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POV

The Retail Industry and The Power of Being Relevant

Authors Mansi Kishor Nimje | Sagar Amar Mali
Hemantkumar Savla

The great restructuring within the retail industry has accelerated the Phygital experiences and integration of the offline and online worlds. The word 'retail apocalypse' is not uncommon, which refers to the customers flocking from physical brick-and-mortar retail stores towards e-commerce.

The retail sector has already re-imagined the shopping experience mid-pandemic and post-pandemic, redefining the selling and shopping experiences, but also the incredible advantages retailers have right now with 'Direct to Customer' for retail and institutional for the wholesale markets. Across the globe, retail markets include food products, consumer goods, and durable consumer goods.

The most popular initiatives available and implemented as tools to optimize the new strategy are – **QR codes, automated payment, artificial intelligence, and augmented reality.**

European and American retail markets are ahead in this curve due to larger access to the internet. Asian markets are catching up, considering the high demand for luxurious European and American retail brands.

The important question here is what the retailer needs to work upon to be competitive, in terms of a product range to cater to the identified market, merchandise pricing based on the product category, and reduced costs of product design, raw materials, carrying inventory, and logistics. Retail aggregators are not far enough as we see in the travel and tourism industry and the retails need to be ready for pricing wars on the back of increasing positive customer experiences.

The Biggest and Latest Industry Trends

1

Online selling is non-negotiable. Hence, if a customer gets a better deal somewhere else at a click of a button, the customer is lost.

2

Omnichannel experiences across machines and mobiles makes shopping experiences meaningful.

3

Same-day delivery or even earlier is giving online retailers the edge.

Microsoft Azure DevOps Dashboards

Now let's come to the use of Microsoft Azure DevOps Dashboards.

These dashboards monitor and track deployments so that retailer online portals are always current, competitive, and relevant in the current competitive scenario. In these times, retailers need to be on their toes always, 365 days a year, more than what they were earlier during the 'Black Friday' sale (maybe once or twice a year) – this is a huge change, isn't it?

DevOps, as we know it in a nutshell, is an amazing platform facilitating cooperation between Dev that is Development and Ops that is Operations. DevOps has become a powerful collaboration tool between the development team and the operations team. As the use of DevOps has increased, various features are embedded to improve the experience, for example, Azure Boards, Artifacts, Test Plans, etc. The dashboard feature helps to gain visibility, share information, monitor progress, and trends, and improve your workflow processes. It has been actively used by team leaders, developers, and trainees on regular basis. These dashboards are highly insightful and easily configurable. The Azure DevOps Dashboard provides the user a plethora of widgets to configure into their dashboards.

Some of the widgets as mentioned below:

Build history

Deployment status

Sprint capacity

Sprint overview

Requirement quality

Test result trend

Benefits

1

This dashboard provides an overview of the entire deployment process in an easy and efficient way to any user with or without technical knowledge of the process.

2

The dashboard can be utilized for making the deployment process more efficient by analyzing various trends seen on the dashboard.

3

The dashboard is being utilized to continuously monitor the deployment process.

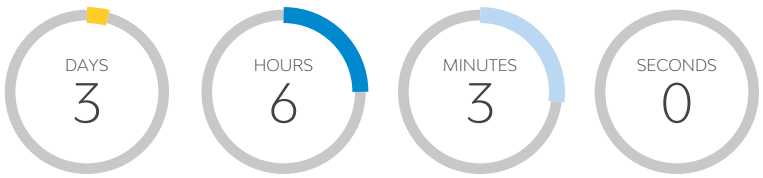
4

The dashboard can help new joinees gain knowledge of the steps involved in the deployment process.

Key Features

Fancy Countdown

- A Fancy Countdown dashboard enables the user to keep a track of the Sprint, which is about to be deployed in the coming days.
- So, any user with access to the dashboard can know the latest Sprint details easily.

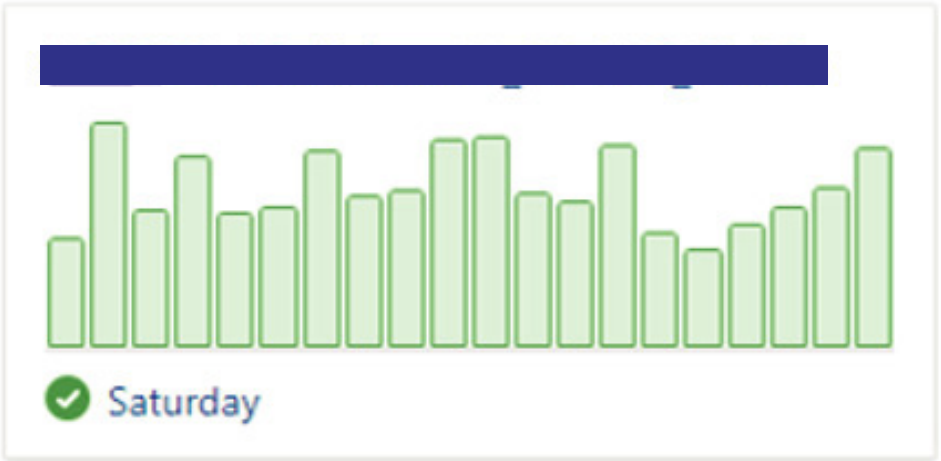


Build/Release Health Overview and Build/ Release Details

- To monitor the status of the latest built and latest release pipeline, the dash board has been configured with Build Health Overview and Release Health Overview widgets.
- These widgets show the overall status of the builds and releases on our dashboard.
- The widget turns green when everything is healthy, blue when anything is in progress and red when anything has failed.
- To add more insight to the Health Overview widgets, the dashboard is equipped with Build Details and Release Details widgets.
- These Build and Release Details navigate the user to the details of the latest build and release for the configured pipeline.

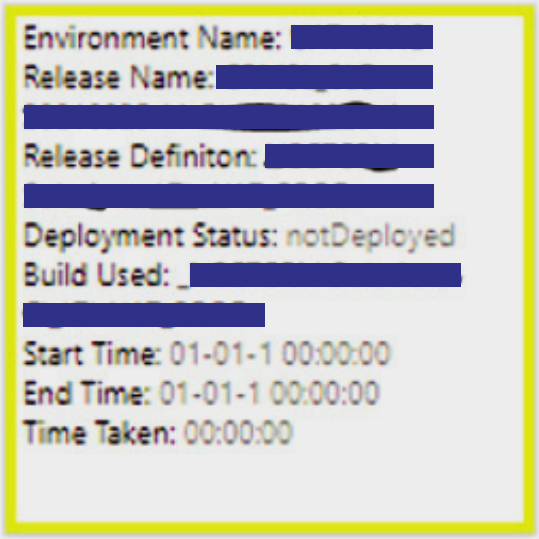
Build History

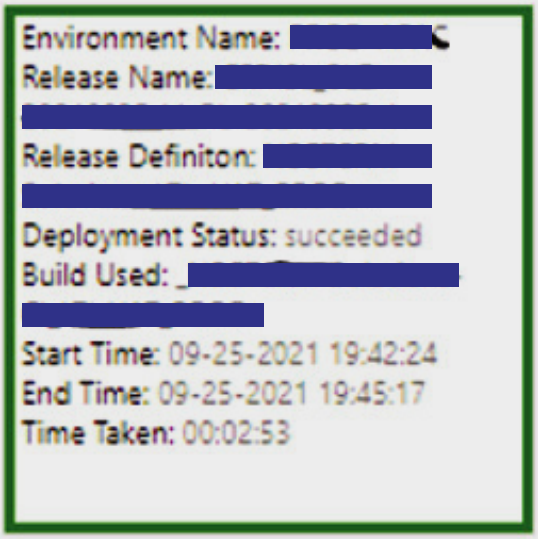
- The Build History widget on the dashboard, is a set of bar graphs, which depict the run time required by the pipeline to be built successfully.
- This graphical representation is helpful for analysis of the build time consumption.
- Accordingly, if needed, actions can be taken to find ways to speed up deployment.



Release Stats

- The dashboard with Release Stats can be configured for each instance present for the application.
- Each of these widgets gives a detailed overview of the current Release in the Pipeline for the concerned instances.
- For each instance the widget provides details like the environment name, release name, release definition, deployment status, build user, start time, end time, and the total time taken.
- The Widget box is also color-configured indicating green for deployment status Succeeded, red in case of error, and yellow when the deployment status is Not Deployed.

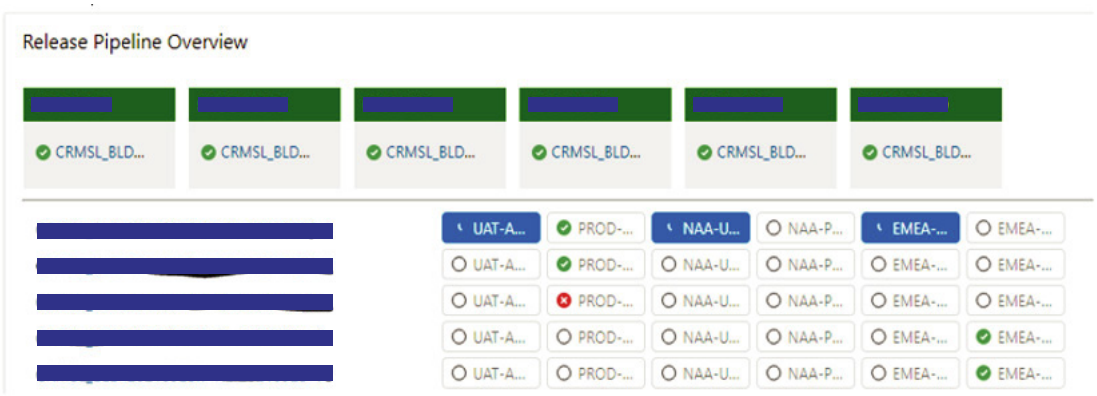




Release Pipeline Overview

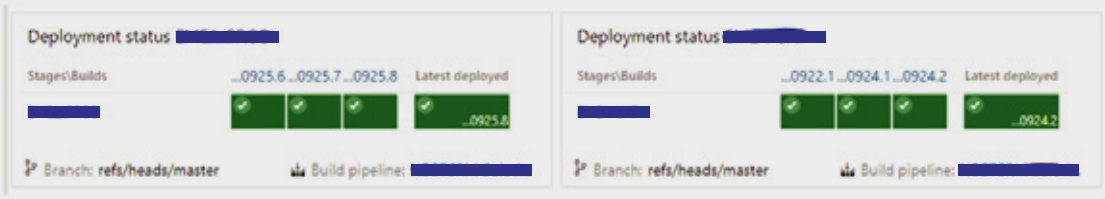
One of the most important widgets on the dashboard, the Release Pipeline Overview is configured in such a way that it provides an insight of all the releases for all the instances.

This widget has two sections. The first section has tabs for the environments with name of the release and the color indicating its status. The second section has a list of all releases and its release status for each environment.



Deployment Status

The Deployment Status widgets, which is also configured for each environment, has deployment status for recent set of builds for that environment.



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Conclusion

Hence, we experience immense use and benefits by DT teams leveraging the ADO build and deployment pipelines for ensuring the scale, correctness of build, and deployments and directly ensuring positive experiences for the end user of the application/portal.

Sustainability (potential green code for businesses) cannot be ruled out for the retail sector with an intent of diminishing relative energy consumption demanded by a particular algorithm.

Author Profile

Mansi Kishor Nimje

Engineer - Cloud Services and Software • MSD

Mansi is a working professional having experience in the Manufacturing domain. Her expertise includes providing consultancy, support and maintenance in the Microsoft Dynamics 365, Power Platform, and Microsoft Azure DevOps. She holds a Bachelor of Engineering with specialization in Information Technology from the University of Mumbai.

Sagar Amar Mali

Specialist - Cloud Services and Software MSD

Sagar has rich experience in the Insurance and Manufacturing domain. His expertise includes designing and delivering high maturity solutions for implementation, support, and maintenance in the Dynamics 365, Power Platform, Microsoft Azure devops, and Net technologies. He holds a graduation in Bachelor's in computer science and is a postgraduate in Master of Computer Application.

Hemantkumar Savla

Associate Principal - Cloud Services and Software, LTIMindtree

Hemant has rich experience in the manufacturing domain, working with pressure vessels, and precision equipment manufacturers. In his Information Technology career, Hemant provides consultation services to LTIMindtree's Manufacturing (Discrete), Insurance, and Retail clients around O2T. His expertise includes designing and delivering high maturity solutions for implementation, support, and maintenance in the Dynamics 365 and Power Platform technologies. He holds a graduation in Engineering and is a post graduate in Business Management.

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