

5 steps to digital innovation

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5 steps to digital innovation

A guide to joining the digital revolution

by **George Ornbo**



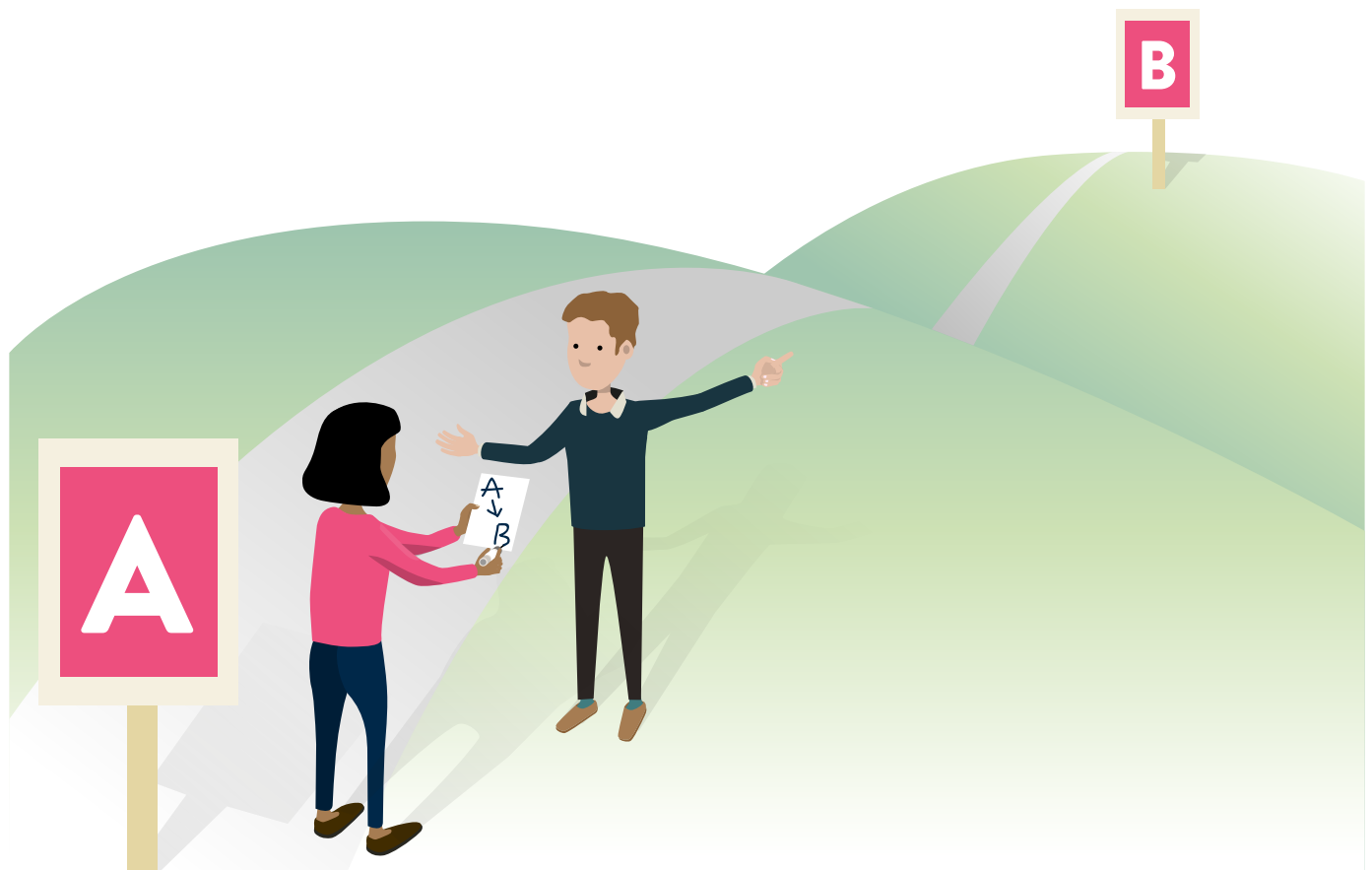
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1. Understand user needs
 2. Test an idea
 3. Embrace failure
 4. Build, measure, learn
 5. Working software over meetings
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1.

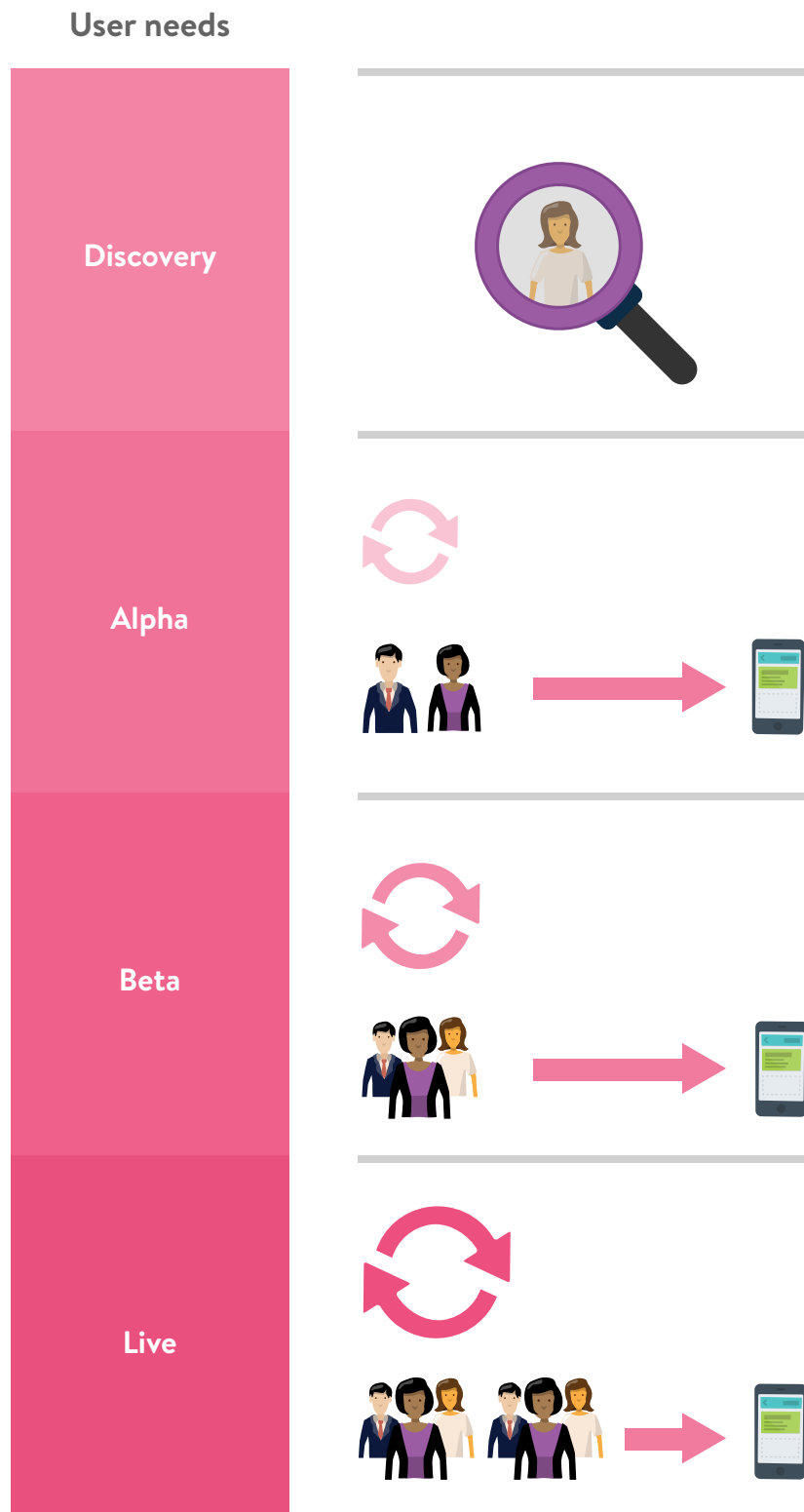
Understand user needs

In designing **Digital Products**, it is key to take a user-centred design approach and to involve users at every stage of the design process. By undertaking a **Discovery phase** and using techniques like User Research and **Design Thinking**, it is possible to understand in detail what motivates users and to design a service that is relevant to them.

By focussing on customer needs and releasing software early, it is possible to gather regular feedback and iterate on the product, based on what customers want rather than what you think they need. Pushing software through Alpha, Beta and Live phases accelerates speed to market, and allows developers to iterate the product quickly along the way.



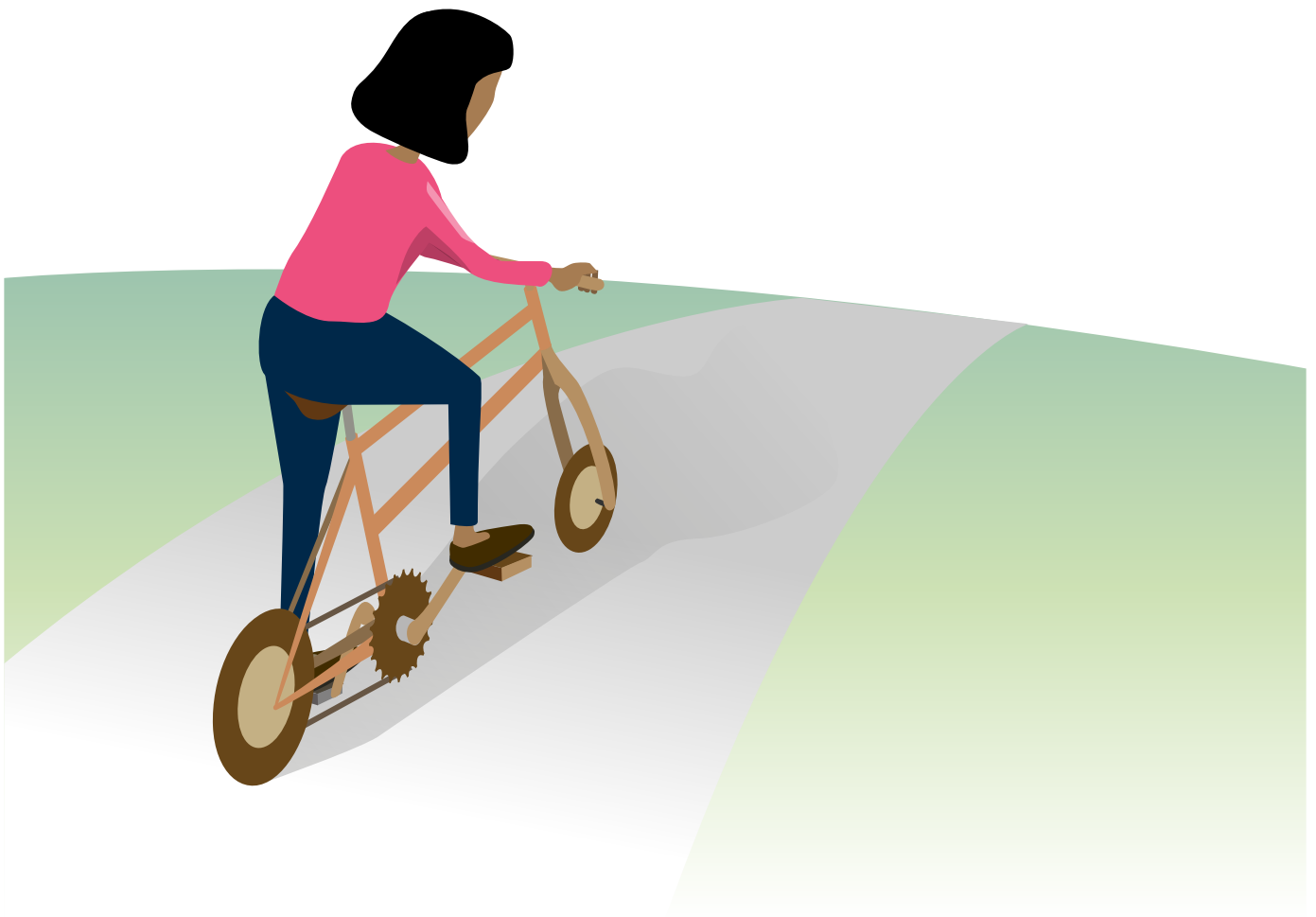
Our workflow



2. Test an idea

Often innovators and entrepreneurs have an idea that they think is the right fit for the market. Through taking an **evidence-based** approach to decision-making opinions can be quickly validated through empirical evidence. By proposing a hypothesis, defining a way to test it and mapping out success criteria, significant time and money can be saved in not developing the wrong idea. By the same token, getting to the right answer will happen more quickly as you learn from misplaced assumptions.

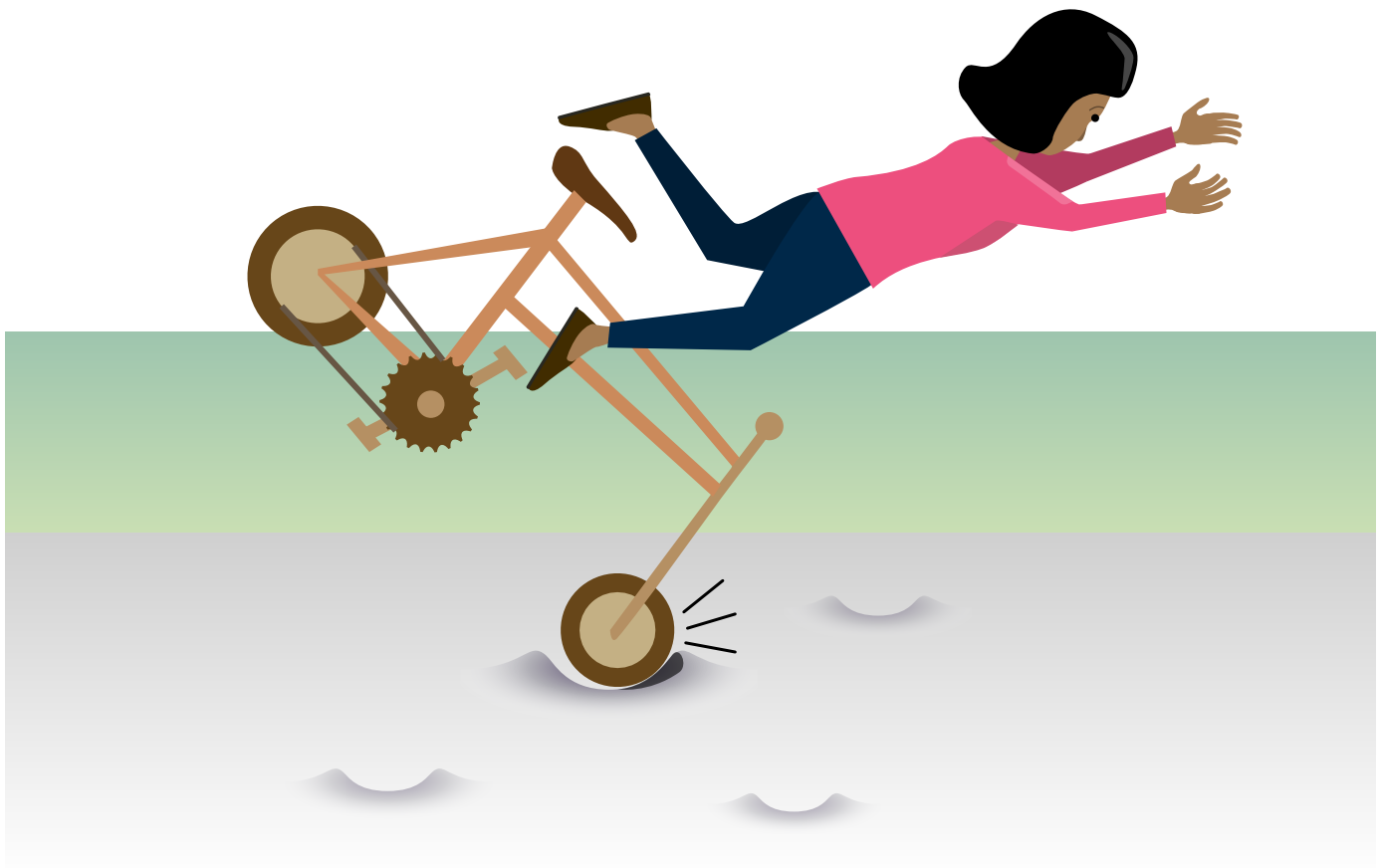
The idea of measurement is very powerful in software design. Measure the success of your process flow through techniques like A/B testing, allowing users to answer your hypothesis in real time. Although Innovation has a strong subjective element in initial inception, it can be accelerated and validated through measurement.



3. Embrace failure

Often the hardest thing for organisations to embrace with Digital Innovation is the idea that it might not work and that this is ok. Clearly it is not acceptable to spend vast amounts of money and not see a return, but **starting small** and understanding that **failure is valuable** rather than wasteful is key to delivering innovation efficiently.

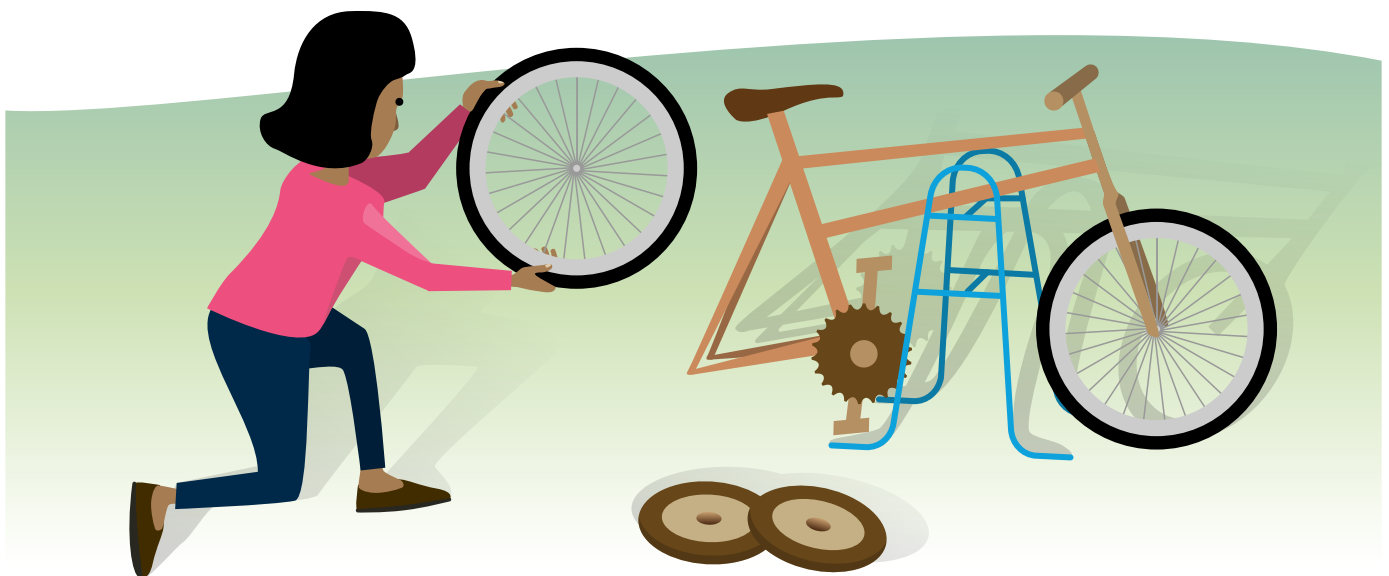
The solution is to establish the right governance in approaching Digital Innovation. By ensuring that stakeholders understand that greater value will be returned through periods of experimentation and iteration, a product has a greater chance of success. Without the right approach organisational and political pressures can hinder digital innovation.



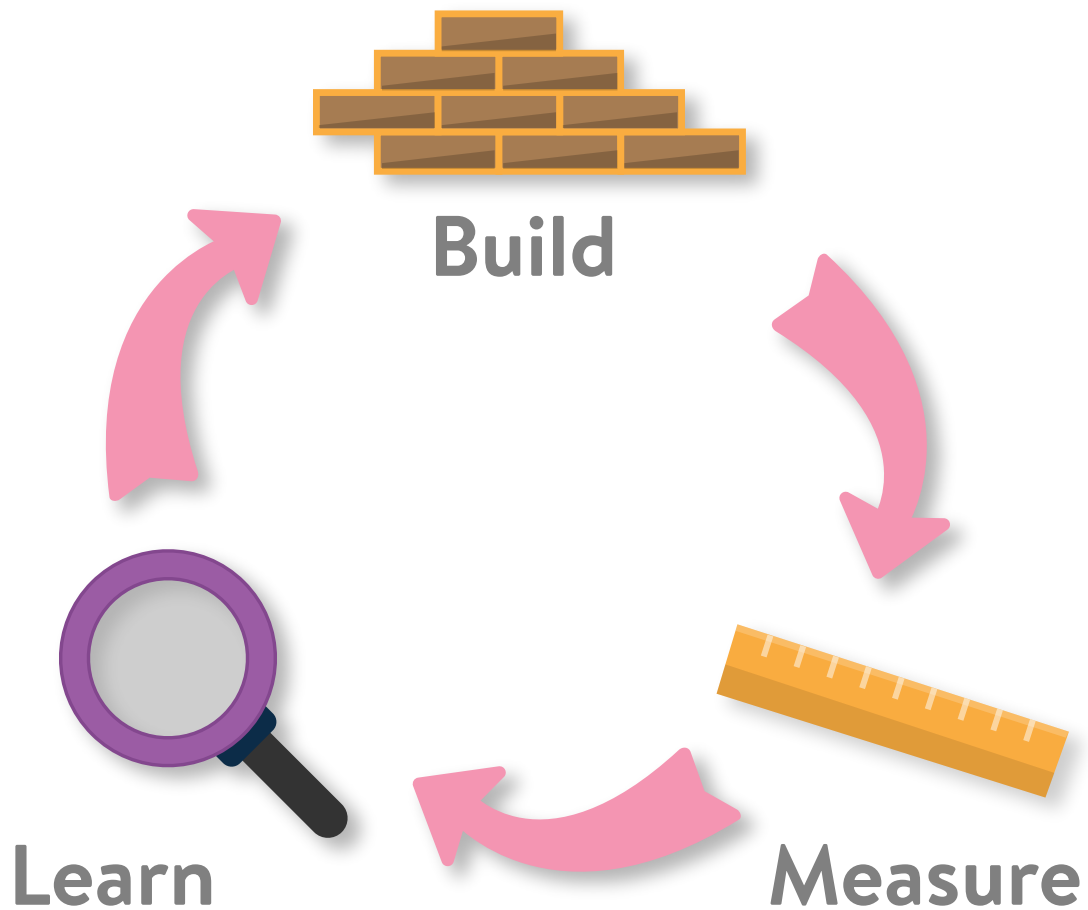
4 Build, measure, learn

The **Build, Measure, Learn** loop is a powerful idea taken from the Lean Start-up Methodology. It proposes that the quickest way to deliver a product is to build a straw man with some assumptions, measure it and learn from the outcomes of the measurement. In releasing working software we seek to test ideas with some measurement. Through the measurement, we learn. If our hypothesis is wrong this is valuable as we can take the learning and try something else. If our hypothesis is validated we know we are trying to solve the right problem.

Advantages of following this approach are that you eliminate uncertainty, you validate your assumptions and get to value more quickly.



Build, measure, learn



5. Working software over meetings

Endless planning and meetings stifle innovation. The philosophy of **‘Show Me The Thing’** is grounded in the idea that by seeing and using working software it is possible to reach consensus and discover what is really important. By embracing the idea that you should **start small** and **release software early and often**, you can sidestep the need for extensive planning and let users help you design your product.

The idea that teams are in a constant state of iteration can be frightening to some. By embracing things like **continuous integration** and continuous deployment, teams are able to ship to users more quickly and gain valuable feedback as they do.



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