

## Time to go again

A lot of good progress happened in the 2010s. Remember the long, expensive waterfall-based delivery of the last century, with six months spent on requirements, another six doing the design, a year building and then six more months doing the testing? Delivery now happens much more often, much more cost effectively, and much more confidently. However, many organizations still think of agility as a delivery model, of agile transition as the shift from one way of working to another.

**The key to unleashing the delivery potential of the new decade is the organizational realization that true agility is a mindset, not a delivery model. It requires a change of culture.**



The first step is understanding that Agile is not a set model, it is a journey according to principles, and that journey needs regular reviews to ensure that it is going in the right direction. Nearly all companies profess a level of agility, yet a very low percentage achieve truly consistent agile.

Of course, not every organization should necessarily aspire to releasing new code with the frequency of Amazon or Google – but every company should be looking to normalize agility as soon as possible and make incremental progress with increasing levels of agility.

This normalization and increased delivery maturity is dependent upon achieving ‘done’ – a measure of the quality that is acceptable to the delivery team. What is the impact on the business when things go wrong? What is the tolerance to defects and delays? The truth is that a lot of organizations don’t define their risk appetite when it comes to testing. They tend to test in the way that they have always done. This suggests an immature quality conscience – the thread of quality is not sufficiently sewn through the delivery process.

An alert quality conscience helps a business to pre-risk undesirable events such as production defects, drops in revenue or reputational damage. CTOs and heads of quality can avoid running those risks by investing time and money in maintaining a mature testing approach in the first place. Test assets need to be considered as an important part of a production system and continuously maintained if high levels of agility are to be achieved. It is a false economy to try to retrofit quality into a product – it should be built the right way from the start, and that means with testing assets that enable continuous change.

**The 2010s are behind us. As businesses and society look to move on from the COVID disruption, it’s time to roll up our sleeves and go again. Here are 9 ways that testing and quality can help to accelerate business agility in the next decade.**