The History of DevOps

DevOps is a newer concept within software development that is built to incorporate IT operations into the software development cycle to help teams become more reliable and efficient when releasing projects, and with less conflict between different departments. It takes various aspects of the Lean community, Agile operations, and Continuous Delivery.

The earliest of these concepts is the Lean movement. This began back when Toyota began manufacturing car parts, and teams came together to improve efficiency, limit waste, and continuously make improvements over time to perfect their process. When applied to software development, these principles are found today with having smaller projects, fewer delays, and rapid feedback loops, which became a core goal of DevOps.

Then came the Agile Manifesto in 2001. This helped emphasize the importance of collaboration, adaptability, and quick delivery of working software. While other processes were strict and less collaborative, Agile was focusing on the internal dynamics of teams and how a more organized, collaborative, and high-moral environment can help benefit a company’s software output, which paved the way for DevOps by making the development process faster and more responsive.

While Agile was focused more on the internal teams behind building software, Continuous Delivery is more focused on automating processes that can allow teams to release updates quickly and securely. These technical practices help move away from large, drawn-out, and risky releases, and helped to develop the importance of smaller manageable updates that are important within DevOps.

DevOps was born in 2009 when John Allspaw and Paul Hammond showed how Flickr was able to do fast and reliable deployments through the combination of strong development and operations teams working together. That year, discourse around DevOps continued to grow, and people were sharing innovative ideas and experiences to help improve upon the process.

DevOps today is not only the combination of major processes that came before it, like Lean and Agile, but also a combination of ideas that was generated when the focus shifted only on output and more to the combination of the culture of a work environment, automation, measurement, and sharing. Combining the importance of tools and automation with the importance of trust, communication, feedback, and constant improvement within a team. These things have helped shape DevOps, and it will continue to grow, change, and influence others as technology advances.