

URL: <https://stvp.stanford.edu/blog/videos/moving-forward-and-changing-processes>

Over the last three years, Autodesk had to change delivery times due to customers' faster delivery demand. Autodesk was able to move forward using software as service, thinking about process, and innovating in an established company.



Transcript

Things that we really worked hard at the last two and a half years on Autodesk is to just move forward and try some of these things.. I'll give you an example.. About two years ago, when it was obvious that there was bandwidth out there.. That our kind of customers were starting to really pay attention to the internet.. You're engineers.. This stuff has to work guys.. You know that, right? The bridge has to stay up and the low tech to work and so forth and so forth.. You're not jumping on the latest little snazzy thing.. So, as soon as we found out our customers are really starting to seriously look at more of a wired collaborative world.. It became obvious to us that having 24-month or 18-month release cycles didn't make sense..

Because we had to start moving things in there.. We had to be able to publish a drawing to 'html'.. We had to be able to do net meetings inside a session of inventor.. We had to be able to do digital signatures, yadda, yadda, yadda.. All part of what I consider a connected world.. We couldn't wait 24 months for this.. So, I brought in the lead Engineering management and the sort of Architectural management guys and said, "I want, instead of releases every 18, 24 months.. Every quarter I want a packet of releases that I call extensions that you can download.. They said, "Cant do that." And I said, "Go away.. Come back next week..

And we'll talk about it again." The next week they came back and they were prepared.. Prepared meant, they really couldn't do it.. Prepared meant, they had a lot of slides about why it wouldn't work.. How they had a big QA process.. That this happened and that happened.. And they did marketing demands studies.. And all of that engine rolled up and 18 months later out popped a release.. And they were good at that.. And I said, "Why don't you come back next week.. But before you come back next week, let me tell you some more reasons why I think this is important." So, we talked a lot about, our customers can't wait 24 months for a response from us as to how to use the internet as part of their design cycle and their build-manufacture cycle..

I talked about how I believe software is going to be a service.. It's not going to be something you get shrinkwrapped.. And in fact, if you want to read a magazine and I come here and say, "Please subscribe to my magazine.. And it will show up every two years." Would you do it? Pshaw, of course, not.. If I say it's coming every week or every month, you're going to say, "You know, I better subscribe to that because I might miss something." Even though, maybe, you aren't maybe going to read that week's time magazine.. You kind of browse, peruse it and say, "Fine." And on you go.. We got to get people up there saying, if it's a service then it's going to be on the web and downloadable.. Something's always up there.. Sent them back and said, "Come back next week." So, now we're two weeks from the original date.. When they came back that third meeting..

They had broken ranks.. My favorite.. And part of them said, "You know, we're kind of starting to figure out how maybe we could do this in three months cycles.. They were still the other seniors saying "can't do".. And you know, it's a little tough sometimes because I'm just technical enough that they can't 'goof' on me too much.. But they broke ranks.. And to not make the story too long, three months later they delivered the first set of extensions.. And will be delivering this quarter, the

seventh extensions.. So seven quarters into it...