of the "Prioritized" item (FEATURE 963663) is shown:

- State: Completed
- Area: VSO Online/VSO Cloud Services/Cross Site/UX Studies
- Description: B / 401 Error Experience
- Questions to answer:
 - Do users understand what they'll be charged?
 - Do they understand that their VSE subscribers are free?
 - Do they expect to be able to install the extension only for VSE subscribers?
 - Do they understand that their changes may vary in the future, based on the number of users in their account? (see if they're advised later when it changes)
 - Do they know what to do at each step? Is there anywhere they are stuck? (either because they're uncomfortable with the next step, have unanswered questions, or don't know what to do next)
- Storyboard to test: https://microsoft.sharepoint.com/teams/111/VSCS/csc/_layouts/15/guestaccess.aspx
- Release Notes
- Prototype: <https://xamarin.invisionapp.com/share/93REPOZ>
- Designs: https://microsoft.sharepoint.com/teams/devdiv/_designShare%20/documents/Forms/allItems.aspx
- RootFolder: %23{teams%2fdevdiv%2fdesign%2fshared%20/documents%2Fjared%20Bauer%2fProjects%2fA
- Study results (Draft): https://microsoft.sharepoint.com/teams/Misc/_layouts/15/guestaccess.aspx?guestaccesstoken=grphNoBhNonWZOPBFle7RdMfUQflnobbbYodk3%3d&folderid=2_1e34e691fd2b243
- Discussion

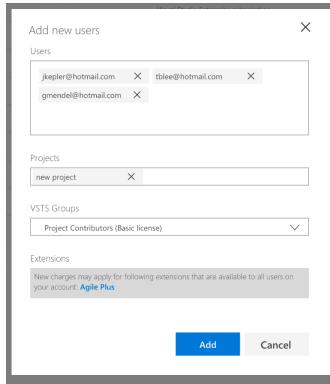
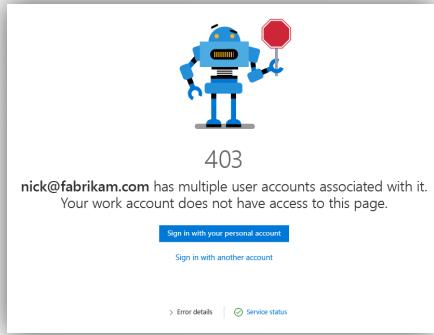
FAAST Study Step 1: Preparation

Who are the participants?

Pre-recruit external users for 3 target personas

- Team Lead/ Scrum Master
- VSTS account administrator
- End User/Developer

What are we testing?



Ideas & Concepts
Mockups, paper prototypes
Low-fidelity prototypes
High-fidelity prototypes
Sprint builds
Live code in builds

FAAST Study Application

✓ Works well with...

- Sprint-specific work
- Smaller/ Simpler features
- Sprint demos
- Quick UI fixes w/wireframes
- Simple UI navigations
- Simple scenarios
- Paper prototypes
- Product concept mockup

✗ Doesn't work well with...

- Method requires large N sample
 - Card Sort study
 - Benchmark studies
 - Competitive Analysis
 - Surveys
- Method requires strategic insights
 - Long-term/ E2E scenarios
 - Complex Systems
 - International Studies

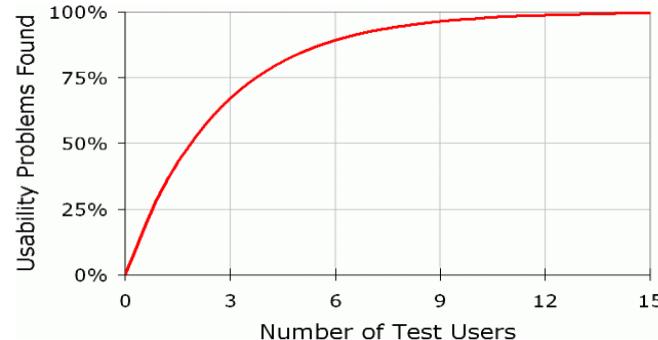
FAQ: FAAST Study – why only few users?

- The best result comes from usability testing is **no more than 6 users** and by running **as many small tests as you can afford**
- The most striking truth is that [zero user gives zero insights](#)

Usability guru, Jacob Nielsen's famous quote: “*80% of usability issues can be found by no more than 6 users*”

$$N(1-(1-L)^n)$$

where N is the total number of usability problems in the design and L is the proportion of usability problems discovered while testing a single user. The typical value of L is 31%, averaged across a large number of projects we studied. Plotting the curve for $L=31\%$ gives the following result:



Who is doing what?

Engineer

Researche
r

Designe
r

P
M



FAAST Study Step 2: Lab Setup

Where are we testing?

Traditional Usability lab



Living Room lab



FAAST Study Step 3: Execute

GO!

FAAST Study Step 4: Debrief with the Team

What happened and what can we do about it?

Reporting key findings

Discussing action items

Noting design fixes

Filing bugs/ adding new work items



FAAST Study Step 5: Communication

What should we communicate?

Research Methodology + Goals + Participants

FAAST Method
Fast, Agile, Ad-hoc, Speedy (+iterative), & Tactical (+on-demand)
11 lab study with moderator observations & participant comments
This study is tested with the HNI Cardio/Diet Tracker

Research Goals & Session Flow

- How successful were users at searching for things?
- Do users like having the 2 button search feature?

Participants

Social networks and news sharing

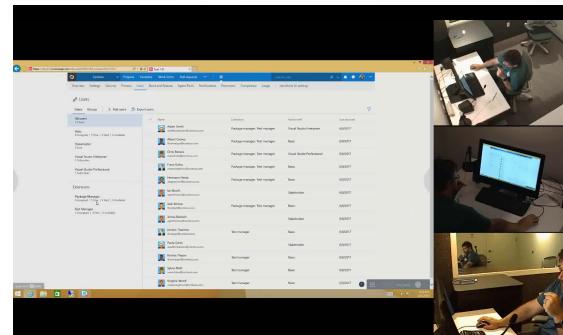
Prime Social & Sharing Study (2/26)
FAAST Study, Fast, Agile, Ad-hoc, Speedy & Tactical (+on-demand)
11 lab study with moderator's observations & participants' reaction

Method
Interview: Talk with the users to learn about their current behaviors around social network's usage and sharing news articles
Mock Cognitive Walkthrough: Walk through mocks of several Prime social features to get user feedback

Target Users
Frequent users of social networks – Facebook, Twitter, or both
Who also share news articles on their social networks regularly



Simple
Desirable
Easy To Use
Clean
Modern
Consistent
Understandable
Empowering
Intuitive
Helpful



Quick summary by email + brief presentation to the team
+ video clips + UX Hotlist + follow up

Weekly Ship Rooms, Bug triages

User Research Update (Miki)

Accomplishments (previous weeks):

Study Title	Open Issues/Risks	Status
CardCast News Layout Investigation (for Spartan) (part 3) [March 10-13] (Lorenzo & Miki)	Evaluated CardCast layout to assess Flex layout acceptability vs. Fixed layout (3 variations) as a part of Threshold investigation but it also applies to Spartan layout	Planned
Social on Web Investigation (Brandi)	Evaluated Social on Web by theme-based investigation. The study was a combination of in-depth interview to understand current habit on Social on web and cog walk to evaluate the current behavior/ expectations	In progress
Money (Prime & Threshold) (Kerry)	Some design mocks on FB service stripe sign-exp, share-like buttons on AR was evaluated	Completed
Prime Navigation Enhancement Study (Kerry & Miki)	We investigated Money task chart + SD module using the existing site+ proposed design mocks	In progress

Priorities (this week):

Study Title	Open Issues/Risks	Status
Prime HP Notification Design consultation (Kerry)	Investigating user expectations on HP notification treatment with PM + Design	In progress
Prime Longitudinal (Diary study) (March) (Lori, Kerry)	Diary study has started... Started to receive diary entries by users – continue monitoring diary entries + run analysis.	Started receiving diary entries

Upcoming (next few weeks)

Study Title	Open Issues/Risks	Status
Views E2E testing (TBD) (Lori)	We will test complx	
Prime Longitudinal (Field Visits planning) (April) (Miki, Lori, Kerry)	Field visits planning	

Prime PIP User Research Update (Miki)

Accomplishments (previous weeks):

Study Title	Open Issues/Risks	Status
Trending Topics / AR Study (Feb 12) (Lori) – completed	Used phone to understand what they're an TT mode vs. regular AR mode [1728957] – team is investigating with team to see if we can show film strip consistently at the top – team has agreed on the fixed charges Inefficient access to all articles within a Trending Topic - there is no efficient way to see all articles within a Trending Topics [1728965] – team has agreed on the changes in the paddle behavior	Proposed changes were discussed, implemented

Priorities (this week):

Study Title	Open Issues/Risks	Status
Views Research Synthesis (Feb 18) (Lori)	Evaluating two versions of TT test sites before experimentation on Thu. Test sites are ready to tested	Completed
Views UR Audit (Feb 18) (Miki)	Evaluates 3 top sites: article reader designs, paddles, titles, article collection flow, style of paginations etc.	Completed
Spartan DHF / NTP design consultation (Miki)	Start working with design team to discuss on the proposed designs, learning from previous user studies Working with IT team (Lori) to access their insights + collab research pieces	Sync is established – will work with team for confirmation

Upcoming (next few weeks)

Study Title	Open Issues/Risks	Status
Social on Web / AR, Autes Slideshow (Feb 26) (Brandi)	We'll look into Social on Web which is more theme-based investigation. The study will be a combination of in-depth interview to understand current habit on Social on web and cog walk to evaluate the current behavior/ expectations	Sync with WebCore / AR / Mkt Invert / Autes
Prime Navigation Enhancement Study (Mar 5-6) (Kerry & Miki)	We will investigate the updated version of drop-down navigation for HP and selected vertical pages (Sports, Lifestyles, Autos)	Watch test sites from QC perspective

*Prime PIP FAAST Studies will run **EVERY THURSDAY** - consult your UR reps

XPlat End-User Feedback Themes: Previous Week

Platform	App	Top Feedback Items		TFS Item
		News	Food & Drink	
iOS	News	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigating crash reports Want notifications and alerts Want ability to easily increase font size 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1579796, 1580004, 1579921, 1582292, 1583409 1605218 1605214 1605316 TBF TBF
Android	Food & Drink	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sound not playing on recipe videos Some F&D recipes not showing content Want better integration with OneNote 		
iOS	Money	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Watchlist stocks not loading Calorie burn data incorrect Investigating crash reports 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1601876 1591293 1593143, 1593145, 1593146, 1592501
Android	Sports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Want notifications and alerts (scores for favorite teams) Requests for additional leagues and sports, especially women's sports (ex: WNBA) 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> TBF TBF
iOS	App	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Default font size is too small for many users, need ability to easily increase font size Would like to tag favorite recipes 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1591117 1438721
Android	News	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Want landscape portrait orientation, especially on tablet Prompted daily to re-add previously selected stocks to Watchlist Widget 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1563544 1547195 1600581 1600606 1603772 1596874 & 1595165
iOS	Food & Drink	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> App forgetting calorie profile Investigating crash reports 		
Android	Money	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Widgets not syncing Support for landscape mode Support for cricket 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1593572 1586438 1591895 1591897
Android	Health & Fitness			
Android	Sports			
Android	Weather	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data quality: inconsistent data reports between canvases; historical data are incorrect F/C nor correctly detected based on user market 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1600123 1576409

UR Announcements, Reports, Flyers

Feb 11 | #31886

Prime PIP FAAST Study:
Trending Topics E2E
by Lori Watson & Miki Kanno

Conduct by Lori Watson

msn ICE

February 12 (Thu), from 7am to 1pm
BRAVERN 2, LAB 3 (11TH FLOOR)

Watch the video stream

WHAT

- Trending Topics site evaluation using the test site to assess E2E flow, entry to TT expectation, re-circulation behavior of TT articles, TT pagination behavior, TT filmstrip nav/ selection model expectation

WHO

- Participants: 6 users who are current web portal, news sites/ apps dairy

Time	Gender	Age	Profession
7-Sam	Male	54	HR Manager
8-Sam	Female	30	Retail
9-10am	Female	23	Info worker
10-11am	Female	33	Info worker
11-12pm	TBD	30s	TBD
12-1pm	Male	24	Student

Sign up for the UR Announcement alias to receive announcements for all ICE User Research studies.

ICE

News-CardCast UR Audit

By Brandi Arnold

ICE

In January 2015, a brief User Research Audit was compiled for News-CardCast by reviewing relevant past research and investigating the various competitors' products.

Please [see the full report here](#).



We investigated the following products:

- Yahoo News (app and web)
- Flipboard (app only)
- Facebook (app and web)
- Twitter (app and web)
- Pinterest (app and web)

These products were selected to get a range of relevant comparable content (e.g., Yahoo News), variety info snacking (e.g., Twitter), and visual presentation (e.g., Pinterest).

Identify Product Features: Where relevant, both web and mobile app versions of the product were examined for core functionality. In general, most major features are consistent across canvases, with canvas-specific notes labeled.

Examine User Feedback: Additionally, app store feedback was used to get a pulse on user likes, dislikes, pain points, and missing features.

Quick Summary

People use Info Snacking Apps...

- In short periods of downtime/breaks
- To alleviate boredom and/or to quickly stay informed
- Either on a consistent schedule (e.g., morning, lunch, evening commute) or more frequently and sporadically (pull out phone in any periods of downtime)

Recommendations from Competitor Comparison and Past Research

- Content relevancy** is critical – **DO** explicit and implicit customization
- DO Categories** – they are necessary for a news focused experience
- DO Local Content** – it makes the app instantly more personal, especially if it's limited to one location
- DO have social integration, BUT be careful about being "too social"** – even on social networks, friends-of-friends content (from users or pages not directly followed by the user) is usually undesirable
- DO allow users to use most of the app without signing in** – optional sign in for certain features is fine, but make the value prop clear to motivate users to do it
- DO let users share posts easily** via the usual social/email channels, ideally somewhere on the canvas
- DO let users save posts for later viewing**
- DO have a robust search** (articles, keywords, sources, navigation by category keyword, etc.)

How well do you know our msn users?

Who the MSN users are?

Why they visit MSN?

What types of articles interest them?

Which users are interested in which types of articles?

Whether users know about our apps and features?



We conducted a survey of more than 10,000 real MSN users in order to answer these questions. Come to the MSN HP Survey presentation to find out more.

Lincoln Square
Presented by ICE User Research
Contact Kerry Spalding (kspal) for more information



Interested in attending an in-home visit?

4/14-17 San Diego, CA

4/20-23 Albuquerque, NM

4/27-30 Austin, TX

Prime Longitudinal Study

Diary

Diary Analysis + Profiles

In-Home Visits

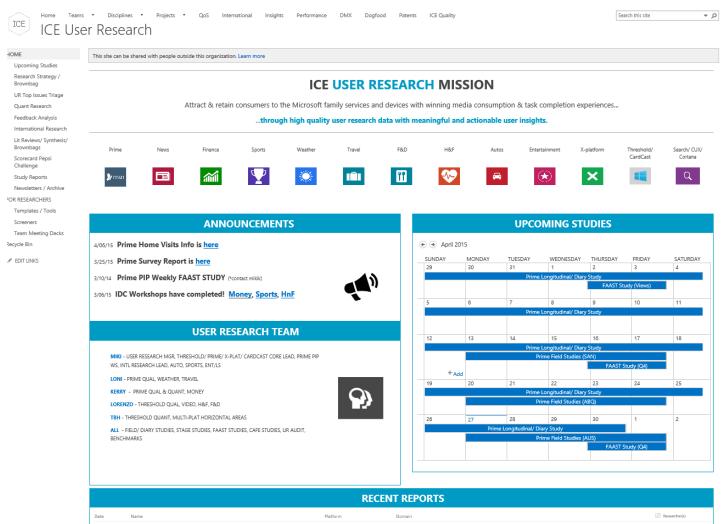
Workshops

Max of 4/Min of 2 people will be allowed to attend each in-home session.
We encourage you to attend at least at least two sessions.
You must be available for the debrief session for your selected location.
Attend one of the Home Visit training session on Wednesday, April 8th 12 PM/1 PM/2 PM in LSQ 22226.

ICE User Research
Contact [Loni Watson](#)(lwatson) for any questions!



UR Share Point/ Monthly Newsletters

The image shows a screenshot of the ICE User Research homepage. The header features the 'ICE' logo with a blue 'I' and a red 'C'. The top navigation bar includes links for Home, Teams, Disciplines, Projects, QoI, International, Insights, Performance, DMX, Dogfood, Patents, and ICE Quality. A search bar is located in the top right corner. Below the header, there's a banner stating 'ICE User Research' and a note that the site can be shared outside the organization. The main content area is divided into several sections: 'ICE USER RESEARCH MISSION' with a sub-note about attracting consumers to Microsoft services; 'ANNOUNCEMENTS' with a list of recent news items; 'UPCOMING STUDIES' showing a calendar from April 2015 with various study details; 'USER RESEARCH TEAM' featuring a megaphone icon and a list of team members; and 'RECENT REPORTS' at the bottom. The sidebar on the left contains links for Upcoming Studies, Research Strategy, and various research categories like UX, UI, and Market Research, along with links for newsletters, templates, and other resources.

The image is a digital newsletter from ICE (Institute for Creative Engineering) titled "ICE User Research Newsletter" for August 2014. It features a header with the ICE logo, a main content area with various news items, and a footer with navigation links.

The image is a digital newsletter from ICE (Institute for Computing Education) titled 'ICE User Research Newsletter' dated November 11, 2014. It features a header with the ICE logo, a main content area with various news items, and a footer with navigation links.

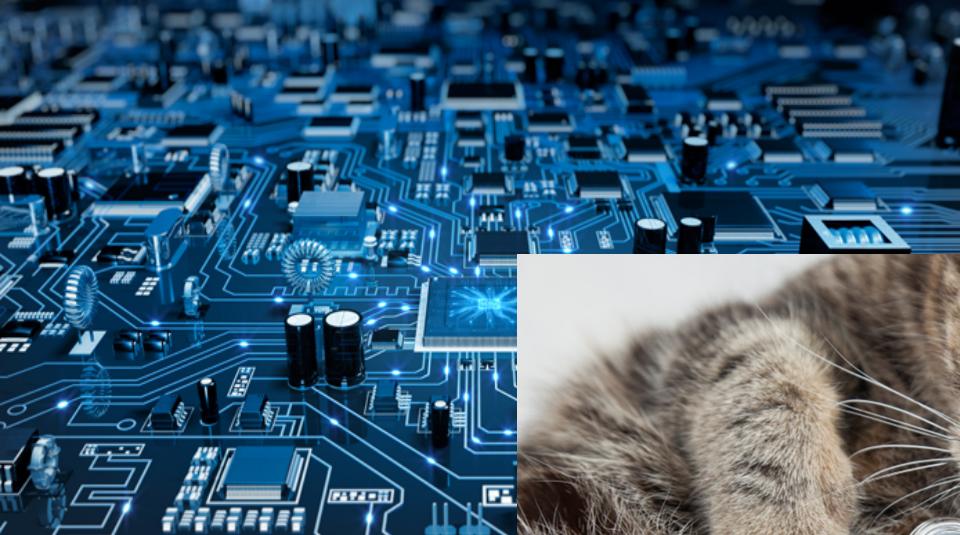
FAAST Studies!

Fast, Agile, Ad-hoc, Swift, Tactical research you can involve

with

- Weekly lab studies
- Add your stuff in the sign-up sheet
- FAAST SCRUM to pitch your idea for user studies
- Every Monday @10:00am, meet us at Studio H 3.HUB Large
- All Designers/ PMs are welcome to participate





Our data driven culture...

Build-Measure-Learn

Hypothesis



We believe {customer segment} wants {product/feature} because {value prop}

Experiment



To prove or disprove the above, the team will conduct the following experiment(s): ...

Learning



The above experiment(s) prove(s) the hypothesis by impacting the following metric(s): ...

Jose Rady Allende

VSTS Agile Leads

Mon 8:31 PM

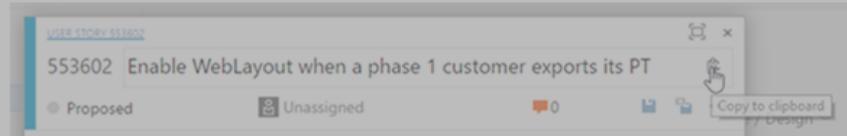
Launch and Learn: Copy to clipboard on the new work item form

Feature

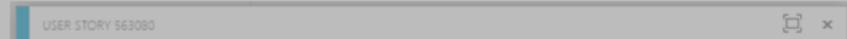
Copy to clipboard allows users to copy a link to a work item with a single click. In addition to the hyperlink, users get the type and title for the work item (i.e., [User Story 563080: Remove redirects for editing a work item](#)).

Last sprint we did some styling changes to make it consistent with other copy to clipboard experiences in Team Services.

From:



To:



Hypothesis supported. More distinctive users have been using the copy to clipboard functionality after our deployment.

When comparing the number of distinctive users before and after the changes, we can observe an increase of around 100 users per day (~20%).

Hypo

The new styling will help with the discoverability of the feature. We expect more distinctive users to make use of this feature.

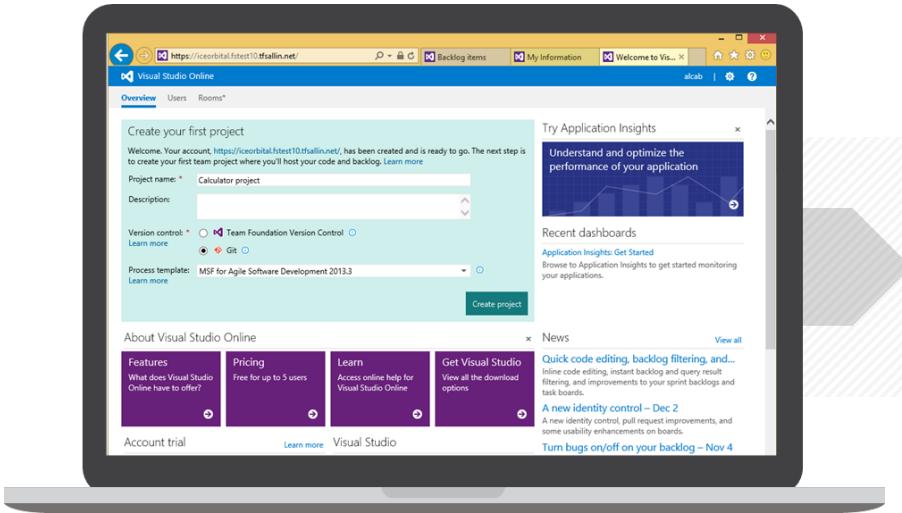
KPI/Data and Insights



Hypothesis supported. More distinctive users have been using the copy to clipboard functionality after our deployment.

When comparing the number of distinctive users before and after the changes, we can observe an increase of around 100 users per day (~20%).

Before ...

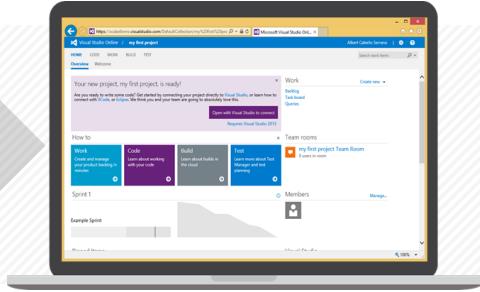
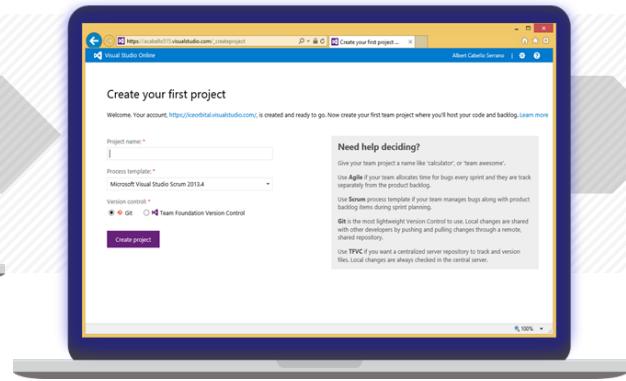
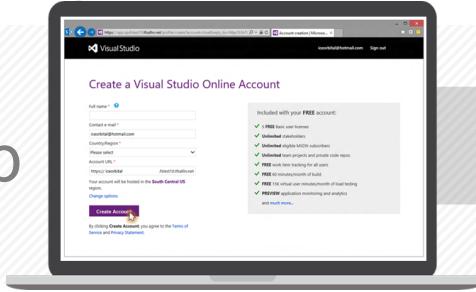


Previous project creation experience

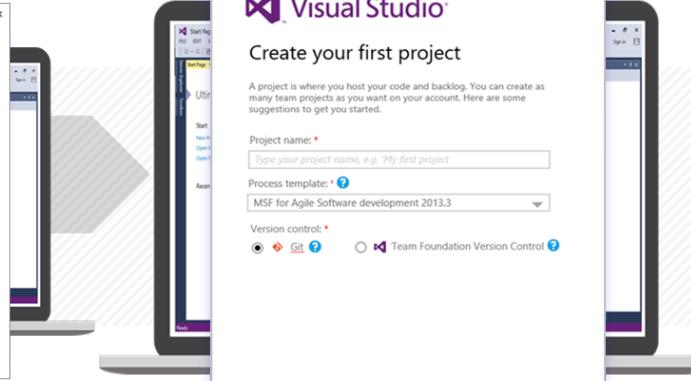
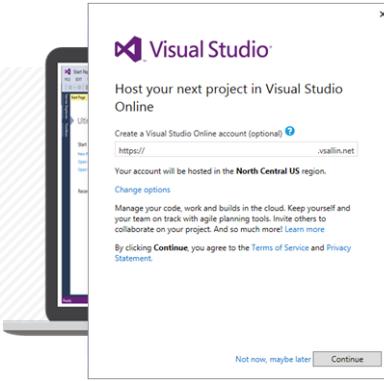
Too many actions and distractions can prevent customers from taking the next natural step of creating a new project

After ...

Web



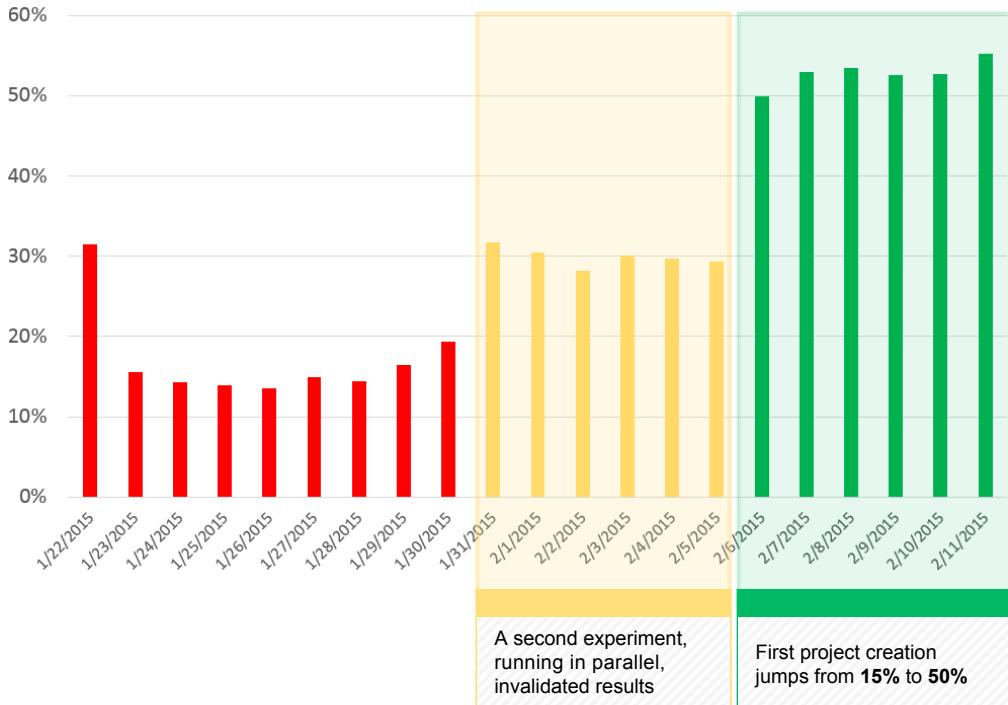
IDE



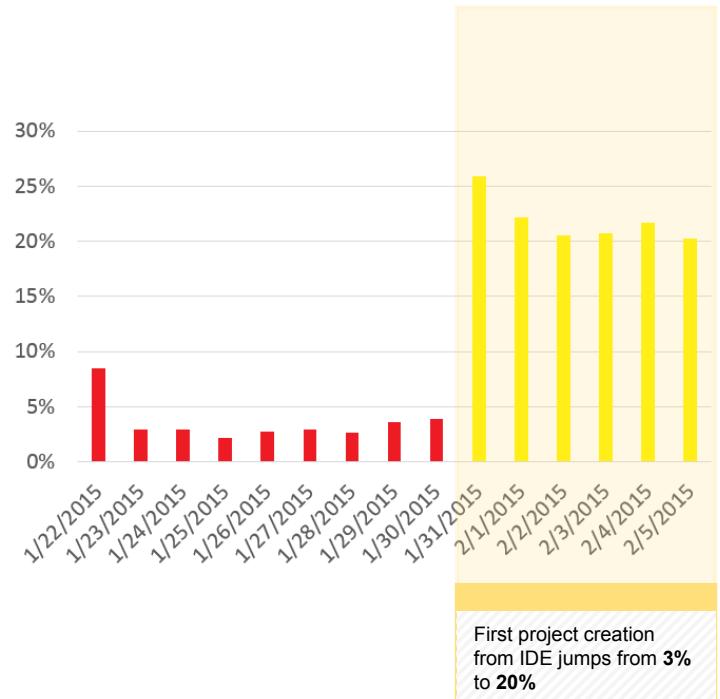
Focused project creation experience – integrated into the IDE flow

Validated learning

% of accounts creating projects the day of account creation
January 22 to February 11 (all sources)



% of accounts creating projects the day of account creation
January 22 to February 5 (IDE only)



Thank you

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m
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