

CASE STUDY

TransUnion Reaps the Rewards of Modern Software Delivery Automation



Industry

Financial Services

Geography

Global

Summary

To help establish trust between business and consumers, TransUnion turned to CloudBees to create a more consistent and productive software delivery platform and bring new features to market at an accelerated rate.

Challenge

As they focused on streamlining software operations, TransUnion needed to create a common CI/CD platform for teams operating in multiple geographies, allowing for a more efficient and scalable software delivery infrastructure.

Solution

Implemented CloudBees to automate pipelines, increasing the velocity of software projects while supporting TransUnion's focus on developer experience.

Results

- Completed more than twice as many software projects after adopting CloudBees
- Deployed and released software features at a 3.5X greater velocity
- Improved work-life balance of engineers and developers
- Enhanced business results with timely support
- Supported modern software practices with minimal change-management issues

Product

CloudBees CI

TransUnion is a global information and insights company that makes trust possible between businesses and consumers by ensuring each consumer is reliably represented in the marketplace. A leading presence in more than 30 countries across five continents, TransUnion provides solutions that help create economic opportunity, great experiences and personal empowerment for hundreds of millions of people.

CHALLENGE

Software and new technologies, like big data, represent a growing part of what propels TransUnion's success. That means a greater role for its development operations and an increasing focus on creating high-quality applications and technologies quickly and efficiently.

"Creating a modern software delivery pipeline that is efficient, scalable, easily maintainable, and enables developer velocity is our number one priority," says Chris Whyde, Vice President of Global Technology, Development Operations at TransUnion. "Our goal is to enable our engineering community to be as successful and efficient as they can be." Whyde currently oversees a 70-strong development team spread between hubs in the U.S. and India.

In the eight years he's been working at TransUnion, Whyde has witnessed dramatic advances in software delivery techniques at his company and industrywide. During this time, many of TransUnion's software engineers and developers relied on [Jenkins®](#) – the world's most popular open source automation server – to reliably build, test, and deploy its software.

With Jenkins instances found across dozens of global engineering teams, TransUnion's rapid growth made it necessary to find a new way to integrate and orchestrate operations consistently and efficiently. "We had an enterprise environment on partial open source that we were feeding and watering regularly, but we knew our growth required a new approach," Whyde says.



SOLUTION

A few years ago, TransUnion adopted CloudBees CI to manage its Jenkins instances seamlessly to provide a flexible, scalable CI/CD platform at enterprise scale. Access to the CloudBees software delivery platform has been key to freeing engineering teams from manual tasks and increasing time for development innovation. From 2020 to 2021, Whyde's organization more than doubled the number of software projects it's supporting with CloudBees— from about 1,400 software projects to over 3,500.

Globally consistent software delivery has also supported TransUnion's consumer delivery, bringing new features to users at an accelerated pace, no matter where they reside. From 2020 to 2021, the development group has seen a 3.5-fold increase in the amount of features it's been able to deploy. Whyde says that he uses this important metric – deployment volume – as a “marker” for the productivity of its engineering community. “We are testing more. We are deploying more. We're doing more,” Whyde says. “And when you overlay the business results you see a really compelling story.”

Efficient troubleshooting

Wherever possible, Whyde wants his group's software deployments and releases to be “unceremonious” – that is, smooth and predictable. “Although new features are exciting,

we want the event of the change to be boring,” he says. “We want them to be just natural muscle memory and to make trust possible for our customers and consumers.”

While maintaining a globally consistent and highly-available environment, CloudBees continues to support TransUnion's achievement of this goal, Whyde says. Moreover, the common software delivery platform helps developers address remediations with comparative ease. “The commonality, consistency, and governance that exists in the environment means you have a single playbook of best practices through which you can manage the resolution,” Whyde says. “The remediation path is very clear, regimented, and structured.”

CloudBees has emerged as a key component of TransUnion's CI/CD application lifecycle, and is part of the company's foundational cloud migration initiatives. “It's a pivotal part of how we're deploying infrastructure as we evolve our ecosystem,” according to Whyde, adding that the platform's versatility is like a Swiss army knife. “We can really leverage CloudBees for a number of different use cases. It has globalized how our engineering teams build and deploy software and created common capabilities that can be ‘built once and deployed many times.’” By deploying the common platform, Whyde explains, you can easily redeploy engineering capacity towards more revenue-generating work.



“What we've already seen in terms of increasing developer velocity and the volume of work across our technology footprint, the value from our build-once-deploy-many capabilities over our CI/CD pipelines, and the governance we get from CloudBees CI has been great for TransUnion.”

- Chris Whyde, VP of Global Technology, Development Operations



Improving the developer experience

Along these lines, TransUnion established a “global developer experience program” to empower the company’s developers and engineers and support a more productive work-life balance. “By the developer for the developer” is the program’s philosophy, Whyde says. “We believe – and industry research shows – that when developers are enabled with the right tools, the right environment, and psychological safety, they are significantly more productive. A positive experience for developers ultimately translates to better business results.”

Adopting Jenkins and later moving to CloudBees was a big part of enhancing TransUnion’s developer experience. “One of the delights that we’ve had with CloudBees is the diversity of different paths we’ve been able to take as emerging technologies and capabilities have come forward in our strategy and playbook,” Whyde says. “CloudBees has enabled us to really accelerate toward those things and leverage capabilities that the engineering community is already familiar with and comfortable operating.”

WHAT’S AHEAD

Continuing to improve the developer experience – and doing so with “frictionless change” – will be a top priority for Whyde and his teams at TransUnion going forward. Adding capabilities

like quality gating will be key to that effort while also increasing the velocity of developers. “We want to improve our already excellent quality while making these changes ‘unceremonious’ to our engineers and customers, including the hundreds of millions of consumers that TransUnion serves globally.”

Retaining and motivating TransUnion’s top engineering talent will underpin everything the engineering group takes on in the years ahead. This will require “giving them everything they need to be successful, creating a very positive developer sentiment and engineering focused culture,” says Whyde. Beyond that he says it’s a matter of “getting out of the way of the people who are going to drive the future of our products – which is our engineers.”

RESULTS

Increased project uptake

From 2020 to 2021, TransUnion has onboarded more than twice as many software projects – from about 1,400 software projects to over 3,500. “We’ve more than doubled the projects that we are running in our environments,” says Chris Whyde, Vice President of Global Technology, Development Operations at TransUnion.



“What we have consistently heard from CloudBees from the start is ‘How can we help you get better. How can we help drive your business results?’”

- Chris Whyde, VP of Global Technology, Development Operations

Boost in feature deployments

Since adopting CloudBees, TransUnion has seen a 3.5-fold increase in the amount of features it's been able to deploy. "Today, engineering teams have been able to increase deployment from what we were able to do in 2020," Whyde says.

Better work-life balance

Moving to CloudBees' common platform has helped TransUnion's complex, global environment consolidate best practices and standardized software delivery approach across the enterprise. "Any time you can simplify your environments; any time you can ensure enterprise-grade alignment to our core development and build standards, you are simplifying the environment and alleviating time spent on remediation efforts," Whyde says.

Driving productivity improvements

TransUnion has seen tangible productivity increases since adopting CloudBees. "If you look at the investments we made in our DevOps journey starting in 2019 and 2020, you'll see a direct correlation with [the productivity improvements] we saw in 2021," says Whyde. "That was really the year where we were able to look back and say, yes we've made a difference."

Business-focused support

TransUnion's development organization consistently benefits from business-focused support from CloudBees. "What we always hear from CloudBees is 'How can we help you get better? How can we help drive your business results?'" says Whyde. "And that's what you want to hear from someone you are working with to improve your engineering practices."

High-touch success

Whyde says that CloudBees is "one of the few companies that I've worked with that will go above and beyond to make sure you are successful with their product. It's not just 'here's your license and now we're through.'" Instead, "from the very beginning it's very much been a high touch, very engaged, strategically focused relationship about how they can help TransUnion improve our engineering practices and drive results within our technology teams."



"Working with CloudBees is more than a transaction; it is an actual relationship. That happens because CloudBees is equally invested in our company's business results and outcomes."

- Chris Whyde,
VP of Global Technology,
Development Operations