Nowadays, ‘agile’ is the word heard almost around every corner in the software development world. ‘Working in Agile’, ‘Agile approach’, ‘agile project management’. These and many more expressions reach our ears very often. Many of those who do not work in software development automatically associate ‘agile’ with its dictionary meaning. It is: to be able to move quickly and easily or to think quickly and in an intelligent way. This is not a bad lead. However, ‘agile’ in software development has a broader meaning.

Agile – a modern approach to software development

Agile is an approach to project management or software development that consists of delivering the project to the Clients in small parts. As a result, the work is done fast, but most importantly the results are constantly evaluated. Teams working on projects can review the requirements, and adjust plans to achieve the changed objectives.

Because of the changing circumstances, the Agile approach uses the inborn human mechanism for responding to change quickly. With an increased number of continuous releases and changes, there comes a need to expand collaboration. Agile teams need a platform that allows for communication during their workflow.

The Slack Platform as an answer to an agile team collaboration needs

In 2013 Slack Technologies put forward a proposal for a program for professional and organizational communications called Slack (an acronym for **S**earchable **L**og of **A**ll **C**onversation and **K**nowledge). Soon enough, the Slack was a huge success among many industries and an aid in collaboration for project and software development teams. It also became one of the essential apps for personal use. Nowadays, Slack is still one of the main apps that simplify workflows for developers. The Slack and the agile approach go well together as Slack quickly connects people to the information they are looking for.

Why is Slack perfect for Agile project development?

Slack has a variety of features that work well for any organization or team using an agile approach at work. Furthermore, there are three fundamental services Slack aims to provide for its clients:

Connection

Ease of access is the main advantage of using the Slack app. Providing collaborative workflows for users is done through dedicated spaces (channels). People can send messages and share knowledge and resources fast and effortlessly.

Flexibility

It does not matter what place you work from. It does not matter what time you do it either. You can instantly access the information you search for anywhere and anytime.

Inclusiveness

All information shared within the organization can be accessed and searched by any member. In channels, sharing information with everyone helps to keep the teams focused and speeds up the decision processes.

Another crucial feature of the Slack is its ability to integrate with other workspace apps and tools you use to conduct your day-to-day business.

What are Slack Apps?

Slack platform does a good job of aiding collaboration. Moreover, its features are significantly boosted thanks to the apps it can integrate with. They ‘blend in’ and help you keep all your tools in one place, making you work more efficiently. All that without having to leave Slack. There are three main types of Slack apps you can come across in Slack:

- Slack apps – these are developed or built by Slack itself
- Third-party apps – these are apps that are owned by other companies and

integrated into Slack
- Your apps – apps that you created and use in your business

All apps can be searched for or added in **Slack App Directory** and their functionalities in respective usage guides. Any user can do that, however, the admins of your workspace can restrict that permission. Any app in the workspace can be used by any member of that workspace.

What are the best apps for Slack to use in agile software development?

Slack has a wide apps choice. With more than 2000 available apps for slack, it may be hard to find the ones that correspond exactly to your needs. Luckily, we prepared a short guide to the most useful apps you can find in Slack App Directory. It is also a list of apps that we like to use in our everyday collaboration.

Asana

There is probably no need to introduce this one. Asana, as a leader in providing solutions for work management, is one of the most frequently searched apps for Slack. Coordinating tasks, managing projects, communicating and most of all – clarity – are all features users love about this platform. What makes it even better? The integration with Slack. What does it change? Most importantly, you do not have to leave Slack to use Asana.

A list of some of the most useful actions:

- receiving Asana notifications in Slack (tasks assigned to you and the ones you follow)
- creating new Asana tasks in Slack
- opening Asana tasks
- actioning tasks (all tasks details are visible) – completing tasks, changing the assignee, due dates,
- adding tasks to projects
- linking Asana projects to Slack channels
- turning Slack messages into Asana tasks
- adding messages to existing Asana tasks

DailyBot

DailyBot is a chat suite for teams and organizations. In this tool you can use all forms of quick communication features: meetings, quick forms, commands, and so on. Thanks to the integration with slack API, you can do all of those and even more without leaving Slack:

- running daily team check-ins
- having watercooler conversations to unwind, bond and stimulate
- giving kudos for special (or not-so-special) achievements
- automatic team activity tracking
- running Pomodoro timer for better focus
- motivation tracking

Vote

This simple voting app helps your teams to stay democratic. Not everyone likes to voice their opinion loudly, but everyone likes to have a say in what happens, especially when it is in the workplace. Thanks to the Vote, any issues can be resolved fast and without further ado or arguments. Easy and painless! Slack enables voting in all channels as well as private groups.

Poker Planner

There is always a need for your agile team to make some estimations. Among various apps for Slack, Poker Planner is the one that helps you with planning. The Poker Planner functions will work in public and private channels as well as the group’s direct messages. Thanks to Slack integration you can do all the below without the interference of other software:

- customize poker points
- save settings for specific channels and conversations (based on the last settings used)
- set revealing automation after voting ends (min 1 minute, max 7 days)
- lock the created sessions so no one can reveal or cancel them
- make average point calculations to speed up the decision-making process.

Google Drive

Since its implementation, Google Drive has made our lives easier by allowing us to access all our precious files anywhere we wish to. And Slack is one such location. The below list of the main actions you can perform in Slack:

- create new files within the Slack workspace
- share files on your Slack channels or through a direct message
- grant access to files through Slack with just a few clicks
- receive Slack notifications regarding any changes to Google Drive
- reply in Slack to comments made within Google Drive
- search inside Google Drive files through Slack

Did you find Slack app you were looking for?

Have you heard about the above-mentioned before? If you would like to use Slack and apps for Slack but do not know where to start, Sailing Byte is here to help. Contact us, and we can cooperate through Slack where you can see for yourself how the apps integrate within the Slack platform.

Have you not found an app that suits your needs? Submit a query, and we can schedule a call to discuss your options to develop an app for Slack that is best tailored to your needs. Building apps is what we do for a living so trust us with your vision and watch it turn into reality.