

CASE STUDY

Harnessing Continuous Feedback for Launch Support: A Case Study with Atlassian’s Jira Service Management and Confluence



The United States Air Force and Space Force strive to modernize launch capabilities to meet the rapid expansion of national and commercial space needs. Among the tools and processes under review is an asset and risk management tool required for launch certification. Contegix designed and completed the initial implementation of a new process using Atlassian’s Jira Service Management (JSM) and Confluence that resulted in a meticulously designed feedback loop fostering both technological advancements and user engagement.

Who: Space Force Assured Access to Space (AATS)

What: Using Jira Service Management and Confluence, the team built an intuitive and dynamic software feedback and management process that modernized and provided ongoing support for critical space launch systems.

Why: The modernization aimed to enhance operational efficiency by providing a more user-friendly and transparent process, encouraging more active participation and improving the quality of continuous enhancements.

The Problem of Modernizing Legacy Systems with Disparate Users

The previous software support system had slow response times, lacked transparency and was not designed for rapidly changing launch protocols and certification requirements. Among the challenges of modernizing this legacy tool was the need for diverse user input from separate launch facilities, each with distinct needs and policies. Moreover, the tool would need to be continuously iterative to keep up with launch protocols, engineering processes and certification requirements. As the necessity for improvement became more pronounced, pressure mounted to find a solution.



The Space Force needed tools that could track processes and accommodate variances while creating standardized task management and risk reporting. In addition, they needed an intuitive, easy-to-use interface that made sharing information across teams easy and encouraged users to submit feedback while also enhancing overall visibility and communication.

JSM and Confluence as a User-Driven Development Process

To address these challenges, the team created a linked JSM/Confluence process to collect feature requests, bug reports and user feedback. With JSM, they built an intuitive, easy-to-use interface that encouraged users to submit feedback. By customizing ticket types to be user-friendly and straightforward, they made the process less daunting and more inviting, ensuring users felt their contributions were valuable and welcomed. Confluence was used to display dynamic information, set user expectations and add process transparency. This resource was crucial in demystifying the development process and empowering users with the knowledge of how their input is utilized, shifting their role from passive observers to active contributors.

The new system captures and integrates user feedback from diverse teams across multiple launch facilities to improve the responsiveness and efficiency of launch operations.

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Outcomes and Impact

The revamped support and development feedback system for launch tools is instrumental in enhancing the Space Force's operational capabilities, significantly reducing the time between launches and increasing launch tempo for reused assets. The success of the tool, bolstered by supportive processes enabled by JSM and Confluence, illustrates the critical nature of adaptive support systems in high-stakes environments.

This transformation was essential to support the dynamic and critical nature of Space Force operations, ensuring that technological advancements and user engagement keep pace with the demands of modern aerospace activities.



Team Perspectives: the Benefits of JSM/Confluence for DevOps

A User's Perspective

The transformed feedback process for the launch support tool using Atlassian's JSM and Confluence is an empowering experience.

Alec Leeseberg, a process and integration consultant on the Space Force contract is a user experience advocate and championed the use of transparent reporting, saying,



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Transparency isn't just about keeping users informed; it's about empowering them. By fostering an environment where every piece of feedback is visible and valued, we created a sense of ownership and collaboration that drove not only user satisfaction but also meaningful improvements. Integrating JSM and Confluence fundamentally altered the way our users engaged with the development process. This enhancement provided a direct channel for their voices to influence immediate changes, ensuring that their contributions were integral to our project's evolution. It's about creating a dialogue, where every piece of feedback enhances our collective work.

A Developer's Perspective

Integrating Atlassian's JSM and Confluence into the support and development processes for the launch support tool significantly streamlined workflows and improved efficiency.

Lisa Bongiovanni, the project manager responsible for building and integrating the launch support tool, described the benefit of engaged users and a productive feedback loop to her process, saying:

By engaging our users directly in the feedback loop and leveraging JSM and Confluence, we transformed our approach to project management. This integration allows us to quickly process feedback and generate actionable data, accelerating improvements and ensuring that every development is closely aligned with the real-world demands of our operations. Our open and iterative approach not only sharpens our strategic decisions but also guarantees that updates to our mission assurance tools were impactful, evidence-based and precisely targeted to meet the dynamic needs of our customers.

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