

White Paper

Building Advanced Product Roadmaps with Jira



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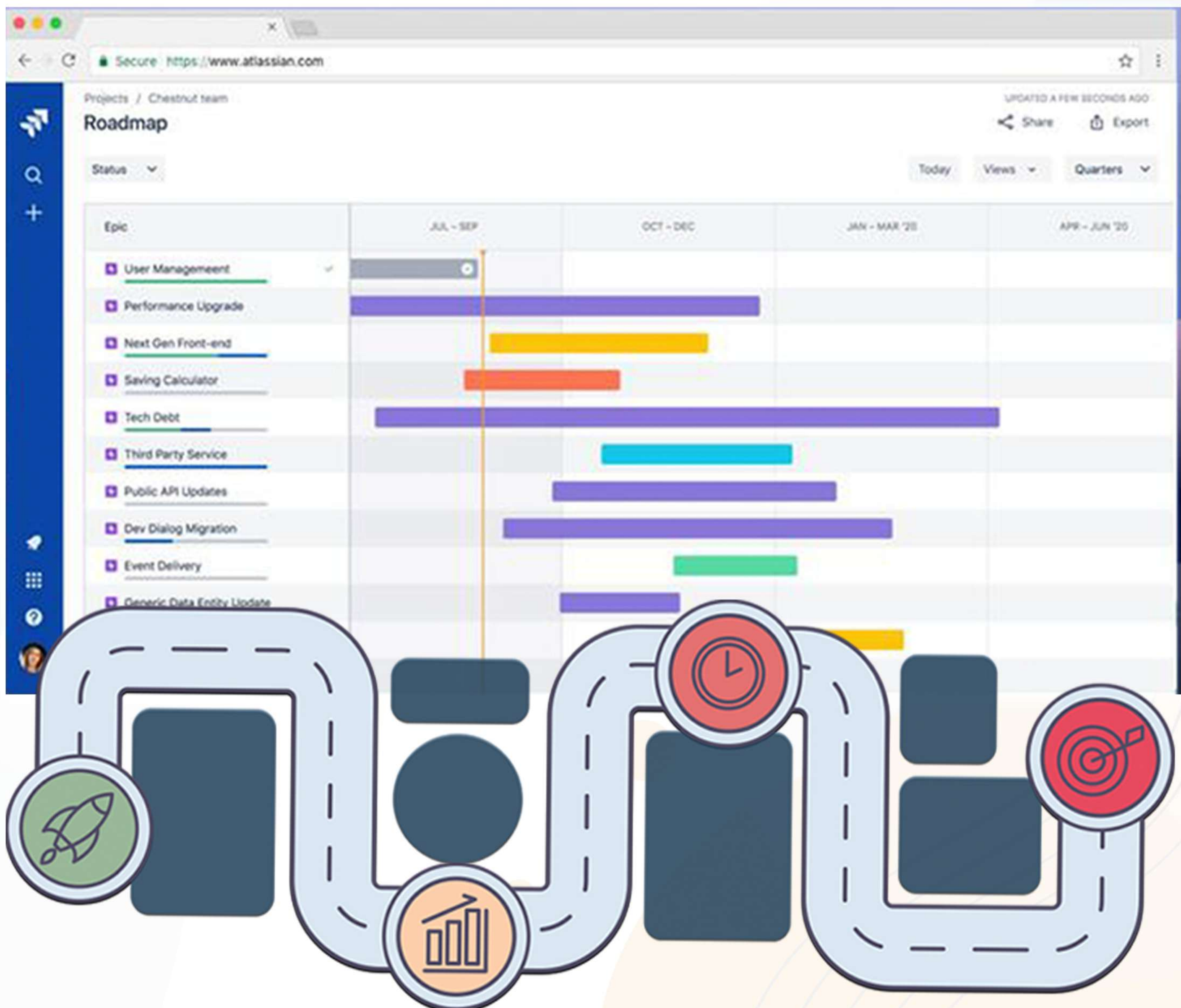
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Chapter 1 – Introduction Product Roadmaps

One of the primary aspects to consider when building a product is the product roadmap which would be the measure of its success or the failure. It is mainly because roadmaps communicate the key product priorities in a digestible and an understandable format where the high level project plan among the internal and external stakeholders is clearly visible. It helps to define areas of short term & long term focus which manages and aligns stakeholder expectations. When the roadmaps are created precisely the companies can not only win and keep the customer base but also can improve the strategic planning and engineering aspects with related.



Chapter 2 – Advanced Product Maps With Jira

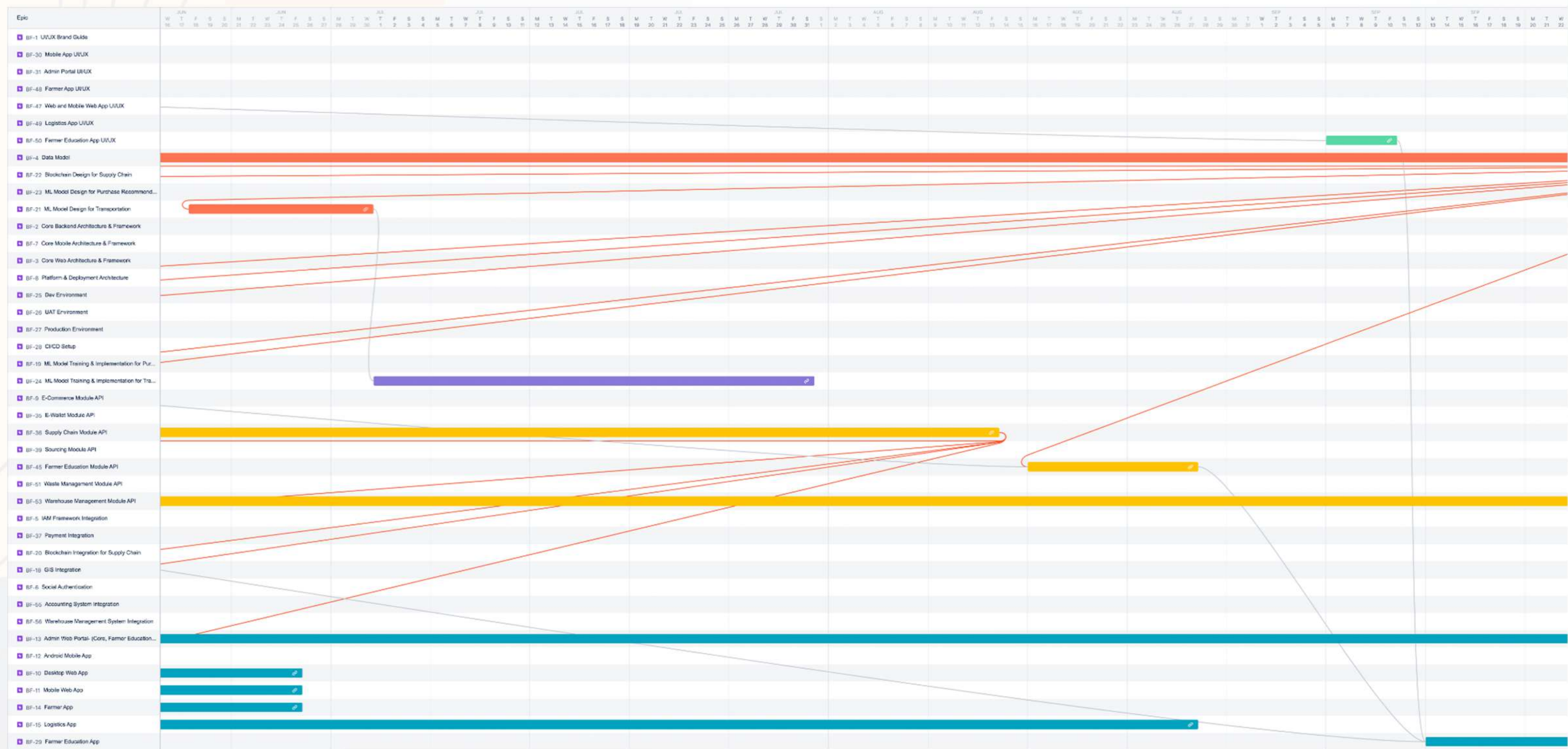
With the growth and the expansion of projects the planning requires a lot of effort. Jira Advanced Roadmaps cater to this need of streamlining multiple number of projects by allowing one to plan and track work strategically across multiple teams and projects. It is designed in a convenient way enabling one to plan on different parameters of preference like capacity, track dependencies, competitors, priorities etc. With ideal strategic planning it also helps in calculating and predicting the future results of a product along with the identified blockers based on the current performance and the expected performance after a cross comparison with alternative scenarios.

Irrespective of the aforementioned key functionalities one of the highlighted capabilities that Jira Advanced Product Roadmaps provide is the team capacity planning which not only enables to keep company goals on track by accounting for whether your teams have bandwidth to complete the work they've scoped but also to foresee multiple teams' capacity on a sprint by sprint basis.

The possibility to create multiple versions of your roadmap to be accountable for different options on best and worst case scenarios ultimately paint a more complete picture of the potential options and outcomes that would keep the plan streamlining processes at a precise state.

Jira Advanced Roadmaps comprises three approaches namely the boards, projects and filters. All three aid in visualizing data in a customizable format as preferred with respect to the project overlay. The boards would display the state of the work carried out within a project while providing the possibility to filter as per the need and thereby helping the team to stay on track and in sync.

Advanced Roadmaps function as a sandbox environment which is a massive advantage a team could have as it gives the possibility for a team to plan and experiment data without having to actually update the original data in the Jira software itself. And thereby the determining of the plan's critical path, exploring different variations, and updating your Jira Software interface would be just a click away.



Chapter 3 - Key Concepts involved in Advanced Jira Road Maps

Of the many aspects, Jira advanced Roadmaps have introduced a set of key concepts to proceed with, which would be the components of the ultimate plan. They will be discussed over here, one by one.

Plan

The organization goal outlining and path communication for teams to achieve milestones and achieve expected results are the two core functions that are conducted by a plan. It is noticeable that in Jira Advanced Roadmaps that the plan works in combination with multiple teams across multiple projects in order to elevate the company product productivity. A plan clearly shows the bird eye view of the project along with the team work and the work conducted by the teams. It depicts how each team contributes to the aspects of broader organizational goals.

Issue Sources

It is quite noticeable that there is a massive bulk of data that will be used when creating roadmaps for it covers the overall picture of almost all projects. When creating a plan using the Jira software Issue sources determine what data will be used throughout in order to for the scope of the plan. Also the issue sources aid in outlining the tasks that needs to be conducted while mapping the problems that the team is about to solve. The noteworthy advantage it has is that even though it is first selected during plan creation there is a capability to change it at any given point in any given time.

The three types of issue sources that are outlines in Advances Jira roadmaps are as follows:

1. Boards - The progress and the volume of the tasks that are conducted is visible from the boards. While it could be categorized to two approaches, Scrum and Kanban, Scrum boards are used for the projects that follow a flow of an iterative style with sprints while Kanban board is better suited for teams with a continuous flow of work.
2. Projects - Having a specific objective or a deliverable projects are issues that address the necessities of a product or a feature
3. Filters — Issues defined by a query in Jira Software, otherwise known as JQL (Jira Query Language).

Like aforementioned the issue sources could be changed and even refined back again. These refinements are conducted using exclusion rules. Exclusion rules allow one to refine a plan's issue sources and thereby display the most relevant issues. And it provides the capability to set rules to exclude specific issue types, statuses, or releases depending on the project focus. One can also adjust how long one could keep the completed issues to stay in the respective plan.

Hierarchy

A hierarchy is the connection that bridges the small process based tasks to cross functional deliverables which elevates organizational objectives. hierarchy levels represent different levels of detail in a plan's scope depending on how work is structured. The hierarchy in Advanced Roadmaps is inherited from the default issue types in Jira Software which consists of the following attributes. According to the Jira Software guide,

1. Epic can be known as a large body of work that can be broken down into stories, tasks, and bugs. In a plan, epics represent a significant milestone or deliverable. The work contained in an epic can be assigned across multiple teams.
2. Story, task, or bug — Stories and tasks are issues that represent work that needs to be completed. Bugs are problems that impede the progress or functionality of work. These issue types can be assigned to specific teams.
3. Subtask — A granular piece of work required to complete a story, task, or bug. In Advanced Roadmaps, subtasks can't have teams assigned specifically to them, they inherit the team assigned to the parent issue.

Usually the hierarchy levels are created above the epics to plan and track the work. Therefore in the plan the included projects will be grouped into hierarchy levels. Also Hira advanced roadmaps provide one the ability to change the names of the respective levels and also the structure of the hierarchy to cater your needs.

Teams and Capacity

Management of the teams through Jira advanced maps across projects is one of the crucial key concepts that aid better convenience in planning. Since teams can be associated with existing plan's issue sources, work can be managed directly in the plan. Teams let one group and filter work based on teams and manage the allocation of work based on capacity. Product program managers take the responsibility in coordinating teams depending on how the work is structured. By prioritizing goals and determining critical paths, they act as the drivers and decision-makers of the cross-functional plan. Team and domain leads contribute to the plan by managing capacity and allocating work to their respective teams.

According to the Jira Software documentation Capacity reveals the units of work that a team undertakes in a given period of time. It can be used to estimate a team's ability to complete work by a particular milestone and is invaluable for evaluating risk when making key decisions. Also Capacity would act as a measure to the plan by team and domain leads who regularly assess their team's availability, resource allocation, and the prioritization of other projects.

According to the two approaches mentioned above scrum and Kanban even though its measuring capacities differ both types of teams can measure capacity with time (days or hours), a scrum team can also use story points (a relative estimation of required effort). The reasoning behind this would be that scrum teams work in time-boxed iterations (sprints), while kanban teams progress through a continual flow of work.

The sprint planning feature allows a user to allocate work to each sprint, release dates, or milestones based on the team capacity and capability. It can also show when sprints are overbooked (when allocated work exceeds the team's capacity). Capacity planning in Advanced Roadmaps is available to both scrum and kanban teams. However, sprint planning is exclusive to teams that use scrum boards as an issue source.

Dependencies

It is noticeable that when roadmaps are created there are issues in the defined plan, such as contingencies and blockers. The relationship between these blockers would be depicted and shown by dependencies. Visualizing and understanding dependencies is vital when project or program managers determine a critical path in the roadmap. When dependencies are precisely mapped, a team can adapt and plan for alternative paths.

Dependencies are shown on the timeline by badges, columns, or lines.

Releases

As the word itself conveys releases are the milestones in a plan that marks a point in time when work needs to be completed. Depending on how the work is structured, a release can represent a shippable chunk of work, which could be given out to a client or could be even marked as an achieved program increment.

This marks the end of the key elements that are involved in Jira Advanced Roadmaps. And below would be the steps to follow when preparing the Jiras Advanced Roadmaps taking those key elements to consideration.



Chapter 4 - Key Steps when creating an Advanced Jira Roadmap

1. Create a Plan

An advanced roadmap combines the relevant board, projects, filters that are involved with the project and the team to one place in order to organize, visualize and design the blueprint accordingly and effectively. The plan would consist of issue types inherited from Jira software with epics and stories.

2. Add Releases

As the next step add the release dates associated to certain issue sources. Selecting a release will import all the issues associated with the release.

3. Add teams and configure boards

In the next step, based on the issue sources chosen, teams will be suggested to add to your plan. This is also where one gets the possibility to choose the option to configure boards for Scrum or Kanban like mentioned, and to decide how one would estimate work. Also it is noticeable that if not chosen the defaults are Scrum boards with two-week sprints and 30 story points.

4. Auto scheduling

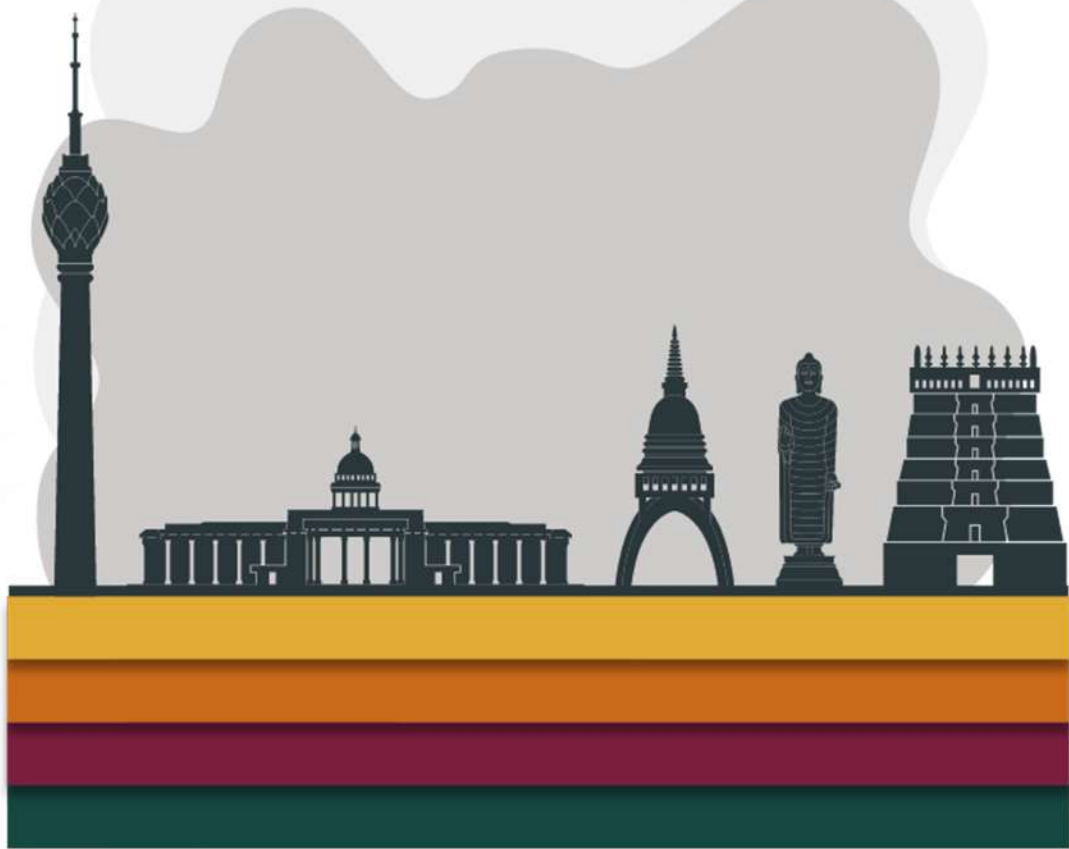
And then for the most convenient part of Jira Advanced Roadmaps would be followed. auto scheduling - based on clever algorithms and your setup, Advanced Roadmaps will generate a roadmap. At this stage, one would receive the possibility to review and edit the roadmap or drive straight in and get started.



Chapter 4 – Conclusion

Taking these aspects into consideration Jira Advances roadmaps would be the most convenient approach designed to help multiple teams collaborate together, track the big picture, identify dependencies across large chunks of work, and plan for team capacity.

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