

# Getting the Team on Board

An excerpt from *Lessons from 29 DevOps Experts On The Best Way to Make The Transition to Continuous Delivery*



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# GETTING THE TEAM ON BOARD

**C**hange is a challenge in any organization, and a lot of people will resist. It's even more difficult when you're talking about such transformational change as continuous delivery and DevOps. Without buy-in, you're sunk.

In the mini e book, *Getting the Team on Board*, three experienced technology leaders discuss what it takes to get that buy-in. As these experts note, even if the advantages of continuous delivery were obvious to you, if you can't successfully play the role of evangelist, your company likely will do what it has always done. That is a prescription for falling behind . . . and failing.

In her essay, Kate Matsudaira, founder of Popforms and an experienced software engineer, observes that human beings like to make predictions. For those on the operations side, the ability to predict problems before they occur is regarded as a strength. But it also can create tension, which may be why people find it so difficult to make a transition to new ideas and why it's so important to get people on board in the process as early as possible. "Doing so probably means more work for you," she writes, "but the effort will be well worth it."

Matsudaira speaks from experience: she was once a newly hired chief technology officer tasked with converting a massive technology stack into independently deployed and decoupled services. Forcing that change on employees who barely knew her might have been alienating, but she listened, asked

questions, and talked people through solutions. When the rollout came, even dissenters were happy because they had been part of creating the new solutions.

In another essay, independent software systems consultant Matthew Skelton outlines his experience helping a United Kingdom-based online travel retailer introduce continuous delivery. The project involved building an end-to-end prototype, a daunting prospect to many of those involved. Skelton describes how he approached the team empathetically and patiently walked individual members through the prototype's development. Before long, a deployment pipeline was in place that everyone involved was eager to try out.

Skelton's moral? "By empathizing in advance and addressing these concerns in a visible, browser-accessible way in a prototype deployment pipeline, you can remove many of the blockers to moving to continuous delivery."

*Getting the Team on Board* is a chapter from a larger e-book, [\*\*Lessons from 29 DevOps Experts on the Best Way to Make the Transition to Continuous Delivery\*\*](#). This publication, sponsored by Zend, provides best practices and advice from DevOps industry leaders. For those who want to learn more about implementing continuous delivery, this e book covers each step: getting started in continuous development, integrating and automating the process, getting the team on board, changing the culture, and best practices for the future. [\*\*Download the full e-book now\*\*](#) to take advantage of these expert insights and determine whether continuous delivery is right for your business.

- Kevin Featherly

# FOREWORD

## Exploring Continuous Delivery

Innovation has changed. Gone are the days when a solitary genius holed up in a garage conceived a big idea, and then painstakingly perfected and brought it to market years later. Today, innovation is fluid, fast moving, and collaborative. Innovation is the engine for growth and value creation in the modern world, and software is the fuel.

The ability to create new, high-quality software applications and bring them to market more quickly is the “X factor” that defines industry leaders, and these leaders all have one thing in common: their IT organizations are leaving traditional approaches behind in favor of new, agile, collaborative approaches to the design, development, and delivery of applications.

At Zend, we are committed to helping companies deliver innovation more quickly. We’ve seen the dramatic results of this trend in working with Fiat, Hearst Corporation, BNP Paribas, Newell Rubbermaid, Prada, and other customers that are achieving faster and more frequent releases of more reliable software and, as a result, improving their business growth and profitability. Like other companies around the world, their success stems from the adoption of Continuous Delivery methodologies and best practices.

This e-book has been created for companies at virtually any stage of the journey toward Continuous Delivery. In the following pages, you’ll find essays from software industry leaders whose experiences, insights, and solutions can make it a lot easier to get started, progress smoothly, and finish strong.



Wishing you the best success,  
Andi Gutmans  
CEO, Zend



Zend helps businesses deliver innovation more quickly, on a larger scale, and across more

channels than ever before. More than 40,000 companies rely on our solutions, including Zend Server, the integrated application platform for mobile and web apps. Zend Server provides superior tools for creating high-quality code, best-in-class infrastructure for moving applications from source control through deployment, and the best back-end platform for performance at Web scale. Zend helped establish PHP, which today powers more than 240 million applications and websites around the world. Visit us at [www.zend.com](http://www.zend.com).

# Continuous Delivery is a Journey



Get buy-in

Integrate &  
Automate

Adopt best  
practices

ROI validation

Build the business case

Get started

We'll meet you wherever you are,  
with the resources you need to succeed.

[Learn More](#)

“ The ability to create new, high-quality software applications and bring them to market more quickly is the “X factor” that defines industry leaders. ”

**Andi Gutmans**, CEO & Co-founder, Zend



# INTRODUCTION

**C**ontinuous Delivery isn't just a technical shift, it's a cultural one. Even though it takes hard work to make the transition, the benefits can't be ignored. Faster time to market, better quality product, competitive advantage, higher customer satisfaction and reduced cost of development are just a few of the benefits driving CD to become the new norm.

With the support of Zend, we reached out to 29 top DevOps professionals and asked them the following question:

**Your friend has been tasked with transitioning her company's software development efforts to Continuous Delivery. She's extremely capable, but she's nervous about leading the transition. Please share a story from your own experience that will provide her with a critical piece of advice that will help her to be more successful.**

The response was fantastic. Not only did we receive insightful essays, but the expert advice came from the very people who have been leading this revolution – people like Gene Kim, Andi Gutmans, Rebecca Parsons, Scott Hanselman and Andrew Yochum. The essays in this book roughly break down into six categories that range from understanding the business case for CD through actually making the journey. We hope the collective wisdom and hard-learned lessons contained in these pages will inspire you and help you take your own development efforts to a higher level.



All the best,  
David Rogelberg  
Editor

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# Getting the Team on Board



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# DON'T FORCE THE CHANGE: GETTING BUY-IN FROM YOUR TEAM FOR CONTINUOUS DELIVERY



**KATE MATSUDAIRA**  
Founder of Popforms

Kate Matsudaira is an experienced technology leader. She worked in companies like Microsoft and Amazon and three successful startups (Decide, acquired by eBay; Moz; and Delve Networks, acquired by Limelight) before starting her own company, Popforms. Her early career was as a software engineer, where she worked on distributed systems, cloud computing, and mobile. But she's more than just a technology leader: she managed product teams and research scientists as well as built her own profitable business. Kate is an author and keynote speaker and has been honored with Seattle's top 40 under 40 award.



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**C**ontinuous delivery has many advantages. You can get things into production more quickly, it forces you to make smaller changes (which, in turn, minimizes risk), and it federates control, empowering a smart and capable team. That said, change is always difficult.

Humans like to be able to predict things. In fact, for people in operations, it's considered a strength to be able to notice potential problems before they happen. As a result, getting an operations team on board with a new idea can often mean a lot of friction. The best thing you can do to ensure a successful transition is get everyone on board early. Doing so probably means more work for you, but the effort will be well worth it.

In one of my previous roles as a startup chief technology officer, I was tasked with moving the whole technology stack from one big code spaghetti-ball we had moved to the server into services that could be independently deployed and decoupled. Many of the old team members were disgruntled about the changes and favored the old system.

I knew forcing the change would only alienate these people I barely knew (not a great way to start off as a new manager), so instead I spent time with each of them. I made an effort to listen to their point of view, talk through solutions, and make them part of the process. When the changes were finally rolled out, no one was surprised, and many of the dissenters actually got on board with the solution because they had been part of creating it.

One of the most powerful things I did was ask for their help. By enlisting them to participate in the solution, there was no question about whether they were “for” or “against” it; instead, they were already involved, and we made progress as a team.

*“Getting an operations team on board with a new idea can often mean a lot of friction. The best thing you can do to ensure a successful transition is get everyone on board early.”*

## KEY LESSONS

- 1 GET EVERYONE ON BOARD EARLY.**
- 2 DON'T FORCE THE CHANGE TO CONTINUOUS DELIVERY.**
- 3 MAKE YOUR TEAM MEMBERS PART OF THE PROCESS.**



# Bring your code and user feedback closer together



**Intuit** founder **Scott Cook** is an advocate for a “rampant innovation culture” and allowing employees to do rapid, high-velocity experiments. Several years ago Intuit’s Consumer Division took this to heart, and transformed the TurboTax website through **Continuous Delivery**.

**Gene Kim**, Author and Researcher, IT Revolution Press discusses success through DevOps practices.

## The result?

They ran 165 experiments during the 3-month tax season. The website saw a **50% increase** in the conversion rate. The employees **loved it** because they saw their **ideas come to market**.



# REMEMBERING THE BENEFITS OF CONTINUOUS DELIVERY



## PATRICK KUA

Principal Consultant at  
ThoughtWorks

Patrick Kua is a speaker, writer, and consultant and stills gets to write code for customers where continuous delivery is the norm. He is the author of *The Retrospective Handbook: A Guide for Agile Teams* and bridges the worlds between the technical and nontechnical realms. Patrick is passionate about working closely with teams, helping them grow and learn with sustainable and long-term change. He is fascinated by elements of learning and continuous improvement, always helping others to develop enthusiasm for these same elements.



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**C**ontinuous delivery is the normal way in which we work with clients, but it's easy to forget the benefits that continuous delivery can bring to them. Last year, I worked with a client to deliver a software system that was used to demonstrate the capabilities of a standard, an otherwise dry and theoretical topic that no one really understood.

The client used the system heavily during meetings with large, well-known international companies to demonstrate the potential benefits of global acceptance of the standard. During one meeting with an important company, the company representative asked whether the standard would enable a particular key feature. It sounded like without this feature, support for the standard would fall by the wayside.

Our team knew that this feature was trivial to implement but had been deprioritized in favor of work on other system features. One of our developers implemented the feature; with our continuous delivery pipeline, it was quickly made available in the production system. Instead of simply talking about what the standard supported, we could demonstrate how the standard enabled the feature.

The company representative who asked this question was impressed, not only by what the standard enabled but also by how quick software could be turned around. Their experience with software releases often meant three-month release cycles, endless paperwork, and frustration that the software they asked for was far from what they expected.

By demonstrating the benefits that continuous delivery can bring, the client opened a separate conversation about how software can be delivered in a different manner.

*“One of our developers implemented the feature; with our continuous delivery pipeline, it was quickly made available in the production system.”*

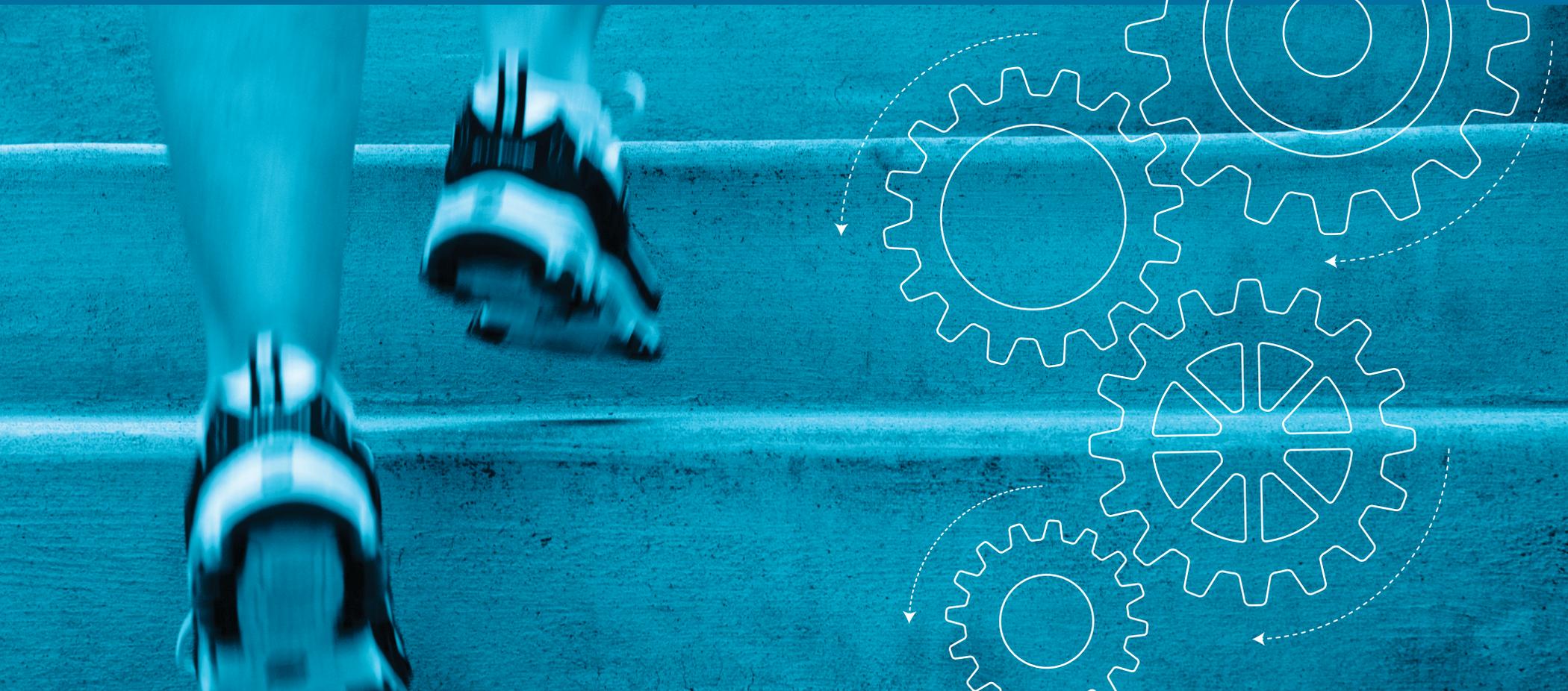
## KEY LESSON

- 1 BY DEMONSTRATING THE BENEFITS THAT CONTINUOUS DELIVERY CAN BRING, THE CLIENT OPENED A SEPARATE CONVERSATION ABOUT HOW SOFTWARE CAN BE DELIVERED IN A DIFFERENT MANNER.**



# Continuous Delivery

Six Steps to Faster Releases without Breaking Anything



More Innovation • Better Quality • Earlier Feedback • Faster Releases

Start off on the right foot.

Read the White Paper ►



# PROTOTYPING FOR CONTINUOUS DELIVERY



## MATTHEW SKELTON

Director and Co-founder of Skelton Thatcher Consulting Ltd

Matthew Skelton is an independent software systems consultant who helps organizations to evaluate, adopt, and sustain good software delivery and operations practices, such as continuous delivery, DevOps, and ITIL, with a focus on software operability. He founded and runs the London Continuous Delivery meet-up group and instigated PIPELINE, the continuous delivery conference. Matthew is director and co-founder of Skelton Thatcher, a software operations consultancy.



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Two things that can really help to make continuous delivery happen are empathy and a careful prototype. I recently helped to introduce continuous delivery at a large online travel retailer in the United Kingdom. We began by focusing on a set of online tools and applications lying outside the main booking flow, partly because these applications had previously been built and deployed manually but also because we felt that we would make more rapid progress with these components than with the main booking engine.

Many changes to the build, test, and deployment of the applications were needed, including new ways of using remote machines to trigger and control deployments.

These changes required new firewall and network configurations that had not been used before, and we knew that unless we had a convincing case, such changes were likely to be rejected as too risky.

Using ThoughtWorks GO to model the deployment pipeline, we produced an end-to-end prototype that captured some important workflow, auditing, and approval steps that up to that point had been done manually. We realized that many people involved in the build–deployment–test process would find the level of automation scary at first. We tried to empathize with their situation and, using role-based security in the deployment pipeline, uncovered enough information to give them a sense of visibility and control.

We then approached key people individually (such as security, application support, and infrastructure), walking them through the prototype-deployment pipeline and showing them the kinds of controls and checks we had considered and prototyped. After a few iterations, we had a deployment pipeline that all involved were happy to try, and we deployed to production soon afterward. The scheme used for building and deploying the online tools in this way became a model for other components to follow.

By empathizing in advance with the concerns of other people and addressing these concerns in a visible, browser-accessible way in a prototype deployment pipeline, you can remove many of the blockers to moving to continuous delivery.

*“We tried to empathize with their situation and, using role-based security in the deployment pipeline, uncovered enough information to give them a sense of visibility and control.”*

## KEY LESSONS

- 1 DEVELOP END-TO-END PROTOTYPES TO CAPTURE IMPORTANT WORKFLOWS.
- 2 EMPATHIZE WITH THOSE RESPONSIBLE FOR BUILD, DEPLOYMENT, AND TEST.

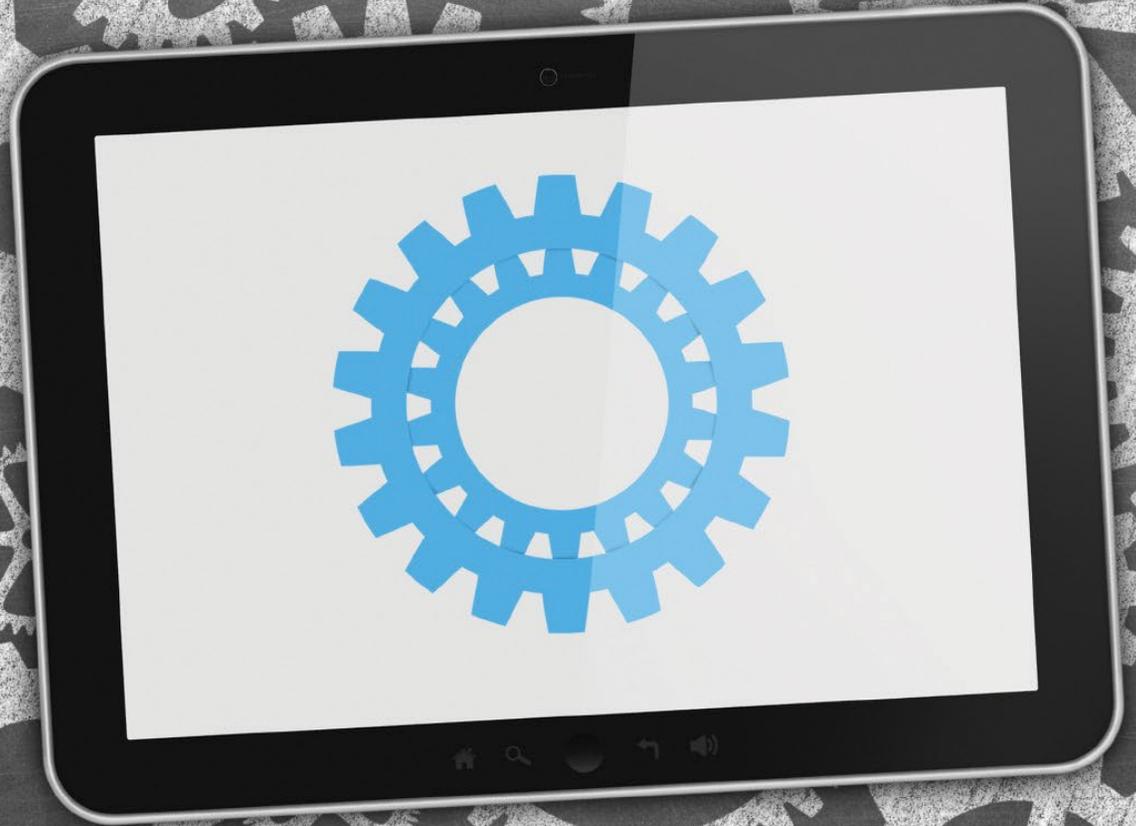


From the front lines  
of Continuous Delivery  
direct to your screen

Take 10  
minutes

Learn from 29  
DevOps  
experts

Get a 360°  
view of the  
journey  
to Continuous Delivery



**Continuous Delivery:** Lessons from 29 DevOps Experts on  
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