



Breaking the Tech Barrier: Implementing Scrum in Both Technical and Non- Technical Teams to Drive Measurable Business Outcomes



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CASE STUDY



Overview

A fast-growing consumer services company in the food industry delivering curated experiences to thousands of customers each week underwent a transformation in its approach to product development and team collaboration. With a mission to simplify life for its customers through high-quality, convenient offerings, the company rapidly expanded its workforce and product portfolio over several years. However, with rapid growth came organizational challenges, particularly around prioritization, accountability, and consistency in execution.

Challenges

Founded by a small entrepreneurial team, the company scaled from a handful of employees to over 70, representing a highly multicultural team. The COVID-19 pandemic accelerated this growth as demand for their services surged. Despite a strong culture of transparency and trust, teams struggled with shifting priorities, inconsistent execution, and a lack of clear ownership.

One core challenge was with Product Ownership. The Product Owner accountability was not fully dedicated and worked in a top-down, task-focused manner. Teams lacked cross-functional capabilities and often had to pause and pivot, resulting in rework and inefficiencies. Though the organization had Objectives and Key Results (OKRs), these goals didn't translate into actionable, coordinated work.

While elements of Agile were present, the organization was not fully aligned around Professional Scrum. It was mainly going through the motions of Scrum without truly embracing its values or principles.

Initiating Change

Ryno Uys, then Head of Operations, led the initiative to explore and implement Professional Scrum. Having seen the framework succeed in other environments, he partnered with Alex Hardt, a Professional Scrum Trainer, to shift from rudimentary Scrum use to Professional Scrum. The shift centered on empowering cross-functional teams, embracing agility, and focusing on accelerating value delivery iteratively.

Solution: Building Scrum Teams and Self-Management

The transformation began with a Professional Scrum Master (PSM) and a Product Owner (PSPO) training for key team members. Two cross-functional Scrum Teams were formed:

- One focused on internal systems and operations
- The other one focused on customer-facing technology platforms

Dedicated Scrum Masters were introduced—something new for the organization—and teams began working in two-week Sprints. Product Ownership was redefined to encourage self-management, with Developers taking charge of Sprint Planning and participating in Backlog Refinement.

Meetings became more focused, outcome-oriented working sessions, with only essential stakeholders involved. Consistent Scrum Events, especially the Sprint Reviews and Retrospectives, improved transparency, allowing teams to share insights and accelerate feedback loops.

Scrum Beyond Tech: Transforming Physical Product Development

Encouraged by early wins, the organization extended Scrum to its physical product development process. This represented a significant innovation: applying Scrum to a culinary environment, an area traditionally resistant to agile approaches. A new dedicated Scrum Team was explicitly created for this purpose. It was composed of two culinary subject-matter experts (functioning as "Developers" despite their non-technical roles), a dedicated Product Owner, and a Scrum Master. One of the business owners served as a key Stakeholder.

Adapting Scrum to a culinary environment required creative translation of agile concepts. The team replaced technical terms with food-centric language that resonated with chefs and nutritionists. Sprint Backlogs contained recipe development items rather than code features, and Sprint Reviews became structured tasting sessions with formal feedback mechanisms from those inside and outside the Scrum Team.

Previously, these cycles were unpredictable, typically taking 8–11 weeks from concept to customer delivery. This lengthy process created substantial business challenges:

- Slow response to market trends and seasonal ingredients
- Challenging coordination with marketing and photography teams
- Limited capacity to experiment with new culinary concepts
- Inconsistent quality as recipes evolved through multiple hands
- Erratic successfully created recipes
- Large quantities of work in progress and uncompleted work

The team transformed this process using Scrum, reducing development to a consistent 2-week cadence. Each Sprint delivered completed recipe cards, ingredient lists, and professionally photographed meals—all production-ready assets.

The culinary team initially showed scepticism about applying a "tech framework" to food preparation, but this quickly transformed to enthusiasm as they experienced the benefits:

- Clear accountability and ownership of specific recipe components
- Daily alignment on priorities and dependencies
- Structured customer feedback was incorporated rapidly
- Consistent quality standards through a formal Definition of Done
- Reduced waste from failed recipes through incremental development

Sprint Reviews evolved to include internal and actual customers, creating direct feedback loops that dramatically improved product-market fit. The Definition of Done expanded to include specific quality criteria for taste profiles, presentation standards, ingredient sourcing, nutritional requirements, and cost targets.

"I'm super proud of being able to implement Scrum in a non-tech team, getting them to believe in Scrum and see the benefits in just two Sprints," said Ryno

Results

Since adopting Professional Scrum, the company has more than doubled revenue and team size. Only five major product updates were launched in the 18 months preceding the adoption of Scrum. In the 10 months following the shift, the teams delivered 10 major updates and 10 feature enhancements. This represents a significant 614% increase in release frequency—an incredible acceleration in overall feature delivery.

These product updates included key initiatives such as serving size flexibility, option swaps, and a redesigned customer interface, which increased revenue by 5%.

Service package development now reliably operates on a two-week Sprint cycle, aligned with real-time customer insights, resulting in a 79% decrease in development time.

Scrum Teams track progress using OKRs and review them quarterly across the company.

Customer-oriented key metrics showed significant improvements across all critical business areas:

- 13% increase in customer referrals, indicating higher satisfaction and advocacy
- 25% improvement in customer reactivation rate for dormant accounts
- 15% growth in high-value customer segments
- Service rating improvements from 4.4 to 4.7 (out of 5)
- 33% increase in average order rate per customer

These metrics were directly attributed to the improved product quality, consistency, and market responsiveness enabled by the Scrum framework, particularly within the non-technical product development team.

"If we didn't have Scrum, we wouldn't have been able to launch features like we have," said Ryno. "It's also been instrumental in maintaining our culture. It makes it easier for new employees to onboard and integrate."

Conclusion

This case story illustrates how a growing consumer services company leveraged Professional Scrum to enhance product delivery, improve team autonomy, and strengthen feedback loops and overall organizational agility.

Alex Hardt's involvement as a Professional Scrum Trainer significantly enhanced the transformation's success. His profound expertise in the fundamentals of Scrum and Agile principles provided the organization with more than just training—it offered a foundation of knowledge that enabled genuine adoption rather than superficial implementation. By combining Alex's expert guidance with clear leadership and a willingness to adapt, the company successfully scaled sustainably while remaining true to its customer-first mission.



About Scrum.org

[Scrum.org](https://www.scrum.org), the Home of Scrum, was founded by Scrum co-creator Ken Schwaber as a mission-based organization to help people and teams solve complex problems. We do this by enabling people to apply Professional Scrum through training courses, certifications and ongoing learning all based on a common competency model.