Sonatype

Real World Experience: Curtis Yanko

Curtis Yanko

Nexus supports the DevOps Movement

Large Global Enterprise

I recently had a long conversation with Curtis Yanko to talk with him about how he has incrementally moved DevOps into a large enterprise environment. Curtis had just returned from a very successful week at the DevOps Enterprise Summit and was excited to talk about what he had seen and heard. The conversation started around his use of Nexus and Nexus Lifecycle (formerly Component Lifecycle Management - CLM), and then there was a seismic shift in the conversation when he started talking about using the tools of DevOps to provide transparency and open discussions across boundaries in the software supply chain teams.

How I Use Nexus

I use Nexus in the traditional sense as an internal proxy for consuming external libraries, open source in particular. I also manage the things we purchase that need to be consumed, even commercial and off the shelf license things. That role has been around forever.

Nexus for me is my ITIL DML (Definitive Media Library). It serves as a way for me to consume and monitor my consumption of my supply chain, so in addition to inputs it allows me to start managing my outputs. It's this "halfway house" between my CI shop and Application Release Automation (ARA) on the backend, which is where most shops implementing DevOps tend to focus because that's the game-changer.

Source code control has been around forever and people have been doing CI for quite a while, maybe even managing their binaries. Getting people to work together on deployment automation is what is making the biggest difference.

The Game-Changer

The game-changer for me is, with something like Nexus Lifecycle, it gives me something to go to the security teams and legal, and have a discussion.

> ## Tools like Nexus Lifecycle have allowed me to bring something to the table in those discussions. It allows me to have meaningful talks with our compliance people and security folks.

In the past, these discussions were fairly one sided in that there was a need but there wasn't a good answer. Now it lets me have these discussions and bring something to the table. In the sense of DevOps, the other thing that emerged from the conference (DevOps Enterprise Summit) was the importance of dealing with audit, compliance and security. You can't overlook these facets of the organization and you need to engage them from early on. Those relationships are really critical if you are going to be successful.

Tools like Nexus Lifecycle have allowed me to bring something to the table in those discussions. It allows me to have meaningful talks with our compliance people and security folks. It helps bring them into the process. Historically whatever they were doing was probably done out of band from the development process, something they were running off to the side. It was always separate from the delivery teams. Now I can get them involved during the build and assembly process and part of the delivery process from early on.

The Value of Transparency and the Nexus Lifecycle Dashboard

That dashboard to me is a lot like anything else where once things become transparent to many stakeholders, it changes the way the organization sees them, literally and metaphorically. The level of transparency that it provides is changing our conversations around managing libraries.

I find this is true in everything I do. By simply making things transparent, be it the KanBan board making your work in progress transparent, or just exactly what a process is through automation, as more people dispel the magic of what happens during certain activities, the more people understand. If you go back a few years, everything was a blackbox to so many stakeholders. Now, almost everything is transparent. Everyone is working in glass rooms and you can see what is going on.

To me the Nexus Lifecycle dashboard has been no different than that. It is another example of that (transparency) and has nothing but positive effects as more people can see it, take an interest in it and become involved in the conversation.

The Most Startling Revelation

For the first time, after decades of research, there is a corollary between investing in IT practices, IT performance and business revenue. That flies in the face of decades of research that says investing in IT never translates into a revenue gain or an advantage because your competitors can make the same kinds of investments. There are decades of research that say there is no way to affect the bottom line.

What we're seeing here is, because it is about practices and not just technology, it can affect the bottom line. I think that's the most startling revelation of the whole DevOps movement, that it makes real financial sense.

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