

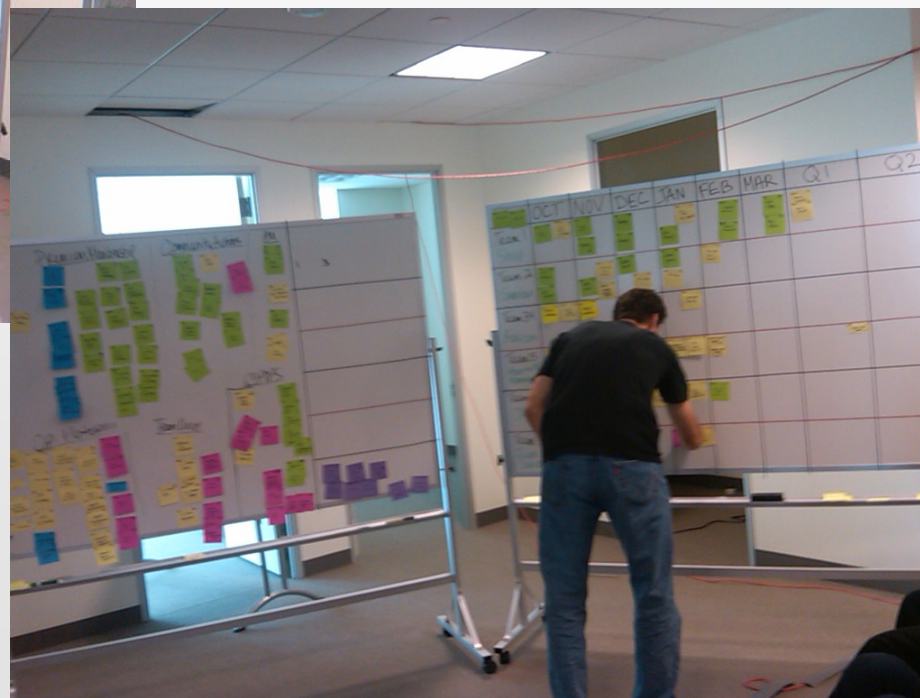
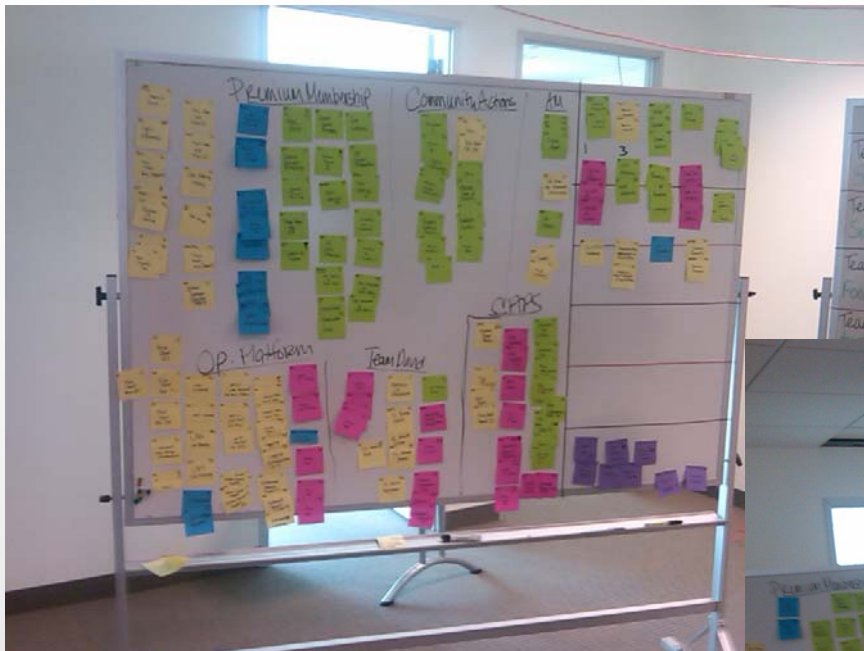


**The Motley Fool**<sup>®</sup>  
To Educate, Amuse & Enrich<sup>™</sup>

## Agile Adoption and Parenting

Max Keeler

# The Goal



# Hopes For This Presentation

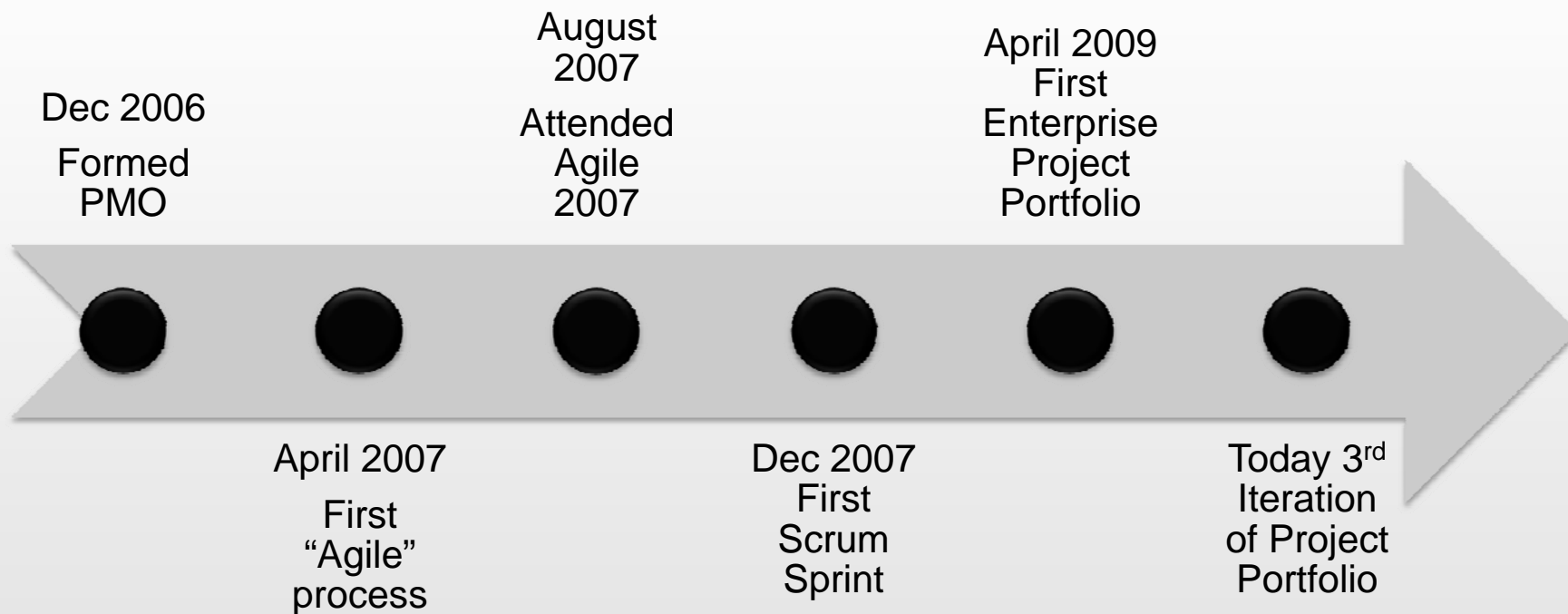
- Share Agile adoption experience and lessons.
- Present a simple portfolio management and governance strategy.
- Disclaimer: I can't focus on every aspect of Agile, I'll be moving quickly.

If you remember this presentation 3 days from now? I'm happy.

# Background – The Motley Fool

- [www.fool.com](http://www.fool.com)
- Founded in 1994, now ~ 200 employees
- ~ 40 frontend and backend developers divided into 6 teams.
- ~ 5.2MM UVs, 55MM PVs per month
- Advertising, Premium Newsletter Subscriptions, CAPS, Retail Fund

# Agile History



# Pre Agile (2007)

## Initiative Plan FY08

Project	FTEs																	
	Jun			Jul			Aug			Sep			Oct			Nov		
	Dev	CrS	PjM	Dev	CrS	PjM	Dev	CrS	PjM	Dev	CrS	PjM	Dev	CrS	PjM	Dev	CrS	PjM
Boards B. Free	1.5	0.5	0.5	1	0.5	0.5												
CMS	0.5	0	0.5	0.5	0	0.5	1	0	0.5	1	1	0.5	1	1	0.5	1	1	0.5
Fool.com - Homepage and Centers	0.5	2	0.5	0.5	2	0.5	1.5	3	1	2	4	1	2	4	1	2	4	1
Fool.com - CAPS Quotes																2	1	0.5
Landing Page Overhaul				1	1	0.5	1	1	0.5	1	1	0.5	1	1	0.5			
Lane - Destination Fool	2	2	0	2	2	0	2	2	0	2	2	0	2	2	0	2	2	0
Lane - Premium Power	2	2	0	2	2	0	2	2	0	2	2	0	2	2	0	2	2	0
Newsletter 1 - Stock Advisor																		
Backend				1.5	1	0.5	1.5	1	0.5	1.5	1	0.5	1.5	1	0.5			
Newsletter 3 - All Access Pass																		
Shop 1 - Order Page	2	0.5	0.5	2.5	0.5	0.5	2.5	0.5	0.5	2.5	0.5	0.5	2.5	0.5	0.5	2.5	0.5	0.5
Shop 2 - AAP Bundle/Rebill																		
Shop 3 - Marketing Bundles																		
<b>Total Demand</b>	<b>8.5</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>11.5</b>	<b>9.5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>11.5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>11.5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>11.5</b>	<b>10.5</b>	<b>2.5</b>
<b>Supply</b>	<b>9.5</b>	<b>9.5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>9.5</b>	<b>3.5</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>10.5</b>	<b>3.5</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>11.5</b>	<b>3.5</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>11.5</b>	<b>3.5</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>11.5</b>	<b>3.5</b>
<b>Supply - Demand</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2.5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>-1</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>-0.5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>

Total Man-months:  
Dest Fool 114  
Prem Power 88.5

Provided a sense of direction and control.

# Pre Agile Challenges

- **Business**

- Difficult to respond to changing priorities (hitting the bees nest)
- Lack of business accountability
- All business interaction happened at the beginning
- Business not sure how to behave
- “Common Understanding” expensive and short lived.
- Dates = Goals

- **Resourcing**

- Splitting people across projects
- Focusing on 100% allocation
- Wall between functional teams

Same old problems, even though we were “agile”.

# Ah Ha

- Agile 2007 conference
- Inspired by several speakers:
  - Jim Highsmith
  - Ken Schwaber
  - David Anderson
  - Mary Poppendieck



The Agile philosophy had a red-hot focus on value, productivity, common sense and respect.



# Adoption

- **Ready**
  - Education
  - Buy-in
- **Set**
  - Team Selection
  - Training
- **Go**
  - Select a Start Date with Clear Rules
- Wait and Watch

# Education

## Breakfast and Beer?\*

The conference includes:

- Breakfast in the rotunda
- Agile and SCRUM explained by Richard Cheng
- Planning and Estimating in an Agile organization with Sandi Rothman
- Value-drive Project Management with Max Keeler
- Getting Lean and Mean with Linda Cook
- Wrap it up with cocktails on the balcony

Look for signup sheets!

Email Max Keeler  
(maxk@fool.com)  
for more info.

Limited Availability!!

## TMF's Agile Mini-Conference

The Project Management team is pleased to bring you a solid day of Agile information sessions. The sessions draw on internal experiences, conferences and advice from Agile gurus. Join us!

# Sept. 24th



Kenny says,  
“Hey, check it  
out.”

Generated buzz  
and anticipation.

\* Beer and Breakfast will actually be served! Join in!

# Buy-in

- Tech Leads articulated problems, opportunities and proposal into a single, “shoppable” document.
- Started with CEO and moved on to business leaders, eventually gaining consensus (in some cases barely).
- Brought in experts, Jeff Sutherland and Linda Cook, to help explain and guide.
- Presented plan to team after approval.

By this time, people were talking and there was a sense of inevitability and some reticence.

# Training

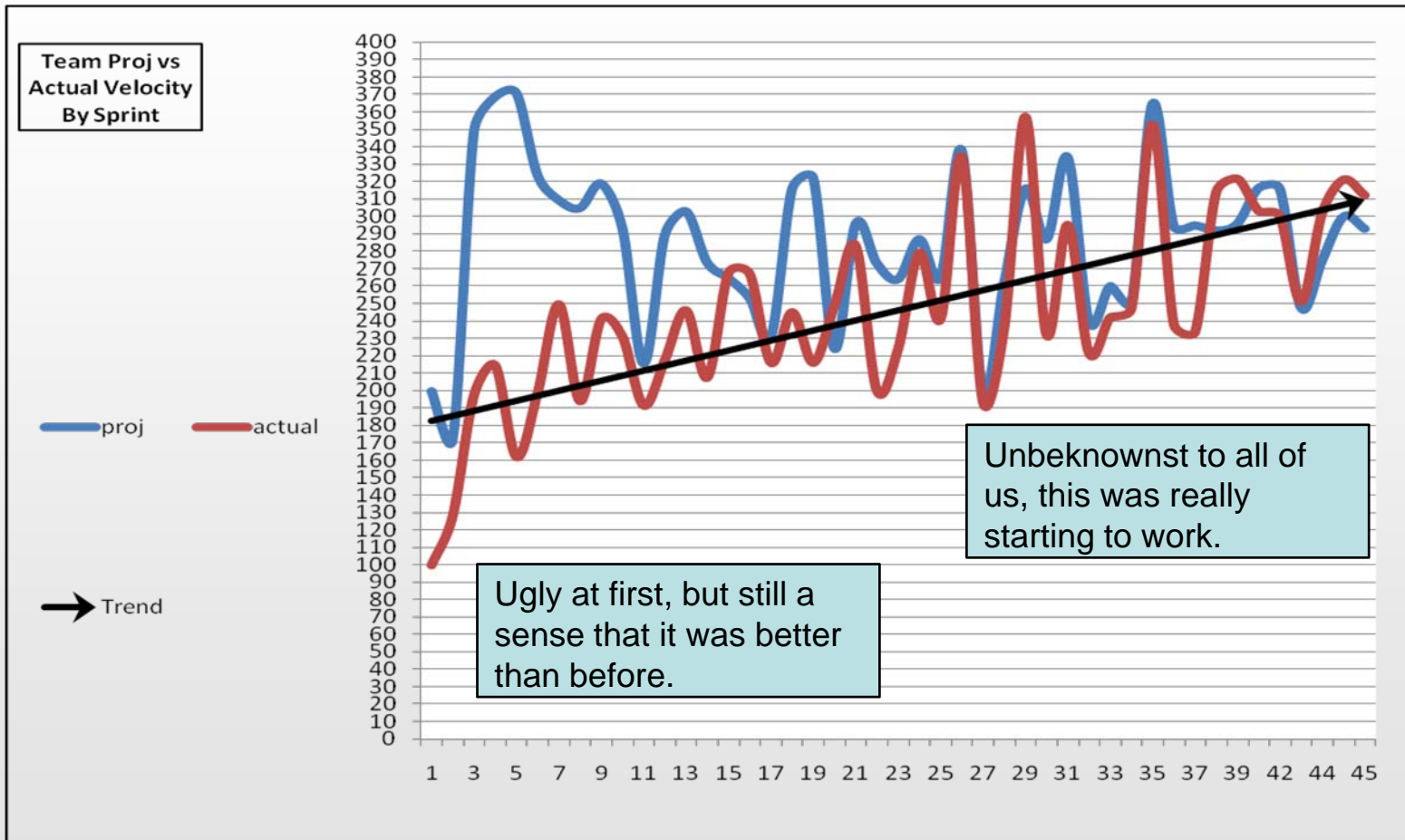
- Contracted with Lithespeed to train everyone, simultaneously.
- Gave doubters a chance to ask questions
- Gave everyone a common language
- Marked the beginning of the transition with a major event (nothing like this had ever been done before).

Most people in the company knew and were talking about Scrum. There was a sense of anticipation and excitement.

# Picked a Starting Point

- 12/3/2007 – Everyone is on a team and in a planning session.
- All teams collocated
- All teams, 2 week sprints
- Weekly releases

# Sit Back and Watch



## What Happened -- Pluses

- + Adapt to priority changes with little overhead
- + Identities forming across functional groups
- + Work aligned with backlog
- + Demonstrated performance increases
- + Conversations changed
  - ~~When will it be done?~~
  - What should we do next?

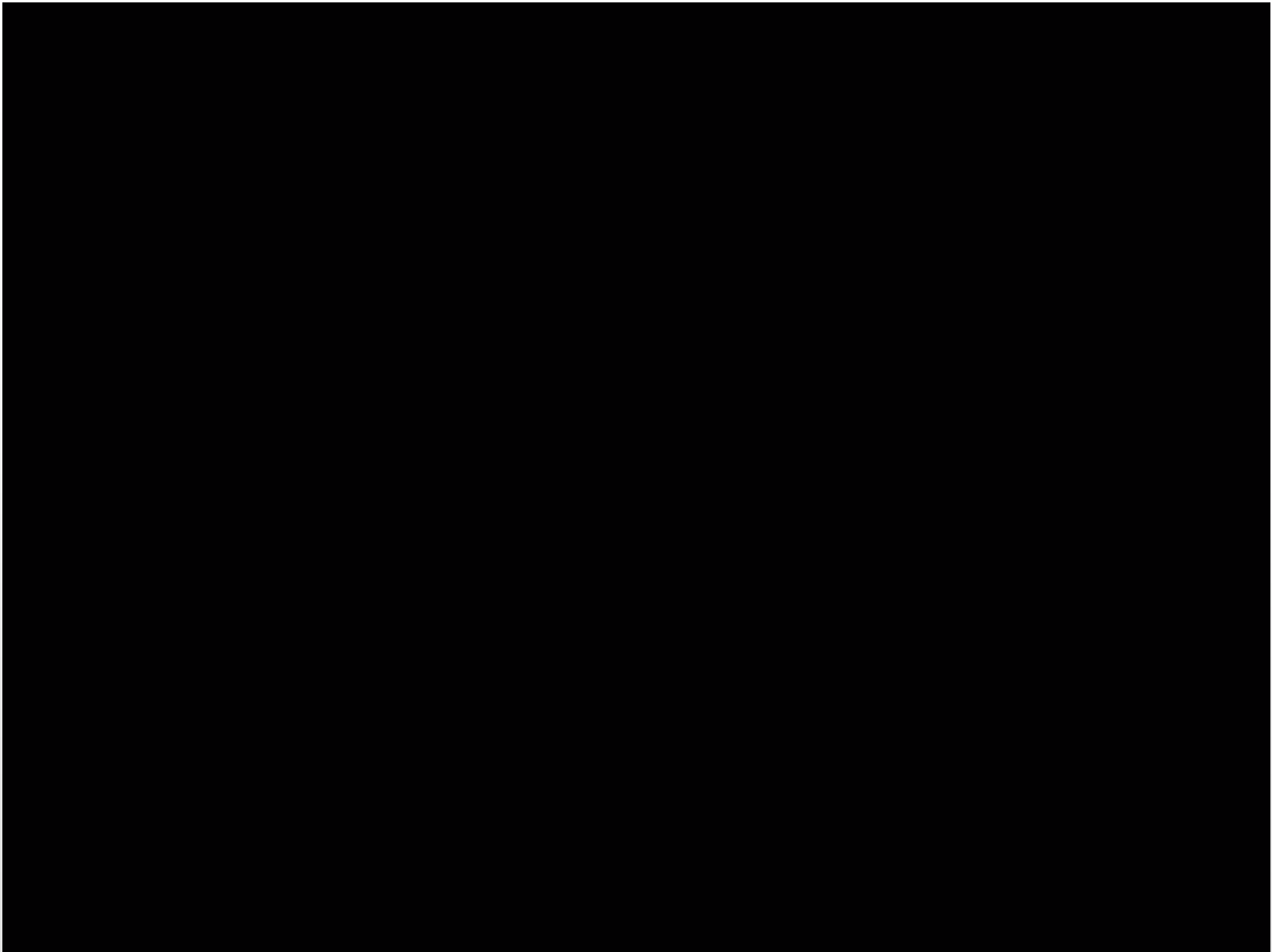
# What Happened -- Minuses

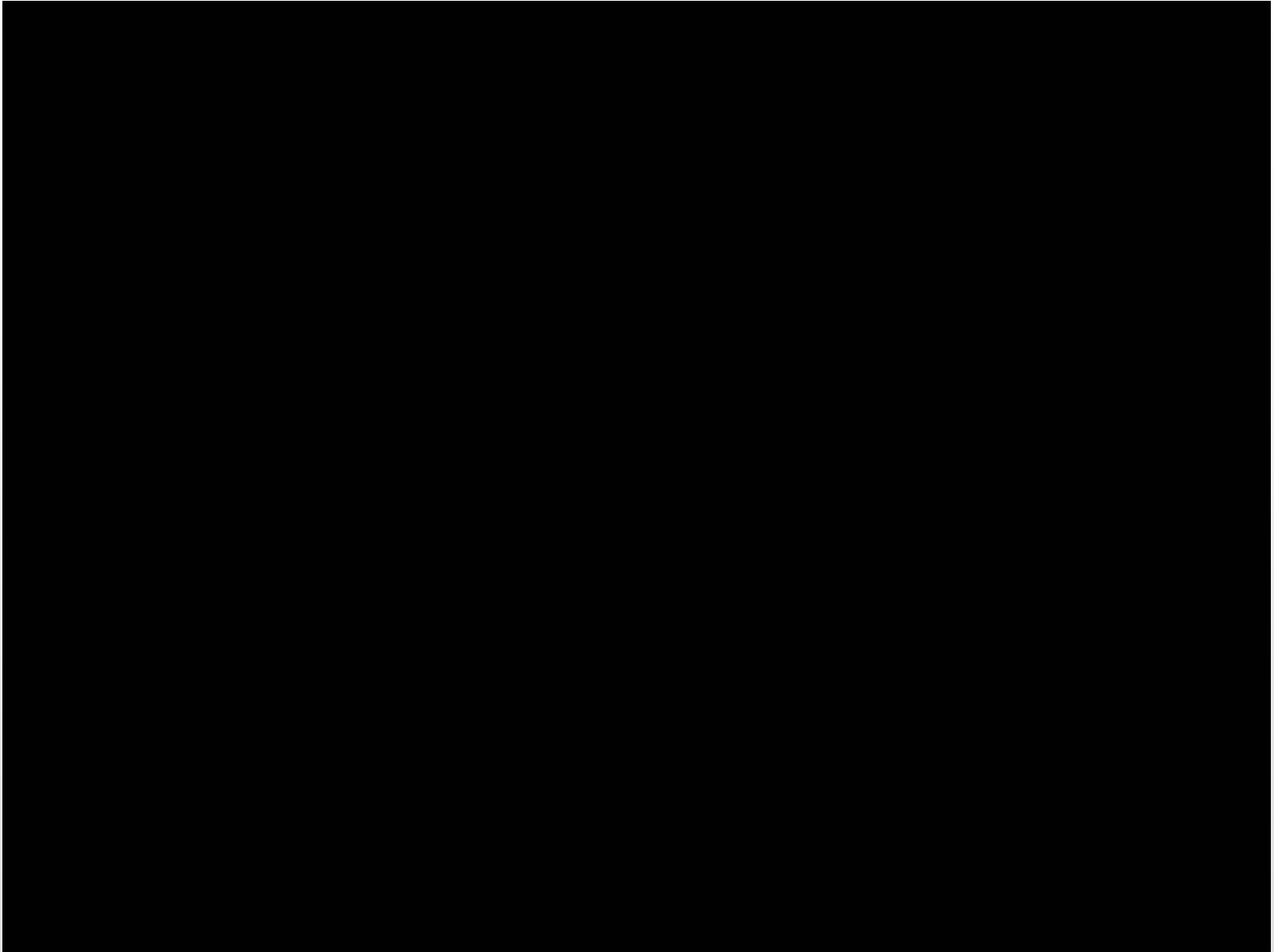
- Strategy Silos
- Management Roles Harder to Grasp
- Balancing Speed, Quality and Value
- Feeding Teams



# PM Transition to Scrum Master

- 3, slightly exaggerated examples..







10 minutes into scrum

# Project Manager Adjustments

Channel Leadership Energy Into:

Supporting, Guiding, Listening, Goal Building,

Channel Organizing Energy Into: Making Work  
Visible, Measuring Progress, Reporting  
Progress

Channel Creative Energy Into: Designing  
Experiments, Whiteboard, Incentives/Awards

Transfer PM accountability to Team Accountability.

# Adoption

## What Worked Well

- Creating a sense of change using marketing.
- Alliance with executives.
- Using the momentum to make significant changes.

## What I'd Do Differently

- Get a better understanding of team needs.
- Recruit at least one group to be more orthodox.
- Focus more on releasing software.

# Agile Portfolio Management

# Agile Portfolio Management

- Business no longer constrained by productivity.
- Challenges are:
  - How can we keep teams aligned and focused on the right work?
  - How can we keep consistency across teams?
  - How can we make sure we're not generating technical debt?



# Project Portfolio Management

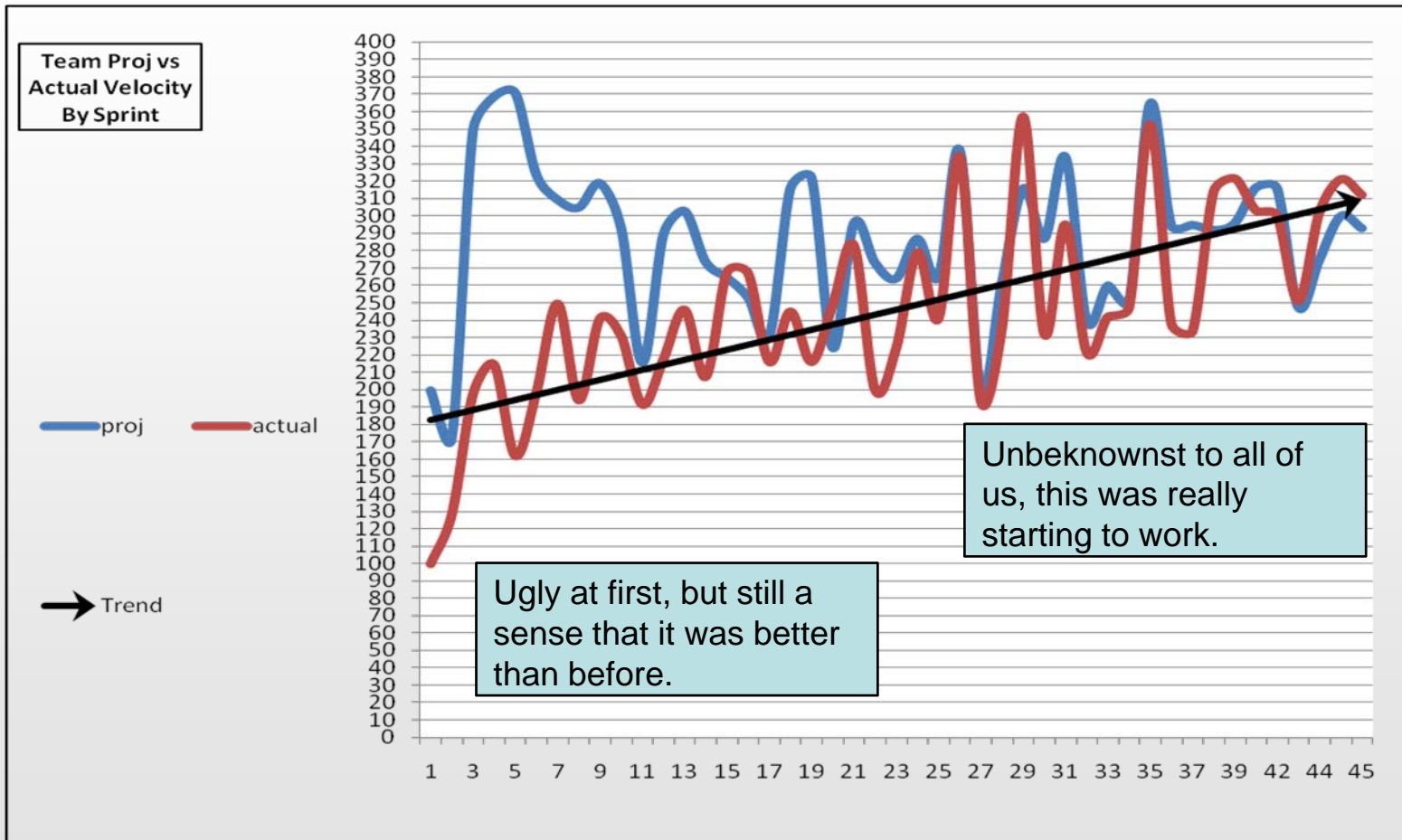
- First Iteration – No real oversight, complete major initiatives.
- Second Iteration – We need to get all this done, can we?

This question created a series of considerations that lead to our first long term initiative plan since we rolled out Agile.

# Iteration 1: Simple Portfolio Model

1. Unit of Supply/Investment – Story Point
2. Reserved Capacity for paying off “tech debt”.
3. Prioritized remaining initiatives to fit within capacity.
4. Sequenced initiatives by quarter/by team.
5. Created a “Workable Plan”.

# Capacity Data



# Workable Plan – Capacity

## Initiative Demand

Sum of SPs						
Row Labels	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Grand Total	
Asset Management		100			100	
CAPS		250	150	475	125	1000
Community Actions		475	315	215	165	1170
Premium		710	430	385	240	1765
Legal/Editorial		25				25
Brand/CX				25		25
OP			150	100	200	450
Community Strategy			225	150	225	600
UK		25	50	50	50	175
<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>1585</b>	<b>1320</b>	<b>1400</b>	<b>1005</b>	<b><u>5310</u></b>

	Demand	Capacity	Over/Under	
Q1	1585	1450	9%	135
Q2	1320	1450	-9%	-130
<b>First Half</b>	<b>2905</b>	<b>2900</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>5</b>
Q3	1400	1450	-3%	-50
Q4	1005	1450	-31%	-445
<b>Second Half</b>	<b>2405</b>	<b>2900</b>	<b>-17%</b>	<b>-495</b>

# Workable Plan – Team View

Team Initiatives	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Grand Total
<b>1</b>					
Account Updater			50		50
Decline Code Mgt.			100		100
Jester's Court			25		25
Marketing Ops Maint. (LP/OP support)	10	15	10	15	50
Monthly Refund Proration	50				50
Fool Pass	200				200
Online Saves		90			90
Transactional Email Functionality		100			100
<b>2</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>225</b>	<b>225</b>	<b>225</b>	<b>975</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>250</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>900</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>250</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>325</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>850</b>
<b>34</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>315</b>	<b>215</b>	<b>165</b>	<b>995</b>
<b>78</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>275</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>275</b>	<b>925</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1585</b>	<b>1320</b>	<b>1400</b>	<b>1005</b>	<b>5310</b>

# Work Plan Built by Those Accountable



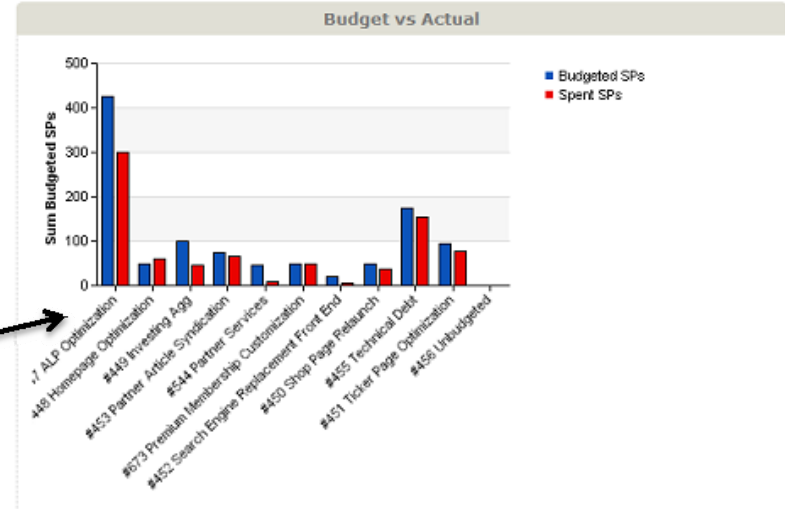
# Manage and Report Through Tools

## Scrum Team 34 Community Actions: Fool.com, CMS, SEO, Distribution

Point of Contact: Danny Hsia

Iteration work by team.

Current and Next Iteration		
	#601 Iteration 45	#603 Iteration 46
#447 ALP Optimization	13	24
#448 Homepage Optimization	5	
#450 Shop Page Relaunch	5	
#451 Ticker Page Optimization	49	8
#453 Partner Article Syndication		2
#455 Technical Debt	16	36
#456 Unbudgeted	3	2
#544 Partner Services	5	0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>72</b>

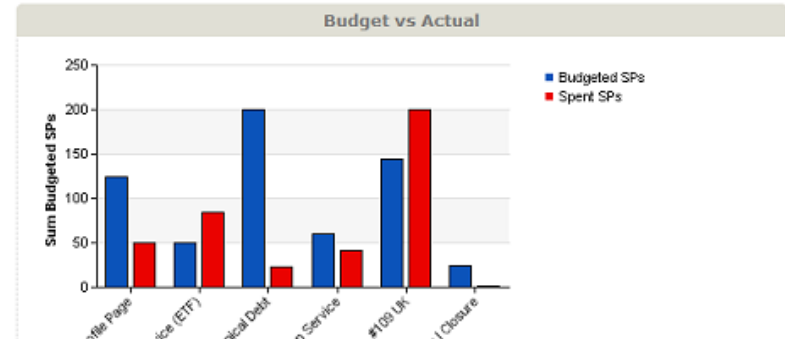


Spent capacity vs. budget.

## Scrum Team 78 UK, Champion Shares Newsletter, Special Projects

Point of Contact: Todd Etter

Current and Next Iteration		
	#230 Iteration 45	#231 Iteration 46
#99 Member Profile Page	0	1
#154 Technical Debt	39	24
#262 Tom's Education Service (not set)		23
<b>Totals</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>49</b>



# Old Resource Focused Plan

Project	FTEs								
	Jun			Jul			Aug		
	Dev	CrS	PjM	Dev	CrS	PjM	Dev	CrS	PjM
Boards B. Free	1.5	0.5	0.5	1	0.5	0.5			
CMS	0.5	0	0.5	0.5	0	0.5	1	0	0.5
Fool.com - Homepage and Centers	0.5	2	0.5	0.5	2	0.5	1.5	3	1
Fool.com - CAPS Quotes									
Landing Page Overhaul				1	1	0.5	1	1	0.5
Lane - Destination Fool	2	2	0	2	2	0	2	2	0
Lane - Premium Power	2	2	0	2	2	0	2	2	0
Newsletter 1 - Stock Advisor									
Backend				1.5	1	0.5	1.5	1	0.5
Newsletter 3 - All Access Pass									
Shop 1 - Order Page	2	0.5	0.5	2.5	0.5	0.5	2.5	0.5	0.5
Shop 2 - AAP Bundle/Rebill									
Shop 3 - Marketing Bundles									
<b>Total Demand</b>	<b>8.5</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>11.5</b>	<b>9.5</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Supply</b>	<b>9.5</b>	<b>9.5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>9.5</b>	<b>3.5</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>10.5</b>	<b>3.5</b>
<b>Supply - Demand</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2.5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>-1</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>-0.5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0.5</b>

Focus on Individual Roles

Constrained by Resource Type

No Evidence that Initiative is appropriately staffed.



# Team/Budget Focused Plan

Team Initiatives	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Grand Total
<b>1</b>					
Account Updater			50		50
Decline Code Mgt.			100		100
Jester's Court			25		25
Marketing Ops Maint. (LP/OP support)	10	15	10	15	50
Monthly Refund Proration	50				50
Fool Pass	200				200
Online Saves		90			90
Transactional Email Functionality		100			100
<b>2</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>225</b>	<b>225</b>	<b>225</b>	<b>975</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>250</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>900</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>250</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>325</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>850</b>
<b>34</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>315</b>	<b>215</b>	<b>165</b>	<b>995</b>
<b>78</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>275</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>275</b>	<b>925</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1585</b>	<b>1320</b>	<b>1400</b>	<b>1005</b>	<b>5310</b>

Focuses on Team Capacity

Facilitates different investments in different initiatives.

Capacity based on empirical Evidence.

Creates well-understood constraints that allow for flexibility.

## Iteration 2: Increase Planning Efficiency

- Bottom Up
- Teams work within existing capacity
- Roll-up and sequence plans to identify dependencies
- **Problem:** No prioritization, Over indexed on “small wins”.

Efficiency can sometimes discourage good conversations.

## Iteration 3: Balanced Portfolio

- Recreate Demand > Supply
- Schedule High Value and Critical work first (~ 20%, should be amply staffed)
- Balance remaining work to create a healthy/diverse set of initiatives:
  - Innovative/exploratory
  - Platform reinvestments
  - Process automation and improvements
  - Optimize existing cash streams

# Governance Framework

- Council of executives to steer process, budget and resources
- Monthly meeting to review initiative progress, budgets and unplanned work
- Quarterly lookback at investment performance
- Quarterly cycle to create a rolling 12-month plan

## Current Quarter Planned Initiative Work

Initiative	Q2 Budget	Q2 Spent	Total Budg	Total Spent	Metric	Baseline	Lift	Realized	Risk
Operating Platform	25	13	350	63	Availability, Page load times	99.8% 3 sec	99.9 % or down <9 hrs/yr, 2.85s (99.87%, 2.71s)	EOQ2	M
Search	125	84	175	163	Click Rate / Cost	33%	10% (43%)	EOQ2	M-H
Technical Debt	50	18	230	108	Sustained Team Velocity	50	-	EOQ2	M
Indy Fund	20	57	120	175	AUM	\$0	\$40M (\$20M)	EOFY	M
Publisher	54	0	104	29	Availability	Unknown	.990	EQQ2	M

Publisher blocked by O.P. work in progress

Optimization and Maintenance requests continue

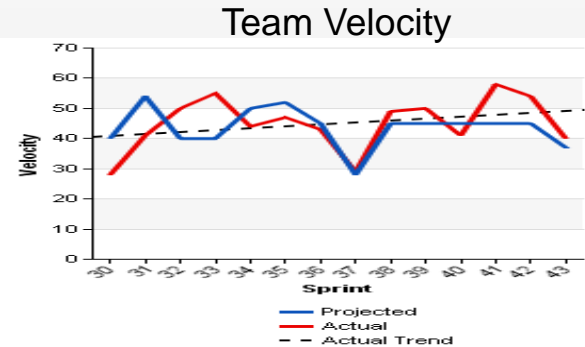
Expect to decommission GSA in October

## Dates and Milestones

- 9/16: WWW and Boards fully Solr. Blogs and pitches available.

## Team Blockers and News:

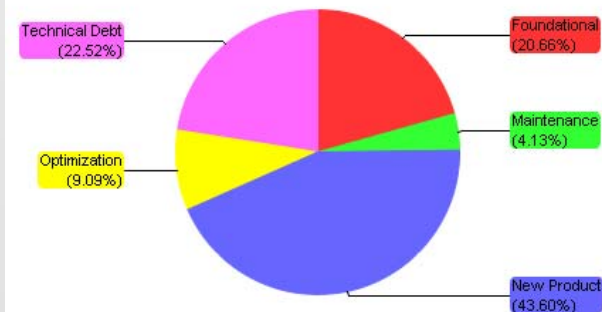
- Challenges with cross-team coordination of Search requirements.
- Sally moving to T2, Johnny to T5.
- Past and present T5 finally celebrated the Fund's launch.
- Low projected/actual velocity due to Innovation Days, vacation & team swap.



## Next Quarter Planned Initiative Work

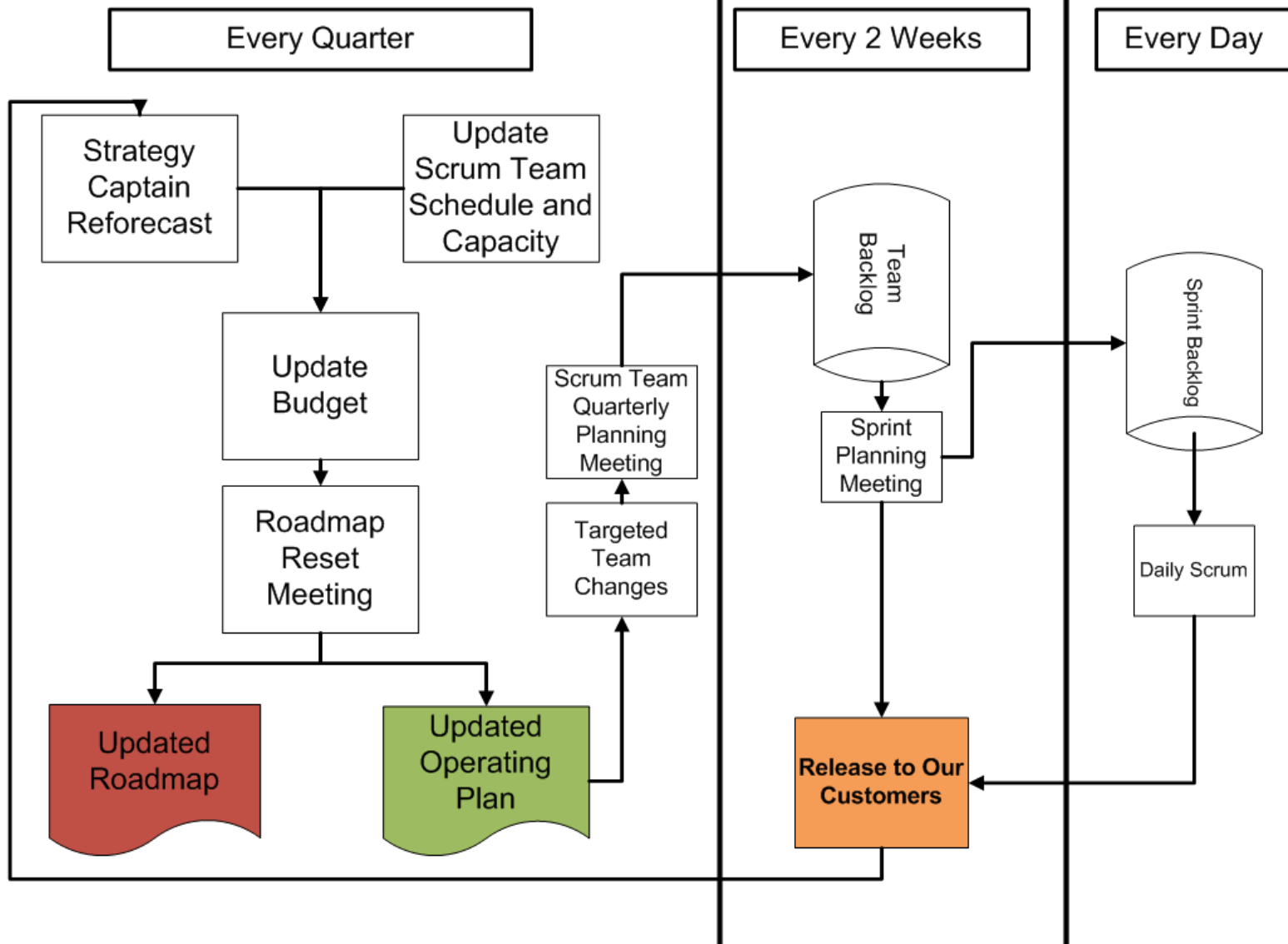
Initiative	Budgeted SPs	Metric	Baseline	Lift	Realized	Risk
Retail Fund	50	AUM	\$20M	\$40M	EOFY	M
Search	25	Click Rate, Cost	33%	10% (43%)	EOQ2	M
Operating Platform	50	Sustained velocity, enable capabilities			EOQ3	M
Blog Platform	110	Remove blockers, enable capabilities			Q1FY11	H
Publisher	54	Availability		Down < 88hrs / yr	EOQ3	M
Tech Debt	60	Improve deployments			EOQ3	M

## Fiscal YTD Work Distribution





# The Motley Fool Process



# Highlights

- Adoption
  - Educate/Buy In
  - Common Language
  - Clear Starting Point
  - Expect some bumpiness
- Parenting
  - Repurpose project management energy into facilitation, workflow and experimentation.
  - Utilize empirical capacity data to make smart investment decisions.

# Resources

- Scrum Book by Ken Schwaber
- Agile Management Blog by David Anderson (Agilemanager on twitter)
- Lean Software Series by Mary Poppendieck
- Sanjiv's Books!



# Thank You

- Max Keeler
- [Maxk@fool.com](mailto:Maxk@fool.com)
- Max\_keeler on twitter