

Critical Evaluation of Agile Tools

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Executive Summary:

The Agile methodology is a project management and software development technique that emphasises adaptability, collaboration, and client focus. It is the most recent model employed by big corporations today, such as Facebook, Google, and Amazon. It takes an iterative and incremental approach, emphasising the significance of producing a functional product rapidly. To support the Agile process effectively, various tools have emerged, offering solutions for project management, collaboration, communication, and tracking progress. These tools streamline workflows, enhance team collaboration, and provide valuable insights into project performance.

Benefits of agile project management tools

- Agile tools prioritize team collaboration and communication.
- Agile technologies include powerful reporting and analytics capabilities, providing insights into project success, team productivity, and critical metrics like velocity and burn-down rate.
- An agile tool saves material in a single database, allowing for cross-project reporting and analysis.
- Agile tools give useful metrics for teams to make informed decisions and optimise operations.
- Testing is included throughout the development process, yielding higher-quality products.
- Agile approaches provide functioning features in iterations, resulting in faster product deployments.

Popular Agile tools:

ClickUp

Trello

Monday.com

Jira

Azure DevOps

Rally

VersionOne

Agile tools help to facilitate the adoption and implementation of Agile methodology in software development projects. These technologies, which include project management, communication, job tracking, and analytics, enable teams to create high-quality products effectively while adjusting to changing requirements and maximising efficiency. Choosing the best Agile technology for your team will help you thrive in today's fast-paced, dynamic development environment.

Agile methodology and its core principles

Agile methodology is an iterative approach to project management and software development that emphasizes flexibility, adaptability, and delivering value to customers quickly and effectively. It divides projects into smaller phases and guides teams through cycles of planning, execution, and evaluation (wrike, 2024). Agile methodology is renowned for its frequent release of functional

software, customer collaboration, and adaptable planning (Atlassian, 2024). It places a strong emphasis on adaptability, feedback, and a people- and results-focused methodology for software development (Simplilearn, 2024).

The core principles of Agile methodology are as follows:

- **Individuals and Interactions Over Processes and Tools:** Agile values the importance of individuals and their interactions in achieving project success. It prioritizes effective communication and collaboration within the team (Eby, 2016).
- **Working Software Over Comprehensive Documentation:** Agile focuses on delivering working software that provides value to customers rather than extensive documentation. It emphasizes the importance of tangible results and encourages frequent iterations and feedback (Eby, 2016).
- **Customer Collaboration Over Contract Negotiation:** Agile methodology recognizes the significance of customer involvement and collaboration. It prioritizes customer feedback and engagement throughout the development process, allowing for better alignment with customer needs and preferences (Laoyan, 2024).
- **Responding to Change Over Following a Plan:** Agile embraces change and encourages teams to be flexible and responsive. It recognizes that requirements and priorities may evolve over time and encourages teams to adapt and adjust their plans accordingly.

These core principles guide the Agile approach to software development and project management, enabling teams to deliver high-quality, working software in a more efficient and customer-centric manner (Alexandra, 2024).

Numerous frameworks, including Scrum, Kanban, Lean, and Extreme Programming (XP), have emerged as a result of the agile approach. Each framework incorporates special behaviours and rituals while embodying the fundamental ideas of Agile in a different way. Software development teams, for instance the organization we are working for, will tend to choose Scrum which helps with the framework for effective team collaboration and EP (Extreme Programming) which is for appropriate engineering practices for software development (paradigm, 2024).

Which agile methodology would be most fitting for the organization

“The company is looking to adopt Agile methodologies for its development projects to improve efficiency, flexibility and collaboration.” Therefore, Scrum methodology will be most fitting as it is suited for complex projects and large teams.

Reasons on why Scrum methodology is best suited:

- **Iterative and Incremental Development:** Scrum follows an iterative and incremental development approach, where work is divided into small, manageable pieces called sprints. This allows for continuous feedback and learning, enabling teams to make improvements and adjustments throughout the development process (Scrum, 2024).
- **Collaborative Approach:** Scrum places a strong emphasis on interdepartmental cooperation and collaboration. It brings together people in many positions, including developers, Scrum masters, and product owners, to collaborate on a project. Frequent meetings, including sprint reviews and daily stand-ups, help team members communicate and work together.

- **Flexibility and Adaptability:** Scrum is made to be both adaptive and flexible in response to shifting priorities and requirements. Feedback and changing needs may be used to modify and reorder the backlog, which is a prioritized list of work tasks. Teams are able to react swiftly to modifications and gradually provide value as a result.
- **Transparency and Visibility:** Scrum uses a variety of artifacts, including the sprint backlog and product backlog, to give transparency into the project's progress. Stakeholders are encouraged to participate and work together as they may observe little steps forward and offer input (Lucidchart, 2024).
- **Continuous Improvement:** Scrum encourages continuous improvement through regular retrospectives, where teams reflect on their work and identify areas for improvement. This focus on learning and adaptation helps teams enhance their efficiency and effectiveness over time (Salimi, 2024).

By adopting Scrum, the organization can benefit from increased efficiency, as work is broken down into smaller, achievable tasks. It also fosters flexibility, allowing the team to respond quickly to changes and deliver value incrementally. Collaboration and transparency are enhanced, leading to improved teamwork and better alignment with customer needs.

Agile tools description:

ClickUp:

Teams may manage tasks, projects, and goals with the help of ClickUp, a feature-rich project management software. It offers calendars, lists, and dashboards that can be customized to manage tasks and monitor advancement. Agile elements like sprint planning, time tracking, and Kanban boards are available with ClickUp. It also comes with capabilities for teamwork like document sharing, chat, and comments. With its customizable views, automation possibilities, and interfaces with well-known tools and services, ClickUp places a strong emphasis on productivity and flexibility (Parker, 2023).

Jira Software:

Jira Software has features including burndown charts, sprint planning, backlog management, Scrum and Kanban boards, and release management. Jira Software facilitates continuous integration and deployment by integrating easily with development tools such as Bitbucket and GitHub. With its wide range of customization choices, teams can adjust fields, issue kinds, and workflows to suit their own requirements. Jira Software is ideal for large teams and intricate projects due to its high scalability (Simplilearn, 2022).

Monday.com:

Monday.com is a flexible work operating system with several tools for managing projects. For visualizing projects and tasks, it offers scalable boards, timelines, and calendars. Teams can assign tasks, set deadlines, establish procedures, and monitor real-time progress. Teams may add automations, modify workflows, and combine Monday.com with other applications because to its vast customization options. It works with a variety of project management styles and Agile approaches, making it appropriate for a broad spectrum of teams and tasks (Day, 2023).

Trello:

Trello is a well-liked project management application that is well-known for its visual task management and ease of use. It arranges tasks and procedures using cards, lists, and boards. Colleagues can design unique boards for various projects, with columns tailored to symbolize distinct phases of their work process. Cards may be rearranged within columns, allocated to team members, and enhanced with labels, comments, attachments, and deadlines. Teams may adapt Trello to different project management approaches, such as Agile, thanks to its flexibility. It provides standard Agile features like process customization and Kanban boards (Trello, 2019).

Differences:

Each of these project management tools has its strengths and is suitable for different types of teams and projects. Trello excels in simplicity and visual task management, making it ideal for small to medium-sized teams. Monday.com offers versatility and customization options, catering to various project management styles. Jira Software is specifically tailored for software development teams practicing Agile methodologies, with advanced features for planning, tracking, and releasing software. ClickUp provides a comprehensive solution with a focus on flexibility and productivity, suitable for teams of all sizes and industries.

ClickUp:

What is ClickUp?

ClickUp is a cloud-based project management tool that serves as a centralized location for planning projects, managing tasks, and communicating with teammates. It has a variety of tools that can be used to get a better understanding of how your project is progressing and where should the resources be allocated to. Click Up's automation builder can be used to streamline workflows, reduce errors, save time, etc. While collaboration features like a document editor and chat view will save time for teams from having to switch between different apps, all serving different purpose (Drapkin Aaron, 2024).

ClickUp features

ClickUp features that are relevant to the agile practices are:

- **Task management** : ClickUp gives you the usual information that you would expect from task management such as descriptions of projects , due dates, attachments , etc. But it has three different ways to display the task view , which are full screen , normal pop-up window and sidebar (Fink, 2024).
- **Collaboration tools** : ClickUp offers tools such as video conferencing , screen sharing , and document management tools . These tools can benefit the users can benefit the users into effective communication and teamwork (Bouchrika, 2024).

- **Time Tracking** : Once the time tracking is enabled , you can see it any task card. The time tracker will allow you to start a timer or set the amount of time you will be dedicating to a particular task (Fink, 2024) .
- **Resource management** : There are two ways to manage resources in ClickUp. Team view and workload view . Team view shows a breakdown version of the tasks assigned to the members in the project , as each member is given multiple tasks . It will display the members that have completed tasks , and the progress chart of the task completion. Workload view shows the tasks on a timeline with color-coding , as it indicates whether a resource is over or under distributed . Workload view also shows the details of the work hours assigned to a resource . With workload view , project managers can help decide if they should move tasks from one resource to another (Fink, 2024).
- **Document management** : Managing documents in ClickUp is straightforward. The menu option in the sidebar has a word named docs. Once you click on docs , you can view all the documents that have been created in the workspace and you can utilize it by narrowing it down to the results that the user wants (Fink, 2024) .
- **Automation** : ClickUp enhances users to automate workflows efficiently by allowing custom actions , as this leads to time being saved . Automation enables users to streamline tasks such as reorganizing tasks cards within lists , changing task card statuses , rearranging task assignments , etc (Bouchrika, 2024) .

Strengths of ClickUp

- **Integration** : ClickUp integrates with various third-party tools, such as Slack, Trello, Google Drive, and Zapier. This feature makes it easier to collaborate with external teams and syncing data across different platforms (Kanai, 2024).
- **High level of customization** : ClickUp allows you to create custom workflows that suits the teams needs. You can create customizable dashboards, labels, and statuses to manage tasks and projects more efficiently. This feature produces customizable dashboards, labels, and statuses to manage tasks and projects more efficiently . It is beneficial , as it ensures the team's processes are optimized to improve productivity, and therefore reducing the chances of errors or miscommunication (Kanai, 2024) .
- **User friendly interface** : It has a simple and straightforward interface to utilize . As it displays all the tasks and projects in one place making it easier to track progress and manage tasks effectively (Kanai, 2024) .
- **Detailed reporting**: ClickUp allows you to generate detailed reports on your team's performance, project progress, and time tracking. You can customize reports to show the metrics that matter most to your team and export them in various formats, including CSV, Excel, and PDF(Kanai, 2024) .

Weakness of ClickUp

- **Occasional glitching** : Users have encountered bugs or glitches , when dealing with more advanced features. These technical issues can disrupt the workflow for team members (Kho, 2023) .
- **Steep learning curve**: Click up has lot of features and customizable options , which can overwhelm new users . It may take some time to adapt to figure out how to navigate it (Kanai, 2024) .
- **Reporting performance can be improved** : ClickUp users would greatly benefit if generating and accessing reports can be quicker than expected . As improvements in this area will allow the users to work more efficiently (M.Carroll, 2023).
- **Limited free plan** : The free plan supplies basic task management and collaboration features , which limits capabilities and is only ideal for personal use (Kanai, 2024).

ClickUp Project Types

Features of ClickUp are ideal to agile teams to create customized funnels , kanban boards , build Scrum charts , track issues and etc . ClickUp is ideal for projects that are non-standardized. Meaning it cannot work with projects that have a fixed set of planning , analysis, and execution , as due to its flexibility and adaptability it can deal with different phases of the project at different times. Therefore , ClickUp will deal with projects that do not a fixed timeline of completion (Fink, 2024).

Jira:

Jira Software

Jira Software is a project management and issue tracking tool primarily used by software development teams to plan, track, and release software projects. It is a popular tool that provides a centralized platform for managing tasks, bugs, and other types of issues, helping teams organize and prioritize their work. Jira Software is designed to support agile project management methodologies, but it can also be customized to fit different ways of working, including waterfall methodologies (Simplilearn, 2024).

Visual interface

Jira software allows teams to track and manage their work, communicate effectively, and streamline their work process. Jira offers a user-friendly interface which includes features such as backlogs, calendars to track work done/work to be done and lists to help the teams to organize and visual their current work (Javed, 2015). Jira can further be integrated with communication software such as Slack

and Microsoft teams which allows teams to have a centralized platform to communicate and update collages on what they are working on.

Collaboration

Jira software offers collaboration features to enhance teamwork and communication for the company since it allows third party collaboration software's to be implemented such as Slack and Microsoft Teams, this allows software development teams to have a centralized space to discuss their work and share their work. Jira allows teams to have real time update on what work is uploaded. Jira Software supports attachments and file sharing, enabling team members to share necessary information and assets within the context of specific tasks or problems. These collaboration features in Jira Software promote effective communication, transparency, and teamwork, enabling teams to work together more efficiently and deliver high-quality software (Atlassian, 2024).

Agile Support

Jira software offers extensive support for agile methodology, making it an excellent choice for the company as it provides and caters agile framework such as Scrum and kanban. The teams can therefore create and manage Scrum/kanban boards, track progress, prioritize tasks and collab effectively. Jira software supports essential Agile practices like backlog grooming, sprint planning, user story management, issue linking, and release planning. With integrations to development tools and collaboration platforms, Jira Software enables seamless collaboration and automation within the Agile development ecosystem (Atlassian, 2024).

Integrations

Jira Software provides software developers with necessary integrations that improve their development process and teamwork. Developers can now immediately attach code repositories to Jira problems thanks to these integrations, which include well-known development tools like Bitbucket, GitHub, and GitLab. Additionally, Jira Software connects with build, test, and deployment procedures (CI/CD) technologies like CircleCI, Jenkins, and Bamboo. Jira can be easily connected with collaboration tools like Confluence, Slack, and Microsoft Teams to centralize project updates and interactions (Atlassian, 2024).

Pros on why we should choose Jira Software

Jira offers multiple advantages over other agile project management sites, for example Jira supports agile methodologies such as Scrum, which features sprints and backlogs to help the teams work cohesively (Kanai, 2023). Furthermore, Jira allows teams to customize their workflows and fields to fit their specific requirements. Third party collaboration software such as Microsoft teams, GitHub can also be implemented which allows for live updates on what the teams are doing, and Jira helps with organizing documented tasks for the teams to access it easily (Atlassian, 2024).

Cons on why we shouldn't use Jira software

Jira software falls short in terms of easy to use for new users as the interface can be confusing. The cost of Jira software can be more than competitors for teams with limited budgets, and some users have stated that real time updates can be improved as sometimes it can be slow (hryb, 2019).

Why to choose Jira Software

Jira has great built in features aimed towards agile project management, making it ideal for software development teams that follow agile methodology. It provides features such as backlogs, sprints, and agile boards to support agile practices. Jira also has extensive integration capabilities with a lot of

development tools that allow teams to communicate seamlessly and share their work. Jira Software provides a high level of customization, allowing software development teams to tailor the tool to their specific needs. Teams can customize workflows, fields, and issue types to match their unique processes and requirements. Lastly Jira software allows teams to efficiently track and manage issues throughout software development lifecycle meaning that if there is a bug it can be captured and fixed efficiently (Good, 2023).

Monday.com:

What is Monday.com?

Monday.com is an open platform that runs on the cloud that lets companies create their own work management apps and solutions. It gives groups a centralised platform to plan projects, communicate, and track advancement in real time. Monday.com is designed to promote productivity across several sectors and team sizes by streamlining workflows, enhancing communication, and offering a wide range of capabilities through customisable interfaces and straightforward workflows. You may use Monday.com for any kind of workflow, including project management, customer relationship management (CRM), software development, and human resources, this is what makes the platform so great (Scot, 2024).

User Interface and features:

Monday.com is usually considered to have an intuitive user experience. Users will find it easy to explore and make use of its many features thanks to its modern and user-friendly design. Monday.com places a high value on accessibility and usability, making it possible for users to utilise the platform to manage their projects efficiently and rapidly learn how to use it (WORKFLOW, n.d.).

Monday.com packs an abundance of functions into one useful application. These are a few of its main functions along with what you may accomplish with them (Katherine, 2024):

- **Role Assignment:** You may give team members defined responsibilities on Monday.com so that everyone has access to the tools they need to do their job. It's simple to keep track of who completes what, which promotes accountability and helps to clear up any doubts about who is working on what.
- **Timelines:** Project schedules are clearly shown visually on Monday.com, which makes it simple to quickly view significant dates, deadlines, and milestones. Project timetables can be rearranged to consider evolving conditions, and timeframes can be added or removed.
- **Gantt Charts:** An intuitive Gantt chart view is available on Monday.com. Gantt charts are a standard tool for project management. You can quickly access all project details, such as dependencies, deadlines, and task ownership, with this view.
- **Software Integration:** Many software connections are available on Monday.com, including as those for Dropbox, Google Drive, Trello, Slack, and Trello. This implies that you may increase productivity, enhance functionality, and streamline your operations by integrating your current tools into your project management workflow.
- **Budgeting:** Monday.com provides tools for budgeting that let you keep tabs on project costs, keep an eye on resource utilisation, and establish spending caps. Additionally, you may programme notifications to tell you when you're spending surpasses a particular level, which will assist you in staying on track and preventing overspending.
- **Project Management features:** Monday.com provides organisations with an extensive range of project management tools to assist in organising, monitoring, and carrying out their projects. Among the salient characteristics are:

1. Project planning: Monday.com allows you to make project plans, allocate tasks and resources, establish deadlines, and monitor development.
2. Project monitoring: You may monitor metrics like project budget, project velocity, and burn rate with the aid of Monday.com's project tracking services.
3. Project reporting: You can see inside your projects and detect problems and hazards with the aid of Monday.com's reporting tools.
4. Project templates: To help you get started on your projects, Monday.com provides a collection of project templates.

Agile Support:

Monday.com offers assistance for the scrum methodology together with the Kaban style. In a project workflow, the operating system encourages openness, flexibility, and quick problem-solving. The user may schedule, monitor, and oversee the scrum iterations in addition to the project lifetime. Furthermore, each project may be arranged using specific boards for topics like epic roadmaps, sprint planning, retrospectives, and bug tracking (Grace, 2024).

Integrations:

Monday.com allows you to combine data from several applications and organise all of your team's work in one location. Slack, Google Suite, Mailchimp, Zoom, Salesforce, Microsoft Teams, Excel, and many more are a few noteworthy connectors (Grace, 2024).

Pros:

- Monday.com offers users and boards and they are limitless.
- Offers customised options for companies according to the quantity of users.
- Enables user to manage challenging assignments.
- Excellent user support.
- A lot of third-party applications are integrated.

Cons:

- Adding new users has a fee.
- Adding subtasks may be a challenging operation.
- Agile sprints are demanding.

Monday.com is recommended for use:

On the market, Monday.com is the most flexible project management software available. The platform allows you to monitor problems, organise video creation, handle advertising campaigns, and manage all your projects. It may also be used as a CRM. Teams use it for almost everything, from teachers organising their classes to engineers creating aeroplanes, as we have discovered.

Trello:

Evaluation Criteria:

1. **Visual Interface:** Trello does a great job of offering a very user-friendly and visual interface. Tasks are represented by cards on boards in this card-based system. Progress may be easily visualized as each card can be moved between columns that represent different stages of the procedure.(Trello, 2019)
2. **Collaboration:** Trello provides great tools for teamwork, including the ability to assign tasks, name other team members, attach files, and remark on cards. Updates in real time make sure that everyone is aware of the latest information, encouraging teamwork and communication.(Trello, 2024)
3. **Agile Support:** Trello still supports Agile approaches like Kanban, even though it might not have as many features specifically for Agile as programs like Jira. Collaborating in groups, teams can design unique boards with columns denoting various phases of their Agile process, including "To Do," "In Progress," and "Done." Teams are able to customize Trello to fit their own Agile practices thanks to its flexibility.(Trello, 2024)
4. **Integrations:** Trello offers several different ways to integrate with other services and technologies that are frequently utilized in Agile settings. By centralizing all pertinent data, integrations with services like Slack, Google Drive, GitHub, and others improve productivity and simplify processes.(trello.com, n.d.)

Strengths:

Trello's principal advantage is its ease of use and intuitive interface, which promotes rapid adoption and smooth teamwork. Its visual format, exemplified by interchangeable boards and cards, makes task tracking and organizing throughout a project's many phases simple. Trello's adaptability to different project requirements and workflows is made possible by its simplicity, which also prevents it from becoming overly complicated. To further improve productivity and workflow efficiency, Trello has a wide ecosystem of integrations that provide seamless communication with a range of third-party applications and services.(Raymond, 2024)

Weaknesses:

Trello may be limited in terms of sophisticated Agile capability and scalability for larger projects, despite its advantages. It may not have all of the more complex Agile capabilities found in specialized Agile applications like Jira, even though it supports Agile approaches like Kanban. Keeping a lot of cards and boards in Trello can get difficult as teams and projects get bigger and more complicated. This can make it harder to stay organized and productive. Trello's capabilities might not be suitable for enterprises with large scalability requirements or substantial Agile requirements.(Raymond, 2024)

Why to choose Trello:

Trello is a popular choice for project management due to its simplicity, flexibility, and emphasis on collaboration. Its user-friendly interface allows teams to start without extensive training, maximizing

productivity. Trello's task management features, such as customizable boards, lists, and cards, foster ownership and control over the project process. Its flexibility allows teams to tailor the tool to their specific workflows, fostering creativity and innovation. Trello's real-time updates, comments, and task assignments facilitate open communication, fostering camaraderie and accountability. Its visual task management capabilities help teams stay organized and focused, allowing them to make informed decisions about time and resource allocation. Trello's extensive integration ecosystem allows teams to connect it with other tools and services, reducing context switching and freeing up valuable time and resources for more meaningful work.(Trello, 2018)

Analysis and Recommendation

After considering all the project management tools, Jira would be the most recommended tool for a large-scale software development organization. ClickUp and Trello would be suitable for small-scale organizations or personal usage, because they don't have the capacity to handle large teams in an organization due to Jira having more complex agile capabilities than them. Monday.com and Jira can manage large teams of a large-scale organization. Jira would still be the most recommended, because Monday.com is versatile as it is ideal for multiple project management methodologies across numerous industries. Whereas Jira is more specialized on the software development niche, with design for scrum teams developing software.

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