Success Story

Agile Software Development from the Public Cloud

Custom IT resources at the right time for the right team

Agile concepts are currently all the rage, yet they are set to make the software development process faster and more efficient. The addition of flexibly scalable IT resources from the cloud results in an extremely versatile basic str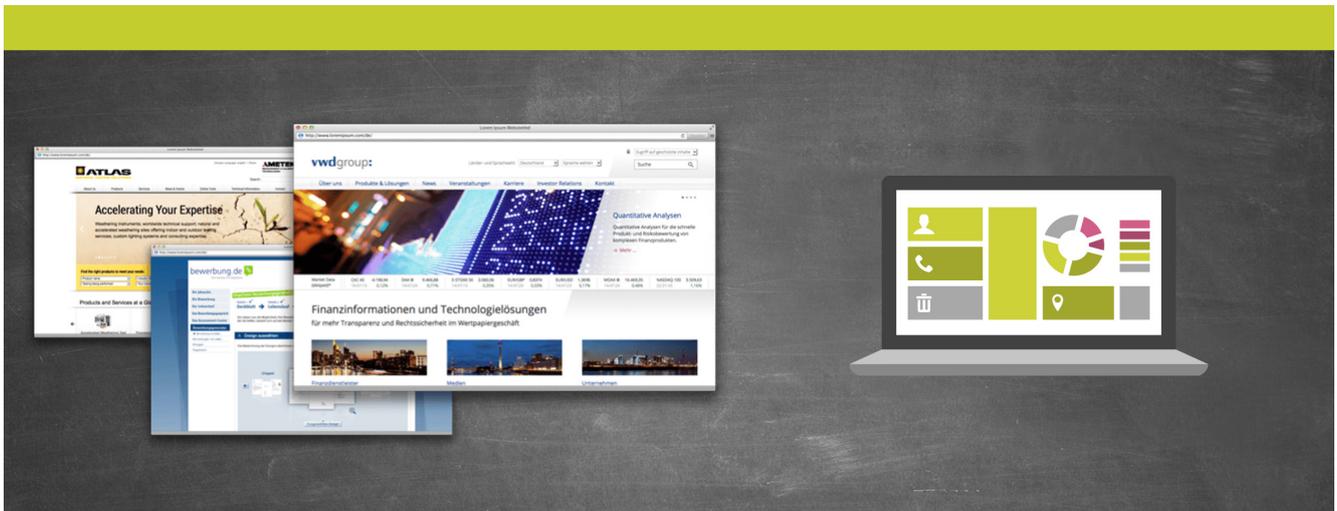ucture that allows agile cooperation between teams. Service provider //SEIBERT/MEDIA (Seibert) is particularly committed to this approach and offers its customers services such as hosting of development, collaboration, and intranet systems that support agile cooperation. In addition, the teams at the company itself work in line with the principle of a "peach organization" – a decentralized structure with autonomous and extremely agile teams.

Software development cycles lasting several years with weeks of testing and half-yearly updates have long been consigned to the past. Whether developers are developing software for external customers or their own company, development cycles have become much shorter, and faster deployments of smaller releases and apps are the goal. However, achieving all this also requires fundamental changes to the work of the development teams. With the likes of Scrum, Kanban and DevOps, several agile project-management methods and collaboration approaches are already established.

Numerous software tools support this way of working. Wiesbaden-based service provider //SEIBERT/MEDIA specializes in precisely these kinds of tools and in helping its customers to introduce them. Along with its own products such as the social intranet suite Linchpin and the software-development suite Codeyard, Seibert also sells licenses for the solutions of prestigious international providers. For instance, Seibert is one of the largest sales partners of Atlassian, a company that has made its name in the sector with solutions such as the social collaboration system Confluence and the project management and tracking software JIRA.

For Real Flexibility, You Need a Cloud

In 1996, Martin Seibert established a small Internet agency that initially programmed simple websites for smaller companies. Today, //SEIBERT/MEDIA GmbH has more than 140 employees and serves more than 70% of DAX-listed corporations along with its mainly SME-dominated customer base. "From major German carmakers to manufacturers of logistics software to IT service providers for insurance groups: the use of agile software-development tools and collaboration tools is entirely possible in all industries," explained Rico Ullmann, Technical Consultant at Seibert. "However, this way of working requires a certain

degree of computerization and networking. There is a clear trend towards this."

Agile methods thrive on short decision-making channels and the flexible provision of resources. The latter is true in more ways than one: just as the teams are put together on a project-specific basis according to the necessary expertise, IT resources should also be able to expand or contract as required.

„Agile working means not having to rely on rigid, predefined structures... The IT should be equally flexible. The team needs the resources as soon as work gets under way. The resources must be easily configurable and scalable, for example if the new app is to be tested. And it should also be possible to deactivate them again quickly when the project comes to an end without causing extra work and costs. There is no time for drawn-out procurement or approval processes here."

Rico Ullmann
Technical consultant at Seibert

To be able to provide hosted solutions for its growing customer base without having to expand its own data centers, Seibert needed an infrastructure partner. "We checked out several Infrastructure as a Service providers to see if they met our requirements," said Rico Ullmann. After all, customers' expectations were high, especially with regard to data protection. To fully comply with the strict German data protection

regulations, Seibert conducted a focused search for an IaaS provider from Germany. This was because American providers are effectively subject to the data-protection provisions of the USA even if they operate their data center in Germany. Most are unaware of issues that affect German corporations when it comes to information security. Seibert opted for the Enterprise Cloud of IONOS: "Along with the location advantage, the Enterprise Cloud gives us the flexibility we need for data center configurations on unbeatable terms."

Seibert's understanding of infrastructure flexibility goes beyond the usual benefits of the cloud. The ability to add or deactivate resources as required is a minimum expectation for customers. "We aim to give our customers even more flexibility," said Rico Ullmann. "This means that every customer builds their virtual data center just how they need it – there are no predefined packages or minimum quotas.

The Data Center Designer from IONOS makes it possible to configure every technical unit individually – from CPU to RAM." The transition runs automatically here: customers that use Seibert tools log into the servers of the Enterprise Cloud almost immediately.

Don't Just Sell, Use As Well

As well as helping its customers to achieve greater agility, Seibert is hugely committed to living out this concept itself: the company is just completing a

restructuring as a "peach organization." This type of corporate structure promises closer proximity to the market since the decision-making channels flow from the outside to the inside here – from the market into the company. In flat hierarchies, the teams work on a largely autonomous basis in interconnected cells, enabling them to develop more freely and act in a more customer-specific way.

If teams are to set up and implement projects independently, they also need to be able to build up the requisite infrastructure quickly and easily. Therefore, Seibert is now also making increased use of the cloud infrastructure services offered by IONOS. "Ultimately, the same factors apply to us as to our customers," pointed out Rico Ullmann. "We need custom IT resources that are available as and when required.

We still have two data centers of our own, principally for our own Atlassian applications, CMS and our website. But operation costs us too much time and money, not to mention expansion. In the medium term, we will move right over to the public cloud."

In the Enterprise Cloud the usage of IT resources is calculated based on actual utilization – to the minute.

A cost calculator gives an advance indication of how much scaling would cost. That way, maximum benefit can be derived from a predefined budget through appropriate management of resources.

Transparent Communication

Agile teams work quickly and flexibly, reorganize themselves as required, and want to be able to access technical aids such as IT infrastructure as quickly and easily as possible. Much communication is required in order to ensure organized operations under these conditions.

„This does not only apply to our work here in-house... It's a great help to us if our service providers work in the same way. IONOS communicates very openly, for example regarding new features of the Data Center Designer, the product roadmap, or planned improvements to the APIs. This type of transparency is hugely valuable to us."

Rico Ullmann
Technical consultant at Seibert

Can we help you write your own success story?

We've already helped countless of other businesses in various industries do just that. Learn how the cloud can help you reach your business goals. If you're interested in unlocking your firm's potential and ensuring that your business remains future-proof, get in touch with us. Our cloud consultants are happy to offer expert advice and will demonstrate how shifting your IT to the IONOS Enterprise Cloud will best equip you to meet the challenges of a digital future.

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