

# Scaling Agile Beyond Software Development Teams Improves Productivity At Midsize Enterprises

Midsize enterprises, or organizations with less than 5,000 employees, struggle to: scale agile practices across the business; foster high levels of coordination between disparate teams; and maintain a level of visibility into work that is similar to the world's largest organizations. Rapidly growing organizations may be experiencing these challenges for the first time. However, by overcoming these challenges, midsize enterprises can retain the agility of smaller organizations as well as compete against larger enterprises with deeper pockets.

With Jira Align, leaders can set goals in the form of objectives and key results (OKRs), and they can connect those objectives to work being done in their team's tool of choice. Jira Align aggregates team-level data to enable managers to view dependencies, coordinate teams, optimize spending, and manage products at the program and portfolio levels. By onboarding teams to Jira Align that are outside of software development, two midsize enterprises were able to realize organizationwide agility.

To better understand the benefits, costs, and risks associated with Jira Align, Atlassian commissioned Forrester Consulting to interview six decision-makers from five organizations and conduct a Total Economic Impact™ (TEI) study.<sup>1</sup>

This abstract will focus on two interviewees from midsize enterprises — a VP of product operations in the finance/technology industry and a senior manager in the manufacturing/electronics industry — and their use of Jira Align and its value to their organizations.



Return on investment (ROI)  
**340%**



Net present value (NPV)  
**\$16.10M**

## INVESTMENT DRIVERS

The interviewees' organizations adopted Jira Align to support their organizationwide agile transformations. They said their organizations were dealing with several high-level problems, including:

- **Scaling agile and coordinating between teams of teams.** Prior to investing in Jira Align, the interviewees' organizations each had at least some teams independently adopting agile practices. They struggled, however, to coordinate disparate agile teams and to scale agile practice to their entire enterprises. The VP of product operations in the finance/technology industry said, "We had come a long way in terms of teams implementing agile, but we ended up with a whole bunch of team silos that [teams] optimized for themselves."
- **Poor visibility and transparency.** Leaders lacked insight into what development teams were building. The VP of product operations said: "We had all of these teams using Jira Software and beavering away and doing lots of work, but we



[READ THE FULL STUDY HERE](#)

had no transparency. It was really hard to know if they were working on the right things.”

- **Slow deliveries and frequent delays.** The interviewees explained how delays occurred regularly and that predictability was a key goal. The VP of product operations said: “[Delays] were quite common, and sometimes our deliveries were really, really slow. We wouldn’t know [about problems] until it was too late.” The senior manager of product and technology in manufacturing/electronics explained, “The main problem that would result would be misalignment and deliverables. We weren’t planning on a cadence either.”

**“Adoption has been phenomenal. The pull from across the organization to uses Jira Align has been really strong.”**

*VP of product operations, finance/technology*

## SOLUTION REQUIREMENTS

The interviewees’ organizations chose to invest in Jira Align for the following reasons:

- **Agile-first architecture.** The interviewees said they sought a tool that had enterprise agility in its DNA. The VP of product operations said, “Jira Align was built from the ground up to support agile ways of working, whereas [our previous tool] was not.” The senior manager said, “Other tools that we looked at had [Scaled Agile Framework] modules, but their main tools were for waterfall or traditional project management. They technically checked the box, but they weren’t inherently designed around the SAFe model, and we knew we’d have issues later on.”

- **Easy to use.** The VP of product operations said her organization enjoys using the tool, stating: “We preferred [Jira Align’s] usability, look, and feel. It just resonated with everyone a lot more. ... Jira Align just ticked all of the boxes, and I had no trouble getting it approved.”

## KEY RESULTS

The composite organization, which is representative of the six decision-makers’ organizations, experiences the following financial benefits:

**Project managers, product managers, and program managers (PMs) realized overall time savings of up to 70%.** The VP of product operations said that Jira Align simplifies and streamlines their team’s preparation before meetings. Where planning meetings for PMs previously took 2 hours, now it takes 30 minutes.

The senior manager said: “Instead of having a file in [project management software] and a [slideshow] with a roadmap timeline — files that could be local or outdated — [the product teams] are now using objects in Jira Align. That’s made conversations significantly more efficient ... [PMs] are still doing the same [types of] work, but [those tasks are] a lot easier for them.”

**Development team productivity increased by 10%.** Interviewees said Jira Align increased PMs’ visibility into developers’ work, which enabled PMs to better prioritize those tasks and ensure developers were spending time on the highest-value work. The VP of product operations said, “Before [we started using] Jira Align, people just prioritized the [tasks] that seemed to be the most relevant, which meant we had fragmented solutions and timelines. We’ve made a lot of process changes as well as tool changes [such as adopting Jira Align], and together they all support our new ways of working.”

They added: “All of my teams now have a single point to [reference]. Jira Align stopped all of the emails and side conversations like, ‘Hey, could you please just do this for me?’ Now everything flows into a single backlog. Then, on a monthly cadence, we review the backlog and prioritize it to make sure that our development teams are working on the most important stuff.”

projects were underway about whether to pivot, preserve, or double-down on those investments.

Before the organization in the finance/technology industry adopted Jira Align, the sales and technology teams struggled to collaborate. The VP of product operations explained: “[Prior to my organization using Jira Align], somebody created a [list of requested features that was] hundreds of items long. But no one [in the technology team] had ever seen it. There was about 20 years’ worth of work in that list that nobody had even [evaluated]. From the sales team’s perspective, [the technology team members were] the bad guys because we never delivered anything they wanted.”

After implementing Jira Align, the team built a workflow in Jira Align that enabled the sales team to pass on their frontline knowledge of customers to the product team. This improved both product development as well as the relationship between the two departments.

For example, the VP of product operations in the finance/technology industry said: “Based on a customer request, the sales team asked us to add [a feature] to our software. We showed them that we could do it, but it would mean we would [build] nothing else for the next 18 months. ... They changed their minds and talked to the customer, and we ended up delivering another option for them.”

## Time saved by PMs

# 70%



**Time-to-market was cut by 50% for the most complex projects.** Both interviewees described how Jira Align helped improve coordination and communication across diverse departments in their enterprises. This led to their organizations releasing new ideas to customers faster.

For example, the senior manager in the electronics/manufacturing industry explained how Jira Align helped coordinate work handoffs between hardware and software engineering teams under tight deadlines. Prior to adoption, these handoffs could take upwards of four months, which delayed projects and would often lead to resultant rework caused by stale code. Jira Align helped the organization manage dependencies and reduce delays.

### **Reduced waste from better investment decisions.**

By improving coordination and communication across departments, Jira Align helped the organizations make better product decisions. The organizations made better decisions up front about which products to pursue, and they made better decisions while

## TOTAL ECONOMIC IMPACT ANALYSIS

For more information, download the full study: “The Total Economic Impact™ Of Atlassian Jira Align,” a commissioned study conducted by Forrester Consulting on behalf of Atlassian, November 2021.

### STUDY FINDINGS

Forrester interviewed five decision-makers at organizations with experience using the Jira Align and combined the results into a three-year composite organization financial analysis. Risk-adjusted present value (PV) quantified benefits include:

- PM productivity, \$9.4M.
- Development team productivity, \$1.1M.
- Incremental revenue from faster time-to-market, \$3.6M.
- Reduced waste from better investment decisions, \$6.8M.



**Return on investment (ROI)**  
**340%**



**Net present value (NPV)**  
**\$16.10M**

## Appendix A: Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Total Economic Impact is a methodology developed by Forrester Research that enhances a company’s technology decision-making processes and assists vendors in communicating the value proposition of their products and services to clients. The TEI methodology helps companies demonstrate, justify, and realize the tangible value of IT initiatives to both senior management and other key business stakeholders.

### DISCLOSURES

The reader should be aware of the following:

- The study is commissioned by Atlassian and delivered by Forrester Consulting. It is not meant to be a competitive analysis.
- Forrester makes no assumptions as to the potential ROI that other organizations will receive. Forrester strongly advises that readers use their own estimates within the framework provided in the report to determine the appropriateness of an investment in Atlassian Jira Align.
- Atlassian reviewed and provided feedback to Forrester. Forrester maintains editorial control over the study and its findings and does not accept changes to the study that contradict Forrester’s findings or obscure the meaning.
- Atlassian provided the customer names for the interview(s) but did not participate in the interviews.

### ABOUT TEI

Total Economic Impact™ (TEI) is a methodology developed by Forrester Research that enhances a company’s technology decision-making processes and assists vendors in communicating the value proposition of their products and services to clients. The TEI methodology helps companies demonstrate, justify, and realize the tangible value of IT initiatives to both senior management and other key business stakeholders. The TEI methodology consists of four components to evaluate investment value: benefits, costs, risks, and flexibility.

© Forrester Research, Inc. All rights reserved. Forrester is a registered trademark of Forrester Research, Inc.

FORRESTER®