



XL Release Cuts Costs and Boosts Revenue at Major Financial Services Company

Software releases happen 2x per week instead of 4x per year



Key Facts

Industry: Financial Services

Company:

A Fortune 1000 company

Employees: 10,800

Assets: \$6.2 billion



Companies in all industries today are struggling to keep up with customer expectations, but demands are particularly rigorous in financial services. Before meeting XebiaLabs, this financial services company, which manages assets of more than \$6B, had been growing rapidly but was struggling with competitive pressure and inability to respond quickly to market need.

Technical Environment

- **Virtualization/Cloud:** VMware, OpenStack, Amazon EC2, bare metal
- **OS:** Solaris, RHEL, Windows
- **Middleware:** Oracle WebLogic, standalone JVM applications, IIS, Oracle DB
- **Provisioning and deployment:** Puppet, Chef, XL Deploy
- **Continuous Integration:** Jenkins
- **Process Management:** JIRA, ServiceNow



Before XL Release

- ➔ Many bottlenecks in the release process
- ➔ No way to proactively pinpoint problems in the release pipeline
- ➔ No way to analyze past releases in order to optimize the process
- ➔ Inability to release software at the speed required to be competitive

After XL Release

- ➔ Visualize the entire flow from development through to production
- ➔ Cut costs by \$500k annually due to less manual overhead
- ➔ Accelerate time-to-release substantially
- ➔ Generate approximately \$4.2m in additional revenue in the process

Background: Big Chunks of Code, Chaotic Release Process

The financial services company was growing rapidly and was facing competitive pressure. Their release process was characterized by:

- Developers spending 3-4 months implementing a set of features and fixes, which they tested and cleaned up for 1-2 months, until finalizing a release.
- For each release, a long meeting was held with developers, QA, database administrators and operators to create the release plan – an Excel spreadsheet that was sent out to all participants.
- During the release, every participant worked off their own copies of the release plan, which often turned out to be different versions.

- After every step, the person carrying out a task communicated the result back to the release manager, who was the only person with an up-to-date version of the release spreadsheet.
- Frequently, team members had to check with each other or with the release manager to find out the status of a task they were waiting on.
- Sometimes, tasks happened in the wrong order, or a team member ended up waiting for another task to complete – only to discover that it had actually been completed a while ago.

To complicate matters further, the technical team was typically working on multiple releases at the same time.

Challenges: Time to Market, Release Failures

"Our biggest challenges were accelerating time to market and cutting down on release failures, without disrupting the existing demands of the business," said the CIO. "We wanted to move to at least monthly releases by adopting Continuous Delivery techniques."

Having identified Continuous Delivery as the approach they wanted to take, the company then had to figure out where and how to start.

"We found it surprisingly hard to find information on implementing Continuous Delivery at scale. We quickly realized we lacked any reliable or consistent data to help us accurately determine the most useful areas to address first," added the CIO.

XL Release Rises to the Challenge

After evaluating products from various vendors, the company selected XL Release as the best solution for its needs. XL Release helps customers across all industries drive business value by visualizing and orchestrating the full end-to-end software release process.

XL Release is a Continuous Delivery Management tool that lets you plan, track and execute all your software delivery pipelines. XL Release is specifically designed to help teams get started with Continuous Delivery *now* to deliver on their Agile, DevOps and Test-driven development initiatives.

Phase One: Getting Started Quickly

XL Release made it easy for teams across the organization to quickly define their existing release processes in the tool. This allowed them to largely eliminate the Excel sheets, Wiki pages, Word documents and MS Project plans that had previously caused confusion.

The teams also noticed that many tasks in their releases were simply instructions to run a script, create a change ticket, or manually carry out other easily-automated actions. Replacing these with automated tasks provided by XL Release immediately cut down on handover time and failed tasks.

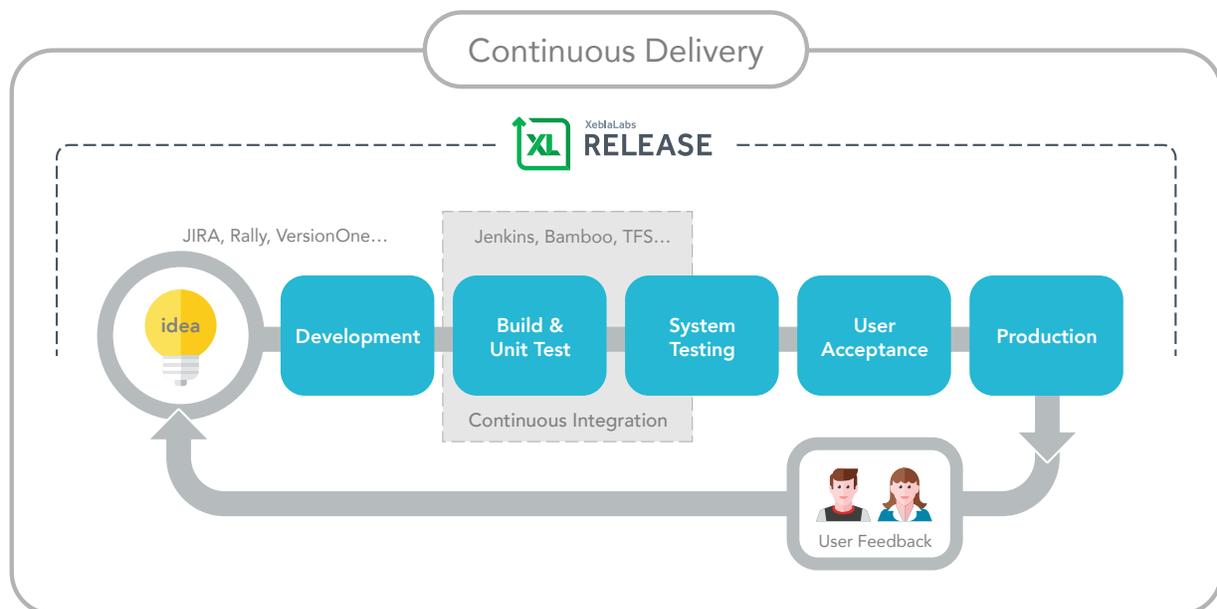
Phase Two: Data-Driven Improvement

After the initial on-boarding phase, the company decided to implement a continuous improvement strategy in which dedicated Continuous Delivery experts worked with teams to optimize their software delivery process.

"We knew that it was neither possible nor cost effective to fix all problems right away. We wanted to make sure our investment stayed focused on those bottlenecks that were most problematic to the business. The data XL Release provided was instrumental in allowing us to target those painpoints effectively."

This improvement exercise is ongoing. The majority of the company's teams still run partially manual release processes.

"Our goal is not full automation, it is to ensure our release process is efficient enough to meet the demands of the business."



About XebiaLabs

XebiaLabs develops enterprise-scale Continuous Delivery and DevOps software, providing companies with the visibility, automation and control to deliver software faster and with less risk. Global market leaders rely on XebiaLabs to meet the increasing demand for accelerated and more reliable software releases.

The XebiaLabs DevOps Platform for Continuous Delivery at Enterprise Scale



Release Orchestration

Orchestrate, automate and get visibility into release pipelines



Deployment Automation

Automate and standardize complex application deployments



DevOps Intelligence

Get unprecedented insight and decision support for your software delivery process

For more information and a free trial please visit www.xebialabs.com.