



## Successful Book Translation using the Nexus Framework: *Driving 30% Efficiency*



### CASE STUDY



#### The Institution

Taiwan Agile Tribe (TAT) is an Agile online community established in June 2019 in Taiwan. As of June 2023, it has grown to 4,500 members, from various parts of Taiwan and Hong Kong. Every month, TAT invites outstanding and influential speakers to share insights on Agile and various related topics, aiming to promote diverse learning in the Agile community.

TAT has a program that enables individuals with shared interests to form different topic-specific small groups. These small groups focus on various Agile applications, such as Scrum, XP, and Kanban, and corresponding accountabilities like Product Owner (PO) and Scrum Master (SM) communities. They also cover topics related to agile skills, including agile coaching, communication, and emerging technologies like Chat GPT and Notion applications.

The diversified development and various small group activities enrich the events organized by TAT. Moreover, the translation volunteer team is dedicated to translating top-notch Agile-related books. This provides members with practical opportunities to apply Agile theories and offers the local Agile community access to classic and up-to-date Agile information.

This case study shares the process of translating the 2nd edition of "Scrum Mastery: From Good To Great Servant-Leadership" by Geoff Watts in 2023.

## The Challenge: When conventional methods fail to make Developers more efficient and improve quality.

Dr. Chou Lung-Hung, the founder of TAT, has led the translation of several international Agile publications in Taiwan. He shared that despite some successfully translated Agile books, the lack of first-hand information on Chinese Agile terminology has hindered the precision of translation.

Many well-known Agile books in Taiwan were published at least a decade ago, but "Scrum Mastery: From Good To Great Servant-Leadership", had not been translated yet. After multiple negotiations, TAT collaborated with DrMaster Press Co., Ltd. to secure the copyright, hoping to create significant value for the Taiwanese agile community.

For this project, 70 volunteers were gathered through virtual communities to complete the translation of the 2nd edition of "Scrum Mastery: From Good To Great Servant-Leadership." by Geoff Watts. These volunteers came from different parts of Taiwan, and they dedicated their spare time to collaborate on the translation, using remote online tools to ensure transparency throughout the translation process.

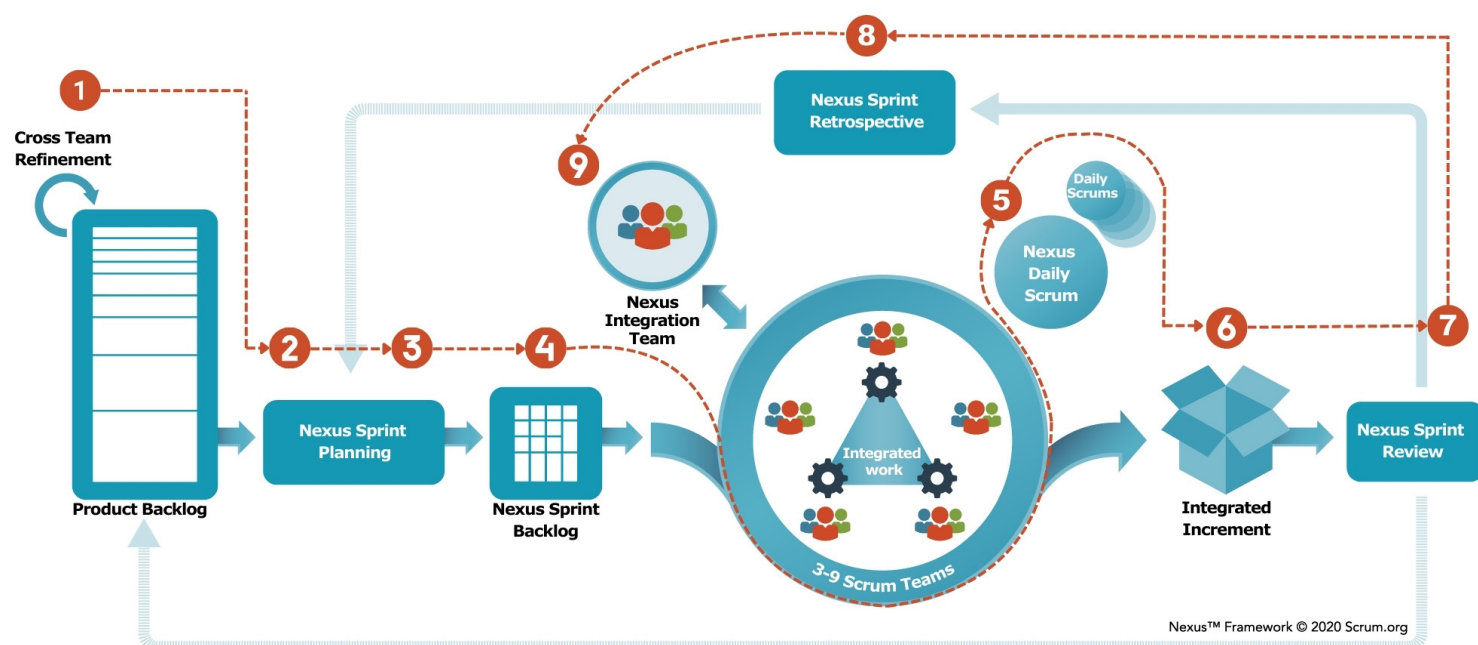
In the past, the translation teams used Scrum, and LeSS and other frameworks to achieve translation goals. While the teams could complete multiple book translations smoothly and significantly improved the translation speed and transparency, maintaining consistent translation styles and terminology in a large team was a significant challenge. The previous execution approach had the following challenges:

- Although each Scrum Team produced Increments during each Sprint, these Increments were not integrated into a working product every Sprint, which hindered consistency of terminology and the quality of the translations.
- They had an integration team operating independently. The integration team could only work on the integration tasks after each Scrum Team completed the Increment. This resulted in untimely communication between the integration team and each Scrum Team.
- The integration team usually provided feedback one week after the Scrum Team would complete a Sprint, resulting in re-work and the project taking longer.
- In addition to being reviewed and integrated by the integration team, the integrated Increment (such as a completed chapter) needed approval by the Review Committee. Sometimes, the final reviewer could not continue the translation project due to other work commitments, causing delays in the project schedule.

## The Solution: The Nexus Framework

The team researched and practiced various Agile frameworks in the past. In January 2023, the Taiwan Agile Tribe decided to adopt the Nexus framework to facilitate the smooth execution of the entire translation project. Nexus was a better fit than previous methods they had used because of its focus on integration and dependency management.

The challenge of managing a larger team required adopting a scaling framework, and they decided to switch to using the Nexus framework. The decision to switch was driven by Nexus's improved integration capabilities, notably due to its Nexus Integration Team (NIT). Having NIT members also be part of the smaller teams swiftly addressed integration issues by bringing them back to the team for resolution.



The Nexus consisted of:

1. One Product Owner
2. Seven Scrum Masters, including the Scrum Master who facilitated the NIT.
3. Six Scrum Teams
4. One NIT is composed of members from each of the Scrum Teams.

The reviewers are part of the NIT. When Nexus first started operating, they compiled relevant terminology and translation rules to provide clear guidance to translators. During the project, the NIT guided the Scrum Teams in implementing Nexus, strengthening team collaboration, and significantly improving output quality.

Having people in the Scrum Teams who were also part of the NIT helped them quickly and effectively manage integration issues as a whole Nexus. Additionally, the teams communicated information better.

The Nexus Integration Team (NIT) comprised representatives from each Scrum Team, the Product Owner, and the NIT Scrum Master. The primary way the Nexus worked was as follows:

1. **Cross-functional Team:** The skills of the Scrum Team included translation, fact-checking and proofreading.
2. **Nexus Sprint Planning:** The Product Owner explained the Nexus Sprint Goal, User Stories, and Acceptance Criteria for the upcoming Sprint. Before the meeting, the Product Owner reviewed User Story content and sought feedback from representatives of each Scrum Team.
3. **Team Sprint Planning:** User Stories were broken down into tasks for Developers to claim and work on.
4. **Nexus Daily Scrum:** This was attended by representatives from each Scrum Team, The NIT Scrum Master, and the representatives from each team. The meeting was held daily, and the representatives from each team who attended brought cross-team issues back to their Scrum Team's Daily Scrum.
5. **Team Daily Scrum:** Each Scrum Team held its own Daily Scrum. The Scrum Team members participated to facilitate two-way communication.
6. **User Acceptance Test:** Each group accepted their Increments and demonstrated the translation output to users.
7. **Team Retrospective:** After the Sprint Review, each Scrum Team held a Sprint Retrospective meeting to discuss how to improve translation methods and quality while reviewing their Definition of Done (DoD).
8. **Nexus Sprint Review:** All group translation work was compiled into an Increment with guidance from NIT and accepted by the Product Owner to release the product increment—the release criteria needed to be synchronized with the Definition of Done (DoD). The following are some example DoDs that were used:
  - The text in the image has been translated correctly, and the image is presented and positioned like the original image.
  - The files need to be placed in the volunteer cloud drive.
  - Proper nouns must be consistent with the "standard vocabulary."
9. **Nexus Retrospective:** the teams discussed various improvements, such as enhancing translation quality to drive overall product quality.

## Results

The Nexus implementation drove the following improvements and results:

- **Transparency:**
  - A single Product Backlog existed for the entire Nexus and its Scrum Teams.
  - The bottom-up insight of how the Scrum Teams worked together increased transparency, communication, and collaboration.
- **Integrated Increment:** All Scrum Teams collaboratively worked from a single Product Backlog to deliver at least one "Done" Integrated Increment every Sprint.



- **Nexus Sprint Review:** The individual Scrum Team Sprint Review was removed. They gathered feedback and issues from stakeholders when the Integrated Increment was reviewed as a whole at the Nexus Sprint Review.
- **Nexus Daily Scrum:** The representatives from individual Scrum Teams spontaneously identified integration issues and discovered cross-team dependencies. The Nexus Daily Scrum helped Nexus inspect and adapt by providing cross-team transparency.
- **Refinement:** The Scrum Teams collaborated on the details of the Product Backlog Items (PBIs), identified cross-dependencies across teams, and made adjustments when they were not adequately independent to deliver specific PBIs.

#### Critical Success Factors for the Project:

1. The Product Owner established a shared vision with the team. This allowed the team to understand the development direction and value of the product to be carried out. The team discussed who this project's target customers are, the product's style, competitive products, and unique values and advantages. The product's positioning and value proposition were clearly expressed through a concise statement of the above elements.
2. Self-Forming Teams:
  - Teams were composed of like-minded individuals.
  - Each member joined the team they wanted to work with based on their expertise and interests. This move increased teamwork dynamics and reduced confrontation.
3. NIT:
  - Each Scrum event served its purpose by bringing back information to the Scrum Team, increasing information transparency, and continuously improving to optimize translation quality.
  - All team members continued to grow through information synchronization, exert organizational influence, and shorten the finalization time.
  - When key team members could not participate due to other work circumstances, other team members could immediately fill in their roles.

Using the Nexus framework, the teams could coordinate work in each Sprint, with each group gradually improving and making adjustments. They also continued synchronizing real-time issues and updates through NIT Daily Scrum. The NIT members were also Scrum Team members, further enhancing team unity and providing a holistic and global view for each Increment.

"To everyone's surprise, this translation project achieved two significant milestones - the first-ever Scrum Mastery Chinese edition in the world and a paradigm of the Nexus framework for non-IT product development. The project also improved efficiency by 30% compared to previous efforts!" - Lung-Hung Chou.

