

AGEFT: Agile Guidance Engagement Framework for Testing

Overview

Product start-ups as well as enterprise application services providers and independent software vendors are constantly looking for new ways to become more agile. To remain ahead of competition, product development teams must increase speed to market for their software applications with uncompromising quality. As such, Agile is being embraced in response to the continuous demand to deliver new and improved IT solutions to end-users and customers at an ever increasing speed. Agile methodology promotes continuous iteration of software development and testing throughout the software development life cycle (SDLC) of the project. In Agile, both development and testing activities are concurrent, unlike the Waterfall model. Agile has distinct advantages over Waterfall or iterative Waterfall when applied the right way.

But the challenge most companies face is establishing which Agile methodology is best suited for their teams. At Astegic, we provide a comprehensive Pro-Agile test engagement framework guide to our clients that is specially designed to fulfill diverse project needs- across project sizes, onshore/offshore locations, and time zones.

AGEFT (Agile Guidance Engagement Framework for Testing) is a comprehensive “Agile Guide” comprising of Scrum, Kanban and Scrumban driven engagement frameworks for testing. The engagement processes constituting these frameworks address the most common challenges companies typically face while engaging with extended QA teams in an outsourced or onshore/offshore model.

AGEFT address one of the most key challenges in Agile-driven development and testing— that is, effective delivery. Too many choices across Agile models can lead to confusion with no choice being made by clients being stalled in analysis paralysis. Astegic’s Agile Guidance addresses this challenge by helping clients choose the right Agile engagement methodology best suited to their project needs.

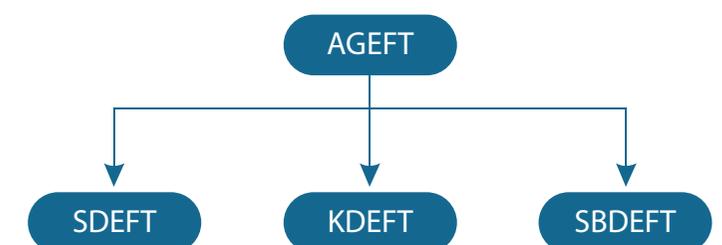


Figure 1 – Agile Testing Methods

AGEFT serves as the parent Agile Guidance framework to assist clients in choosing the right Agile methodology best suited to their project requirements, team size, Agile culture and other critical factors.

Within AGEFT, clients can adopt Scrum, Kanban or a hybrid Scrumban methodology depending on their specific project goals.

SDEFT: SDEFT (Scrum Driven Engagement Framework for Testing) is best suited to larger projects where tasks are organized in sprints (usually 1-4 weeks long). Sprints are planned by all scrum team members. Astegic's TCoE team comprises of certified Scrum masters that ensure that QA teams work seamlessly with the client's product owner and developer team.

KDEFT: KDEFT (Kanban Driven Engagement Framework for Testing) addresses critical client concerns of speed, agility and communication throughout the SDLC and across time zones. KDEFT brings greater transparency and efficiency in team engagement and collaboration especially with regard to frequent priority shifts and change requests. With KDEFT, we use a basic Kanban board concept which has a three-step workflow: To Do, Doing, and Done. However, the workflow can be mapped to meet the unique process of any particular team depending on a team's size, structure, and objectives.

SBDEFT: SBDEFT (Scrumban Driven Engagement Framework for Testing) uses mixed techniques of both SDEFT and KDEFT and methodologies. SBDEFT combines basic features of Scrum with high degree of organization, while also offering the flexibility of Kanban with WIP limits which helps reduce the amount of tasks that can be worked on at one time. SBDEFT is best suited to fast-paced companies and startups that favor following a plan for each delivery, but yet can still effectively handle continuous change requests, and where the environment is dynamic.

	SDEFT	KDEFT	SBDEFT
Iterations	1 to 4 week long sprints	WIP with continuous build releases less than 1 week long or larger iterations	1-4 week sprints with WIP limits, can incorporate a priority fast lane to handle immediate needs
Scope	Work amount limited by team commitments in sprints	Current work amount managed by WIP limits	Work amount limited by team commitments in sprints and WIP limits
Routines	Sprint planning	Release/iteration planning	Sprint planning
Estimation	Done ahead of the start of a sprint	Discretionary	Done ahead of the start of a sprint
Performance metrics	Burndown charts	Cumulative flow diagrams	Burn down charts and average cycle time
Additional items in iterations	Accepted if business accepts any required sprint commitment adjustments	Can be added whenever queue allows for it	Can be added whenever team accepts it or adjusts sprint to accommodate it
Team roles	Scrum master, product owner, team(s)	Not defined, variable	Scrum master, product owner, team(s)
Task size	Tasks that can be completed in a sprint	Any size	Tasks that can be completed in a sprint
Team structure	Cross-functional teams	Cross-functional teams, specialization	Cross-functional teams, specialization
Best fit	Teams that favor planning and delivery commitments over flexibility	Teams that favor responsiveness and flexibility over planning and commitments	Teams that favor planning and commitments but account for some flexibility and responsiveness

Table 1 – SDEFT, KDEFT, SBDEFT Compared

Best Fit

SDEFT is favored by teams that value planning and delivering upon a plan to meet certain business and development objectives where delivery timeline cannot change. That work generally needs to be broken up and planned for in order to meet the market window on time.

KDEFT is favored by those teams that want to be able to react to any business need, customer support focused organizations and startup teams that want to be more responsive to needs but do not want to restrict themselves by sticking to a rigid plan to provide it.

SBDEFT incorporates Kanban reactive and WIP limits into the sprints of Scrum so that teams have the flexibility to plan, and at the same time react within the sprint on items that need addressing. Teams can add a “fastlane” where the sprint commitments take precedence but if a critical priority item needs to be worked, it gets put in the sprint and overrides any WIP limits.

Benefits

AGEFT delivers significant client-benefits that include some of the following key outcomes among many others:

- Quick selection and deployment of Agile engagement model
- Distinct advantages and disadvantages of each framework clearly outlined
- Objectivity and clarity between onshore and offshore teams
- Improved productivity
- Improved collaboration
- Greater flexibility
- Shortened STLC
- Continuous deliver

About Astegic

For 15 years, Astegic has been helping Fortune 500 through startup companies with their Testing & QA needs. With our in-depth experience across a wide range of industries, our clients receive innovative and best-in-class service and solutions. We offer near 24/7 rapid service from both Astegic’s US and India based testing operations.

Focusing on resolving our client’s testing challenges, Astegic specializes in decreasing costs, speeding time-to-market and improving the quality of our client’s applications. Astegic has a dedicated Testing Center of Excellence (TCoE), specializing in providing solutions across Mobile, Cloud and API testing.