

Game Developers Conference® | **March 9-13, 2010** | Moscone Center | San Francisco, CA

**THINK**  
SERVICES  
A DIVISION OF UNITED BUSINESS MEDIA LLC

# GD10

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**[www.GDConf.com](http://www.GDConf.com)**



# **Building Global Bridges**

## **The Benefits of Cross-Border Agile Game**

Aðalsteinn “Alli” Óttarsson



# Who am I ?

- Aðalsteinn “Alli” Óttarsson
- Sr. Technical Producer
- Core Technology Group
- Joined CCP in 2001
- Originally a programmer turned producer
- I have contributed to all the EVE Online releases
  - and all the game projects we are currently working on.



## 13 years ago ...

- Reynir, our founder, had an idea about spaceships ...
- ... flown by hundreds of thousands of (real) people over the internets in the same universe
- ... and everybody would pay us monthly for flying them
- ... and he was requesting \$5 million to make it
- ... in a 300,000 people country which predominant industry was fishing.





## Sounds crazy?



“Venturing on a project so massive in scope, so unprecedented and unproven in so many ways, is only done by either madmen or idiots...”

“...We *were* probably both.”

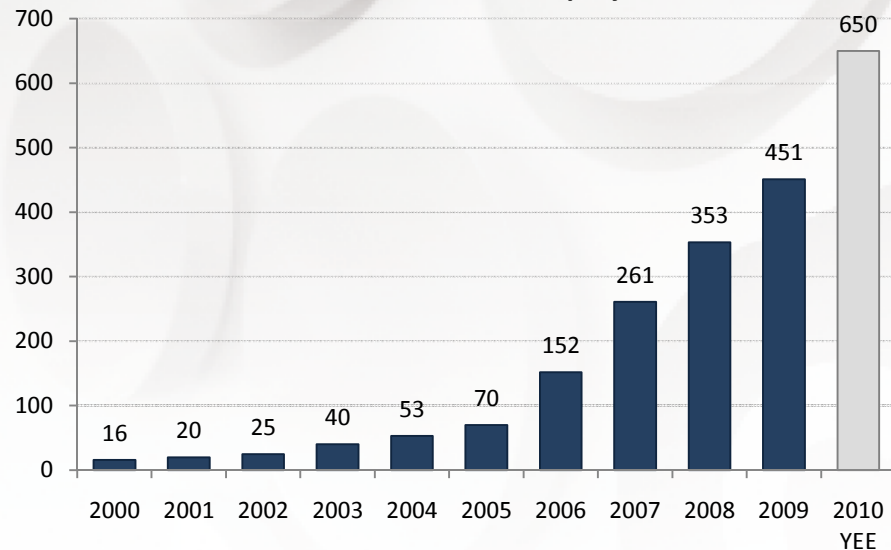
- REYNIR HARDARSON, creative director and founder of CCP





# CCP Overview

Number of CCP Employees



- CCP employees represent over 20 nationalities
- The number of languages spoken by employees exceed 30
- Melding the best of art, science, operations and business talent

- CCP employees are spread between four offices in three continents
- Iceland / Reykjavík
  - Headquarters
  - ~240 Employees
- China / Shanghai
  - ~80 Employees
- USA / Atlanta
  - ~150 Employees
- UK / Newcastle
  - ~13 Employees
- UK / London
  - Location of servers

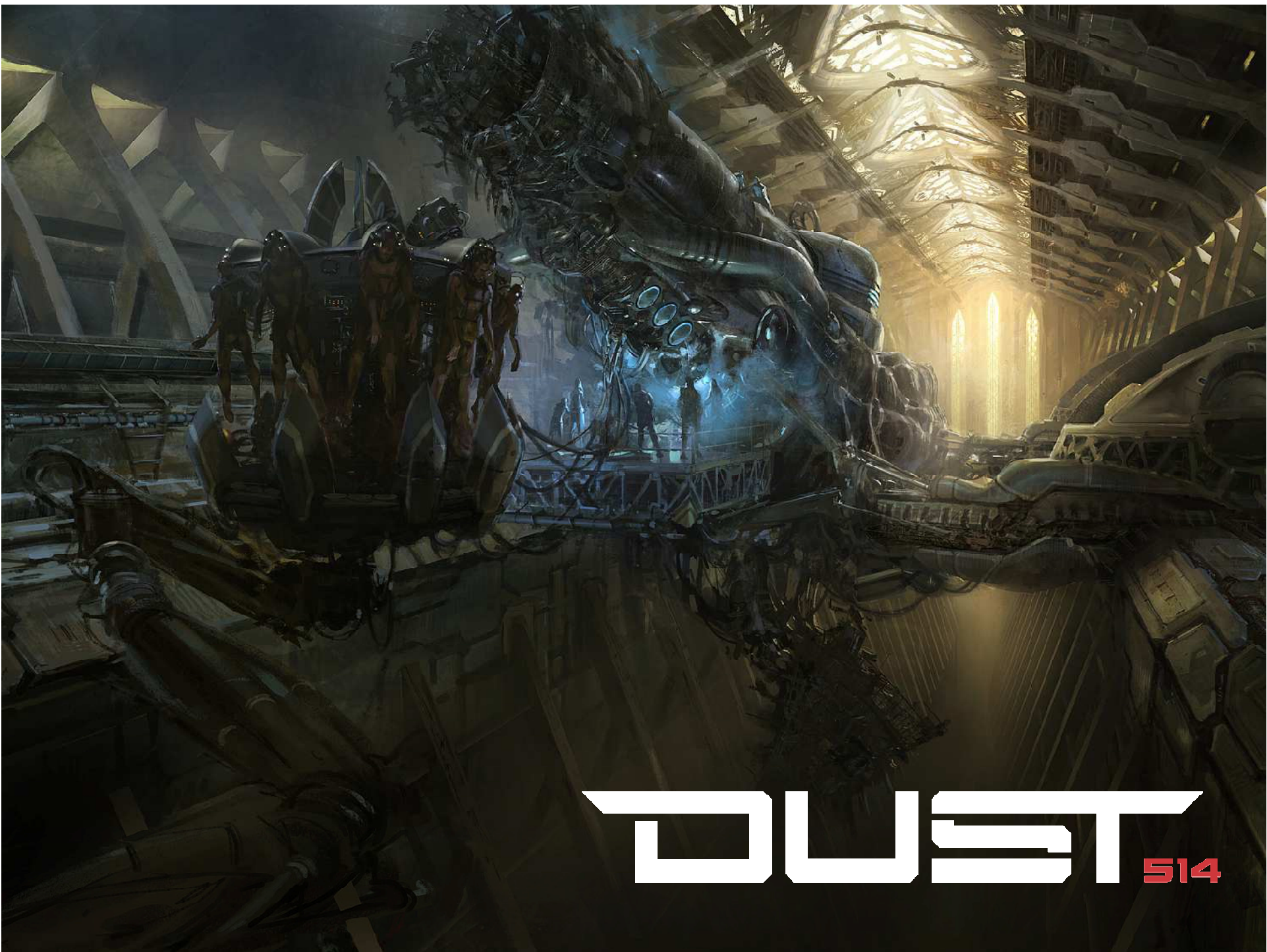


ENJO

# EVE

ONLINE





DUST 514







# Global Development





# EVE Online





# EVE Online Expansions





The background of the slide is a dramatic space scene featuring a dark, swirling nebula with vibrant green and blue hues. In the center, the 'EVE' logo is displayed in a stylized, white, blocky font, with 'ONLINE' in a smaller, simpler font directly beneath it. Below the logo, the word 'APOCRYPHA' is written in large, white, spaced-out capital letters. At the bottom of the image, there is a small, faint icon of a snowflake or a similar geometric shape.

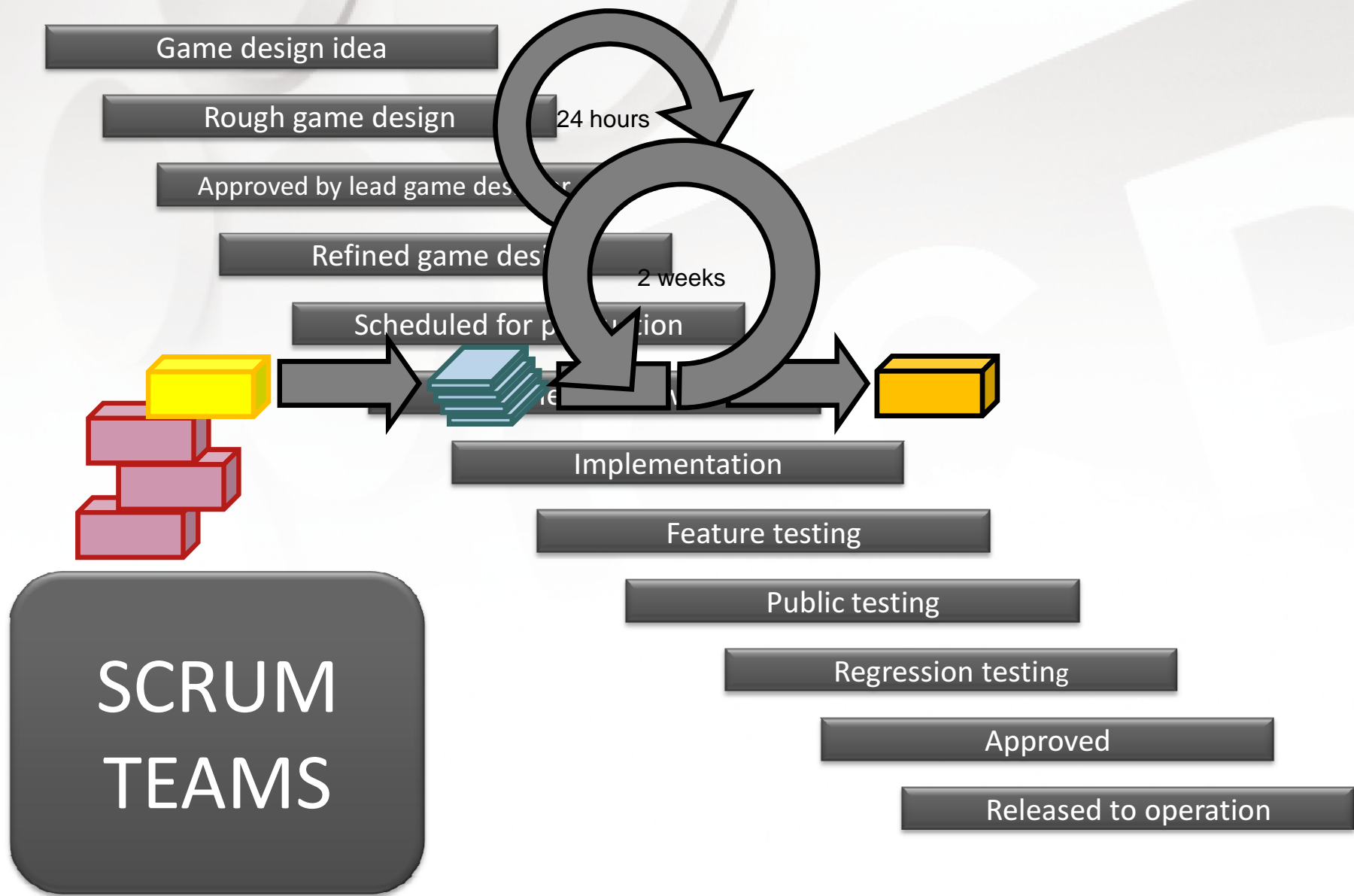
EVE<sup>®</sup>  
ONLINE

Λ P O C R Y P H A

- Over 120 Developers
- 3 Offices in 3 Continents
- Biggest EVE Expansion to Date
- Shorter development time than previous expansions

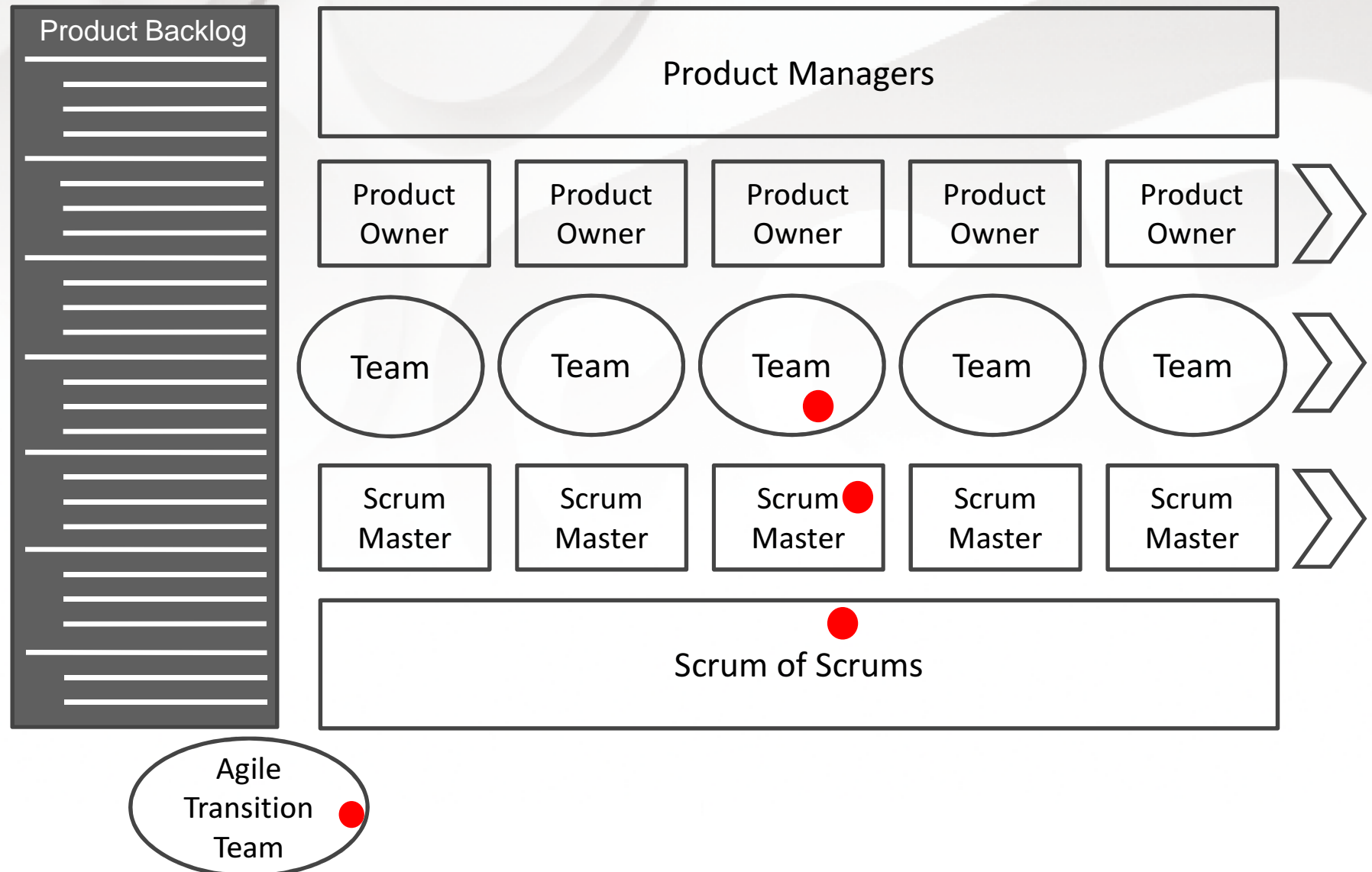


# Transition EVE to Agile





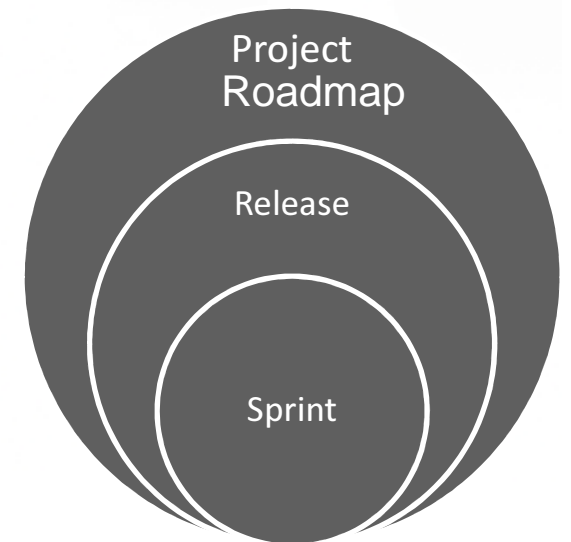
# Large-scale organization





# Shorter More Frequent Releases

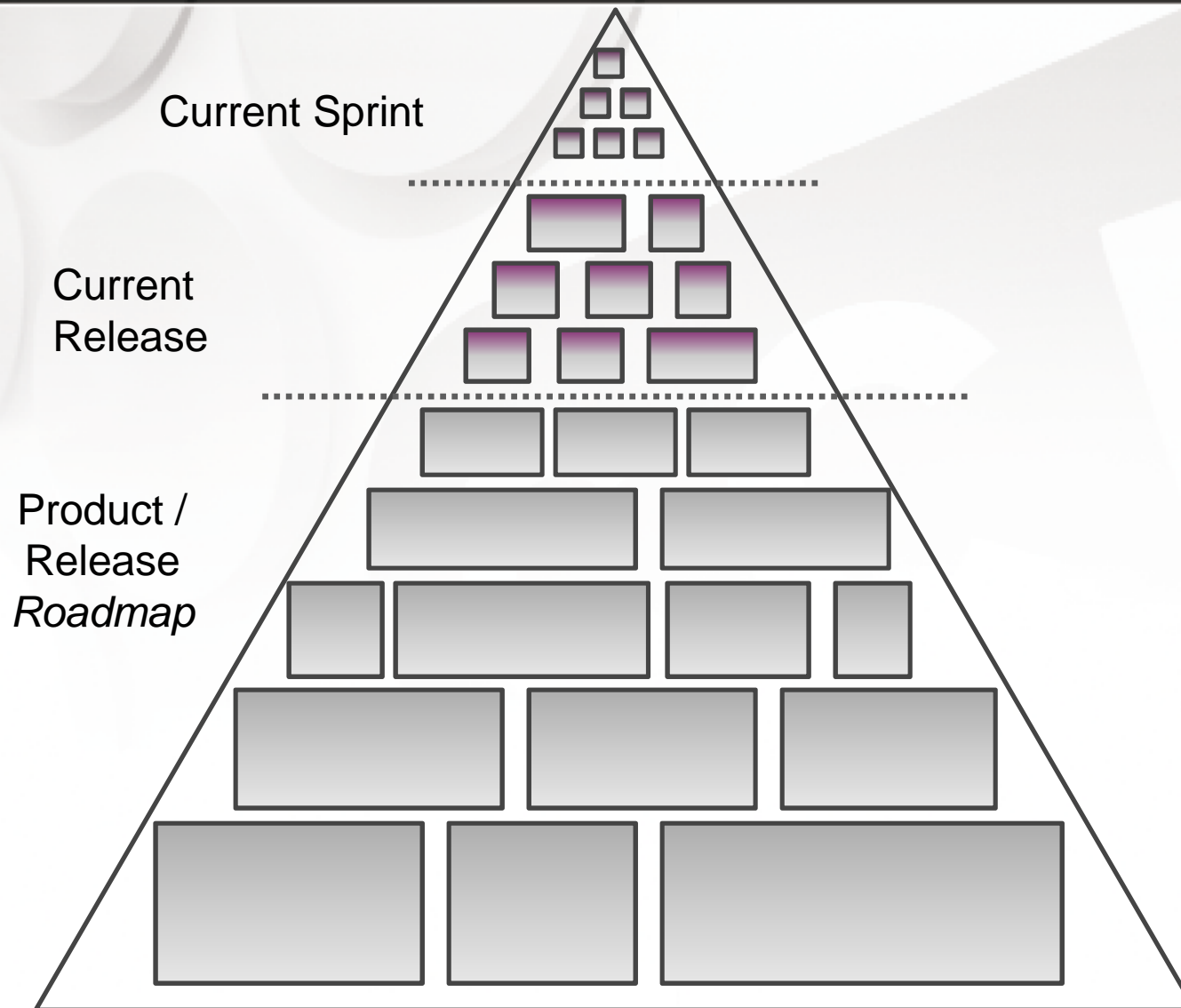
- 4 – 5 Sprints plus a hardening sprint
  - Hardening sprints are for polish
  - No new feature development
- Focus around clear release goals
- Teams define, build, and verify features or components
- Output stable polished vertical slice of the product

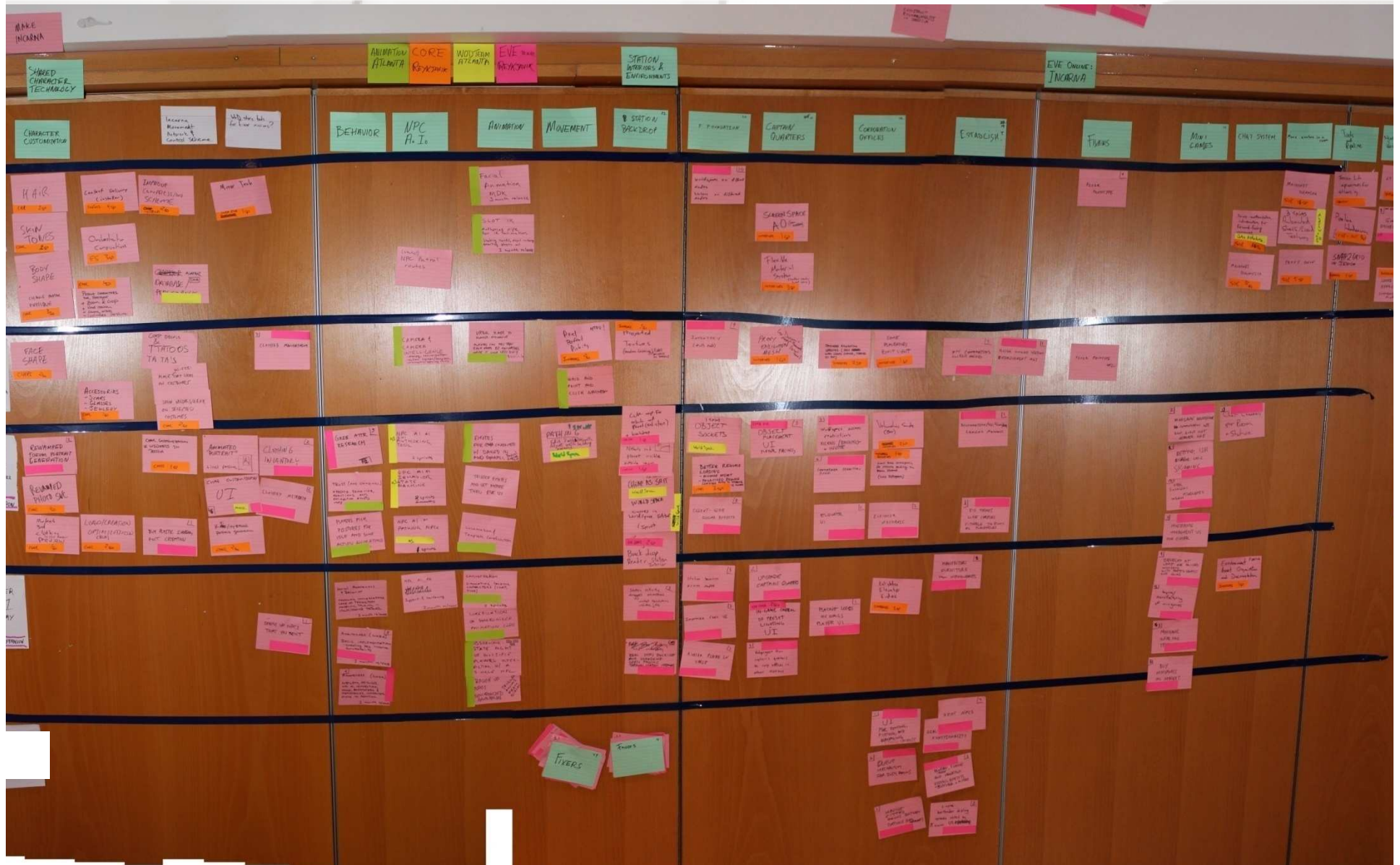






# Shorter More Frequent Releases







# Release Plan

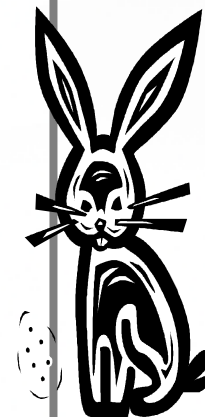


Release 3  
NYX  
1. Mar– 21. May

Release 4  
TBD  
31. May – 13. Aug

Release 5  
TBD  
23. Aug – 12. Nov

Release 6  
TBD  
22. Nov– 10. Feb



March  
2010

April

May

June

July

August

September

October

November

December

January

February

2011



# Release Plan

Sprint 1

Sprint 2

Sprint 3

Sprint 4

Hardening Sprint

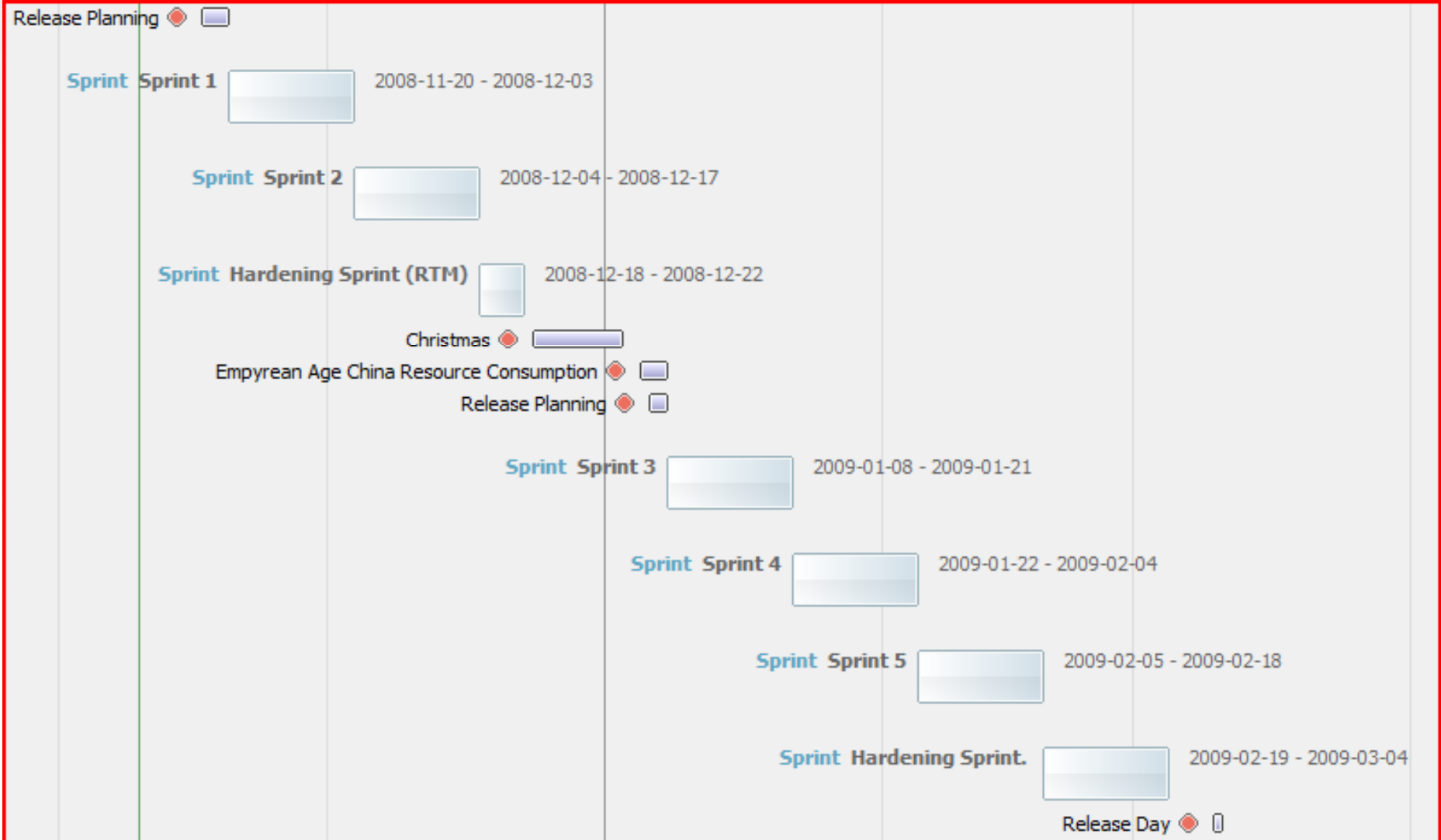
21 May







# Release Plan





# Release Plan

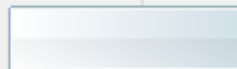
Release planning ☒ ☐

**Sprint** Sprint 1



2010-01-27 - 2010-02-16

**Sprint** Sprint 2



2010-02-17 - 2010-03-09

**Sprint** Sprint 3



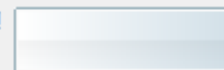
2010-03-10 - 2010-03-30

Easter Holiday

Maudry Thursday

Good Friday

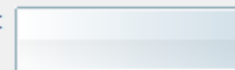
**Sprint** Sprint 4 - Mexico!



2010-04-07 - 2010-04-26

Mexico

**Sprint** Release Sprint



2010-05-04 - 2010-05-24



# Features & Stories

How would you like to view the items?  
Create and structure items in a hierarchy. Let other people participate by delegating parts of product backlog.

Items in a hierarchy    Items on a wall    Items prioritised

Insert backlog item   Delete   Undo   Redo   Show or Hide items   More...   Find   Print

Item name
<b>EVE Online: Tyrannis</b>
<b>Planetary Interaction</b>
<b>Internal Trade</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> As an industrialist, I make a trade agreement with other industrialists on the planet, so that I can profit from specialization
<input type="checkbox"/> As an industrialist, I can execute a sale based on a trade agreement, so that I can profit from specialization
<input type="checkbox"/> As an industrialist, I can cancel a trade agreement, so that I can back out if the agreement is not being honored
<input type="checkbox"/> As an industrialist, skills can affect attributes on my pins, so that I can specialize as an industrialist
<input type="checkbox"/> As an industrialist, I haggle with other players at trade pins, so that I'm encouraged to interact with others
<input type="checkbox"/> As an industrialist, pins can affect attributes on other pins, so that I can invest myself in the planet
<input type="checkbox"/> As an industrialist, pins can affect attributes on my pins within a certain radius, so that I can invest myself in the planet
<b>Pins</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> As an industrialist, building pins and links have an associated power cost, so that I cannot spam pins and links on planets
<input type="checkbox"/> As an industrialist, my infrastructure pins function according to spec, such that I can run my operation on the planet
<input type="checkbox"/> As an industrialist, I can see the location and basic information of my pins on the planet, so that I can easily get an overview of them
<input type="checkbox"/> As an industrialist, I can build a particular pin within my deployment zone on a planet, so that I can expand my colony
<input type="checkbox"/> As an industrialist, I can see detailed information about one of my pins, so that I can manage it
<input type="checkbox"/> As an industrialist, I have a polished detailed information view for pins, so that I can easily manage it
<b>Command Pins</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> As an industrialist, I can deploy a command pin on a planet from my cargo such that I can build a colony
<input type="checkbox"/> As an industrialist, I can click a "deploy command pin" button in the planet view, so that I can deploy command pins without using a right-click menu
<input type="checkbox"/> As an industrialist, I can export commodities from the planet via my command pin, so that I can profit from my operation
<input type="checkbox"/> As an industrialist, my command pin can store a finite amount of commodities, so I can export them off the planet at my leisure

Major Feature (Epic)

Sub Feature

Stories



# MuSCoW Analysis

Must Have

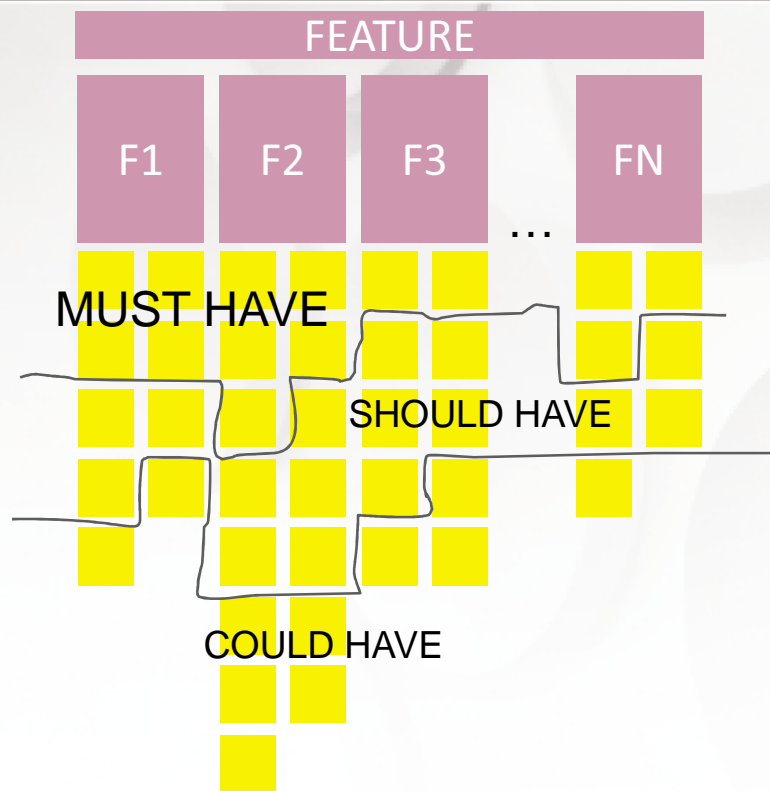
Should Have

Could Have

Won't Have



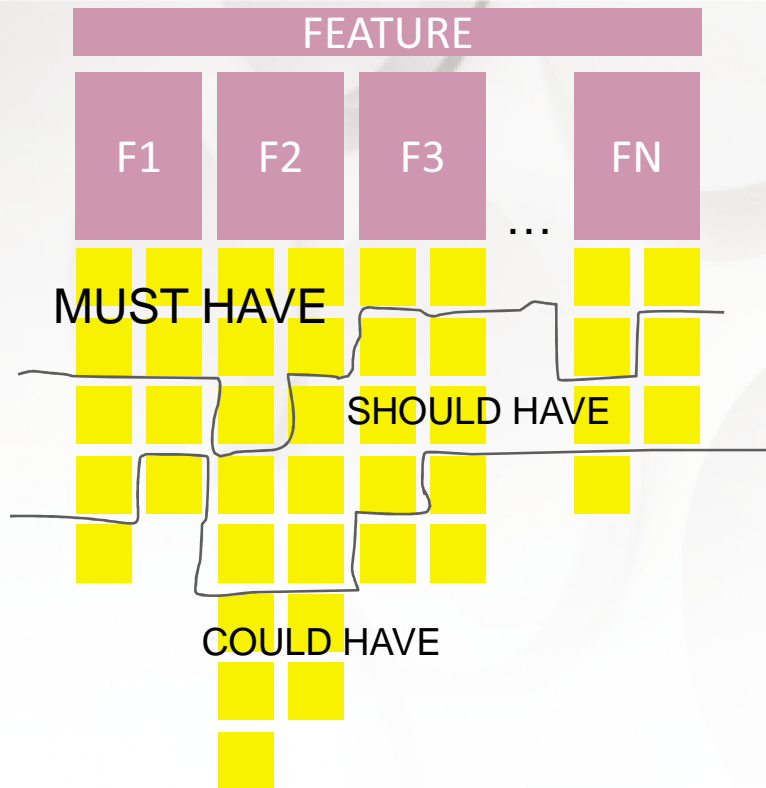
# Features & Stories







# Features & Stories





# Release Planning Day







# Release Planning Day





# Release Planning Day







# Release Planning Day



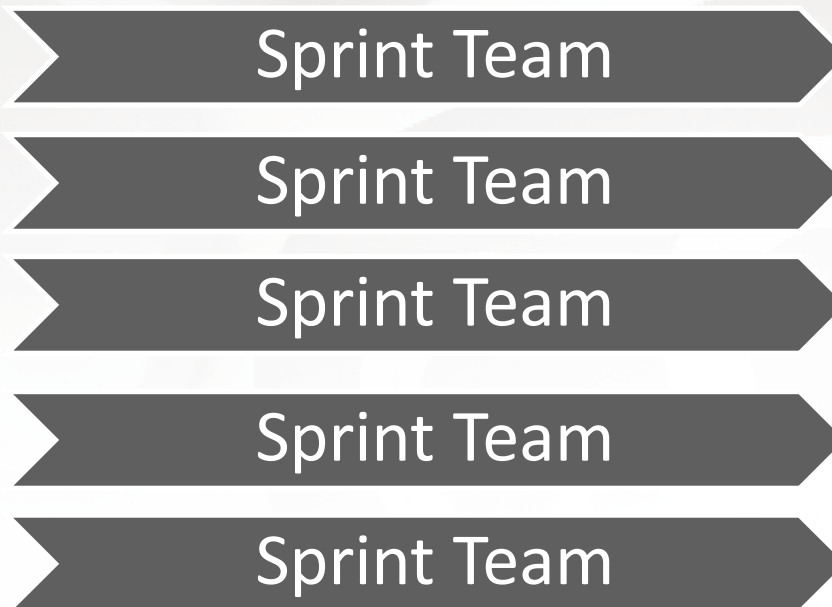
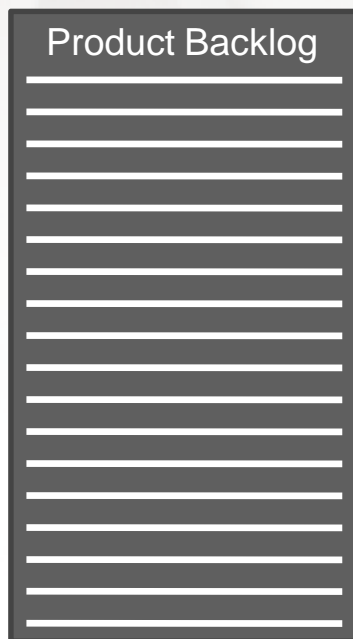




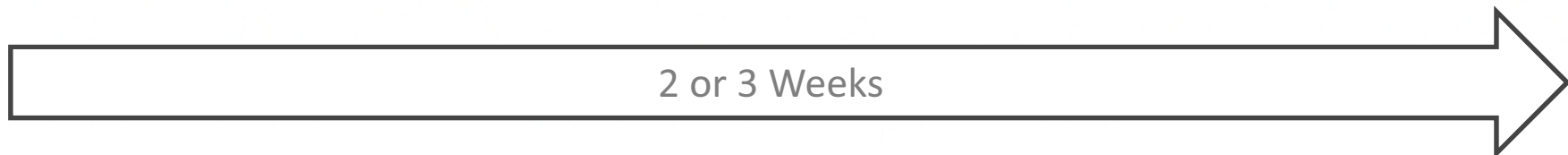
# Release Planning Day



# Synchronized Iteration Cadance



Integrated Demo  
Playable MMO





# Global Sprint Review



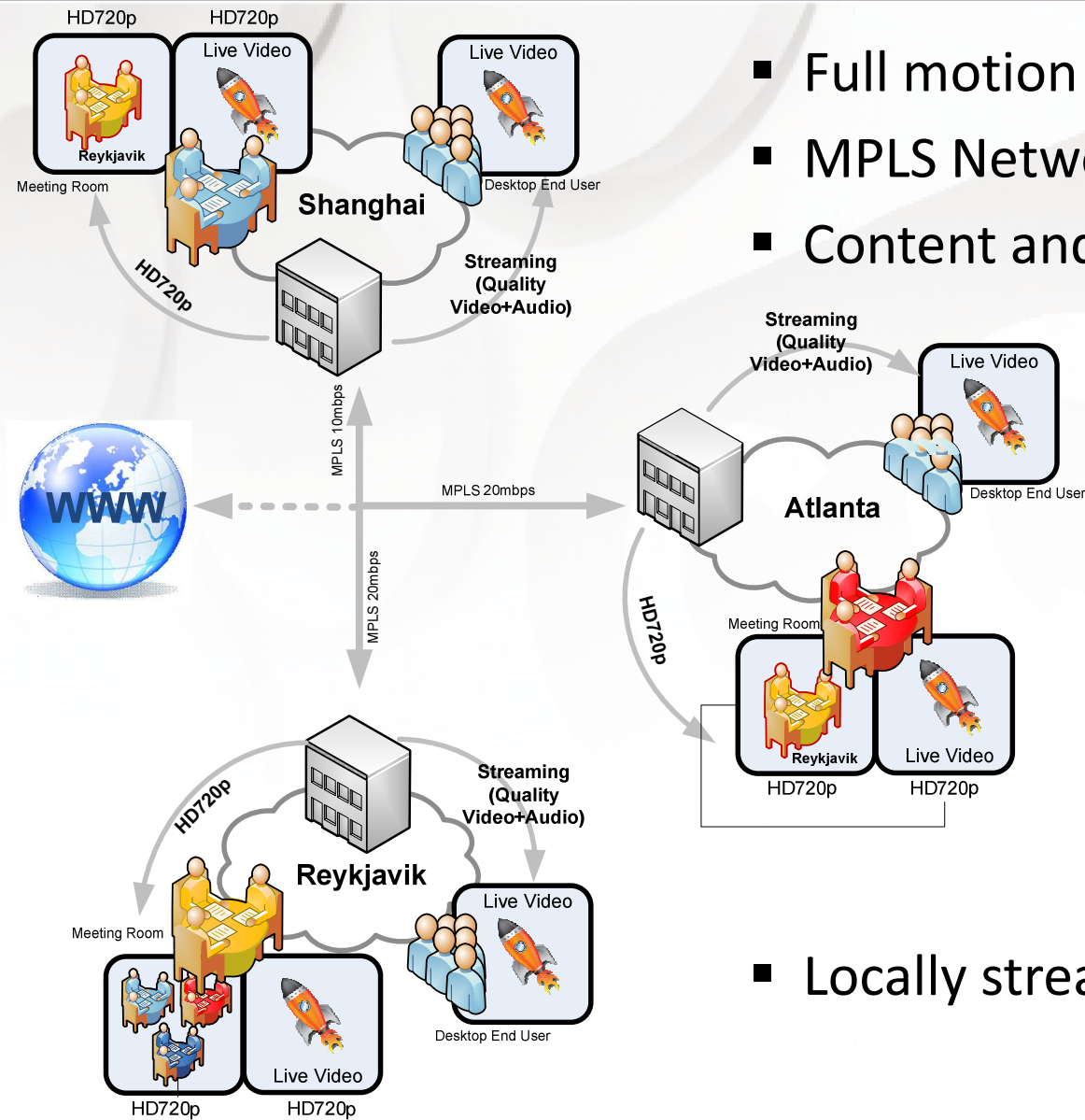


# Global Sprint Review





# Global Demo via HD Video Conference

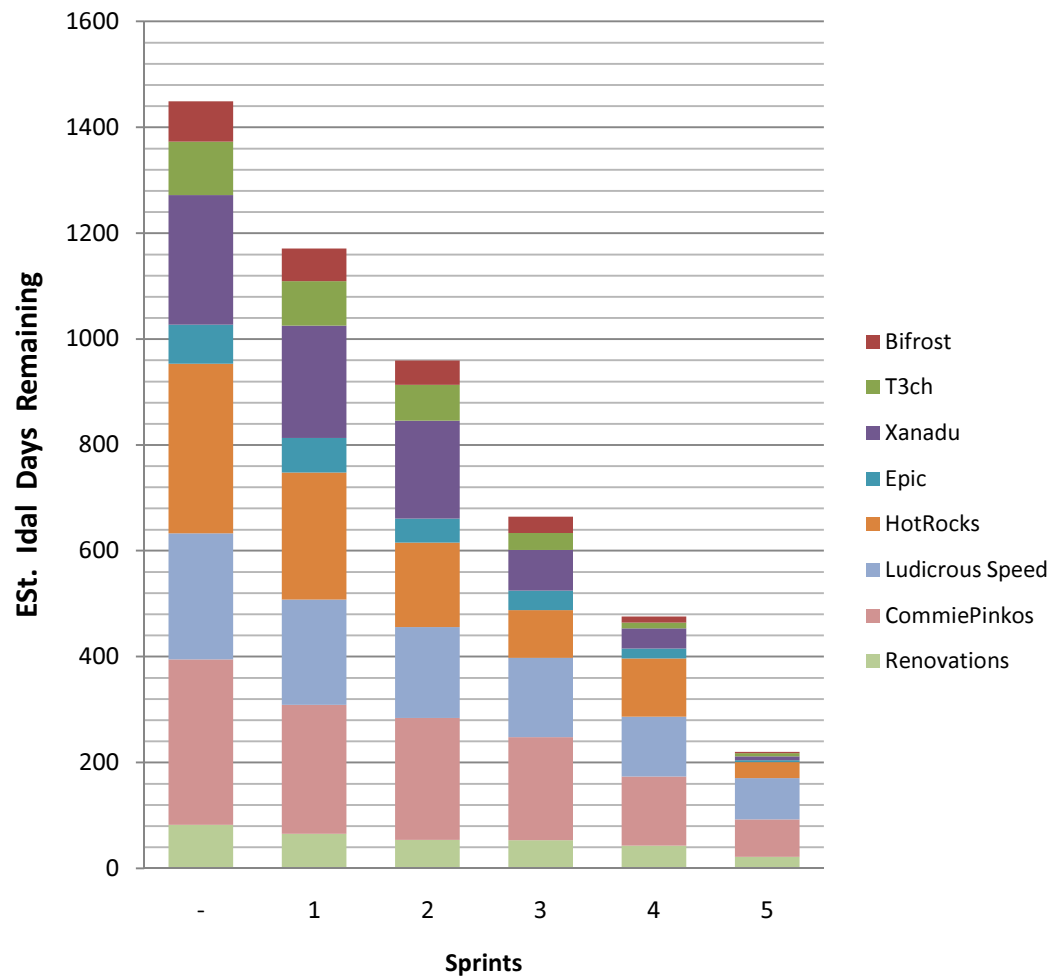


- Full motion 720p / 30 fps
- MPLS Network Infrastructure
- Content and presenter

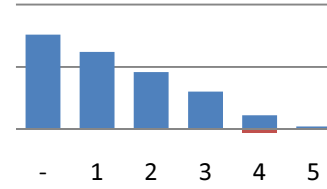
- Locally streaming in all offices.



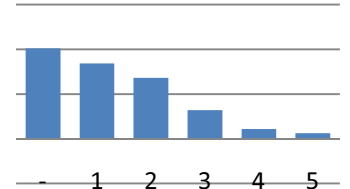
# Release burn down



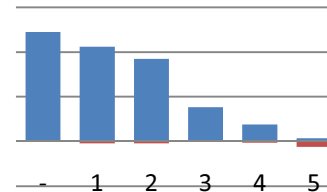
Team Bifrost



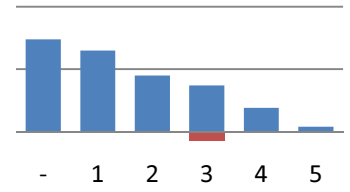
Team T3ch



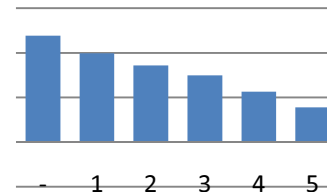
Team Xanadu



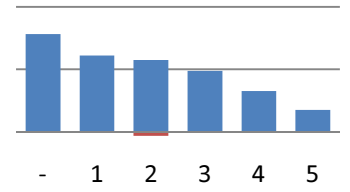
Team Epic



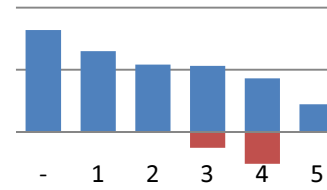
Team LudicrousSpeed



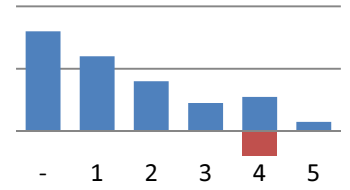
Team CommiePinkos



Team Renovations



Team Hot Rocks



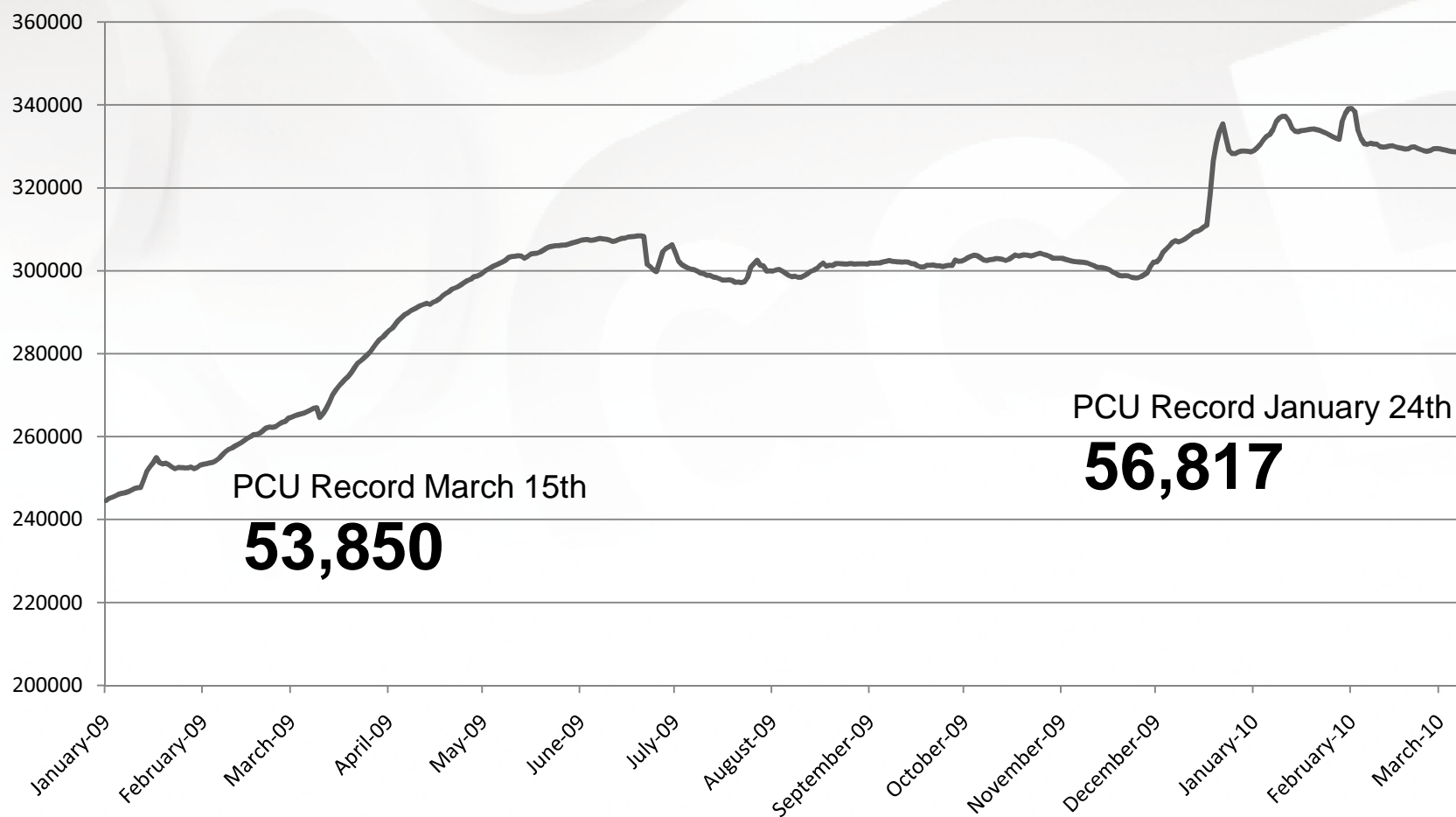


# Road to success

- Empowered Teams
- Self managing and self organizing
- Release Planning by the teams
- Shorter more frequent releases
- Tools that scale



## Atctive Subscribers





# 2009 Game of the year awards





# FOCUS





## The Scrum Values

**COMMITMENT**

**OPENNESS**

**FOCUS**

**RESPECT**

**COURAGE**



# Continuous Improvement

## 改善

Applying the Keizen mindset of continuous improvement by reflection and adaptation

At all level of the organization

- Team retrospectives, Scrum of Scrums, Scrum Master Retrospectives, Product Owner Retrospectives, Release Retrospectives Agile Transitioning Group.



# Where Agile becomes Fragile

- Maintaining Architectural Integrity
  - Agile methods promote emergent architecture.
  - What happens when architecture emerges from a dozen teams.
  - The role of the Technical Director / Architect.
  - Peer reviews, Teams cross reviews.



# Where Agile becomes Fragile

- Art and asset creation
  - Getting art, assets, levels or content “Done” in a Scrum Sprint has varied results.
  - Throw outsourcing in the mix.
  - Lean Production shares a lot of values and principles with Agile methods.
  - Lean Production methods and Scrum can coexist.



# Where Agile becomes Fragile

- Game Design
  - With multiple large intertwined game systems it is very unlikely to arrive at a good design by piecemealing it together small bits at a time.
  - Game design is in essence iteration, we do it to explore multiple options ahead of implementation.
  - We've implemented a framework that draws a lot of values and practices from lean thinking and lean manufacturing. The design process focuses on early iteration, mass participation, ownership of the design among the people who will implement it.
  - Coming to a GDC near you.





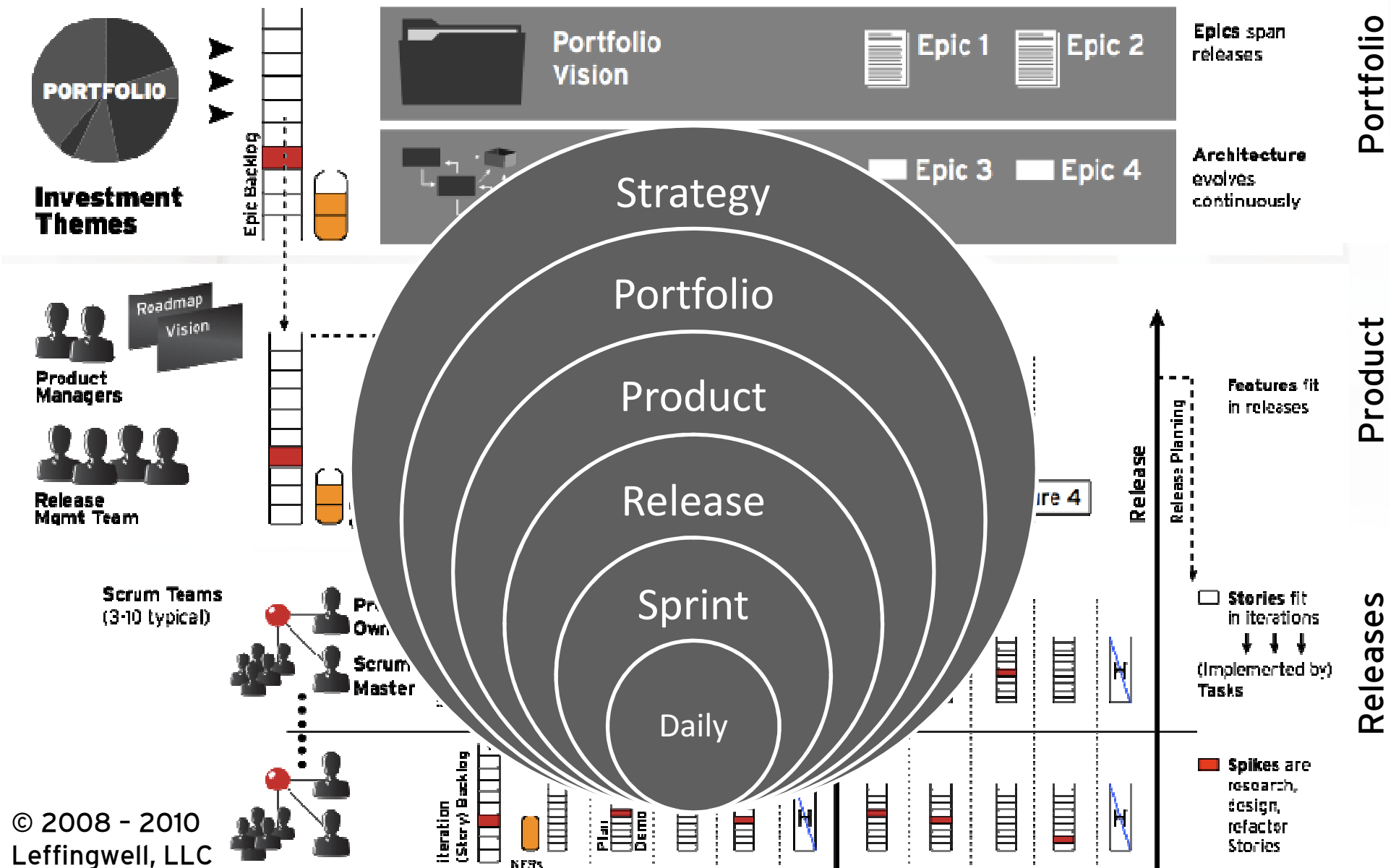
# Where Agile becomes Fragile

- Maintaining Legacy code
  - Agile methods promote test driven development.
  - Legacy code without test harnesses can severely affect velocity
  - Continuous Integration is a must.
  - Try to get as many test harnesses in the code and build processes as possible.





# Agile drives the entire Development Organization





# The CCP Release Train

MMO2: MilestoneX

R8

APRIL 28th

MMO2: MilestoneX

R9

JULY 1st

DUST 514: NYX

R3

MAY 21st

DUST 514: TBD

R4

AUGUST 13th

EVE: Tyrannis

Late May

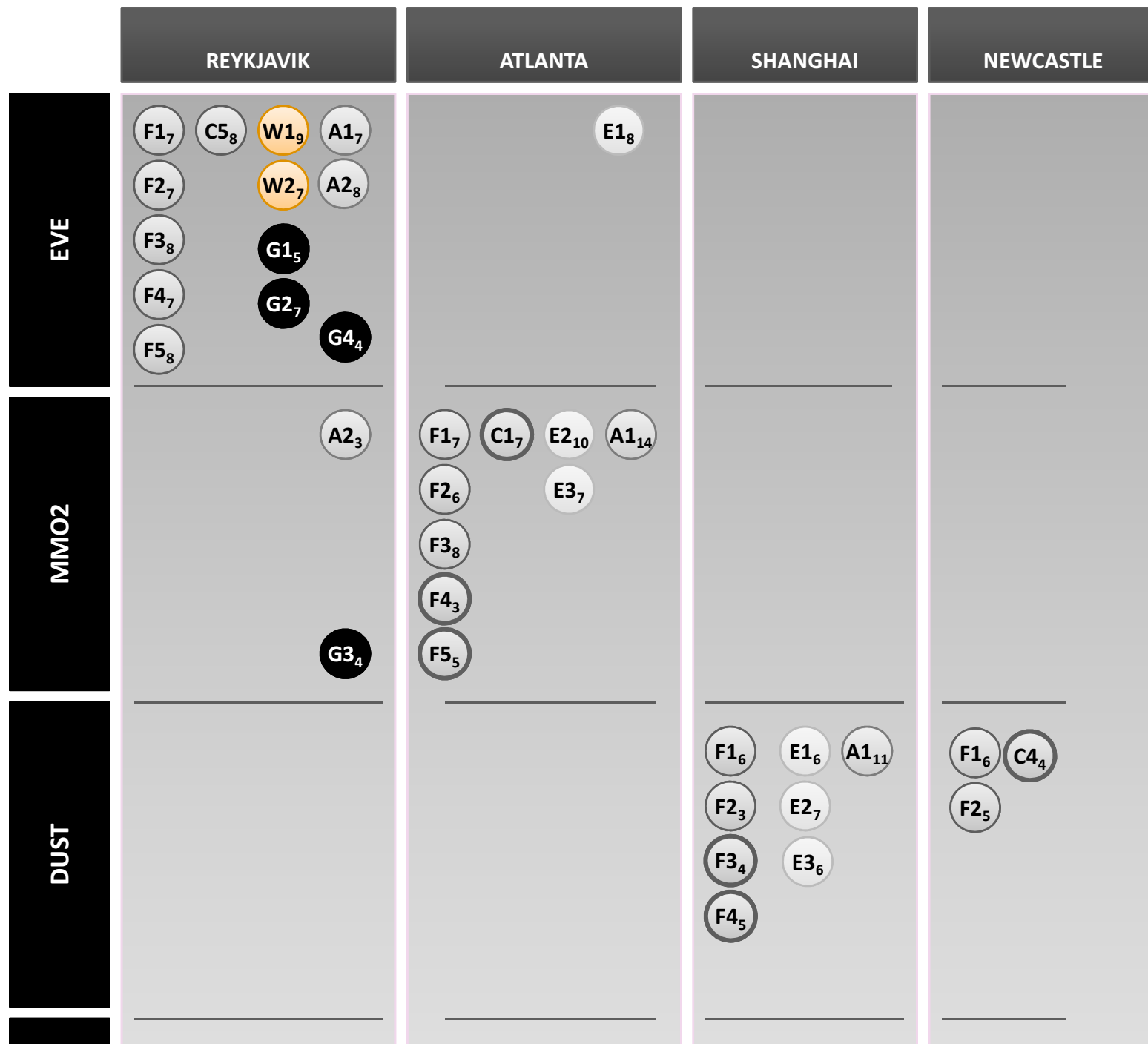
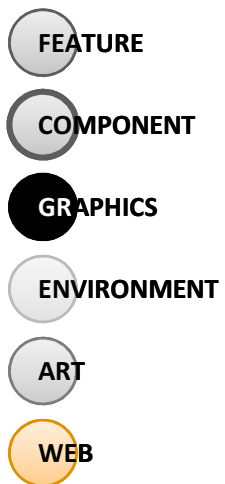
EVE: Unnamed

R1

AUGUST 5th

- FEATURE
- COMPONENT
- GRAPHICS
- ENVIRONMENT
- ART
- WEB

		REYKJAVIK	ATLANTA	SHANGHAI	NEWCASTLE
EVE		<div>F1<sub>7</sub></div> <div>C5<sub>8</sub></div> <div>W1<sub>9</sub></div> <div>A1<sub>15</sub></div> <div>F2<sub>7</sub></div> <div>W2<sub>7</sub></div> <div>F3<sub>8</sub></div> <div>F4<sub>7</sub></div> <div>F5<sub>8</sub></div> <div>G4<sub>4</sub></div>	<div>E1<sub>8</sub></div>		
MMO2		<div>A2<sub>3</sub></div> <div>G1<sub>5</sub></div> <div>G2<sub>7</sub></div> <div>G3<sub>4</sub></div>	<div>F1<sub>7</sub></div> <div>C1<sub>7</sub></div> <div>E2<sub>10</sub></div> <div>A1<sub>14</sub></div> <div>F2<sub>6</sub></div> <div>E3<sub>7</sub></div> <div>F3<sub>8</sub></div> <div>F4<sub>3</sub></div> <div>F5<sub>5</sub></div>		
DUST				<div>F1<sub>6</sub></div> <div>E1<sub>6</sub></div> <div>A1<sub>11</sub></div> <div>F2<sub>3</sub></div> <div>E2<sub>7</sub></div> <div>F3<sub>4</sub></div>	<div>F1<sub>6</sub></div> <div>F2<sub>3</sub></div>





# Teams









Let's talk about it...



<Cue: take questions from the audience>



## Contact

Aðalsteinn "Alli" Óttarsson

[alli@ccpgames.com](mailto:alli@ccpgames.com)

<http://blog.ccpgames.com/alli/>



**CCP at GDC**

**Booth #2502  
in the Career Pavilion**