Aries Process Changes to Development and Feature Request Analysis

What You Need to Know

Aries is transitioning from a Waterfall Delivery release model to a **Continuous Integration/Continuous Delivery (CI/CD)** release model upon the completion of EM/PM version 17.0 in early Q2 2021. As part of this shift, Aries will be updating our processes around feature requests and development. Under the CI/CD model, we have the opportunity to shrink down development time and increase productivity, ultimately allowing us to better serve our customers. This shift closely aligns with our commitment to focus on delivering high value solutions to our customers through continuous innovation and process improvements.

What is Changing?

As we begin to a make a shift to our new agile development model some parts of the FRA process will change, however, some areas will remain as they are today. When a client requests a feature, Aries Product Management will continue to produce the Feature Request Analysis (FRA) in conjunction with the client and Aries Client Services, and that FRA will continue to be the basis for determining scope and pricing for client-funded features. Under the updated development process, once a client is presented with an FRA, Aries will now provide a two-quarter estimate for when that entire feature, or the separated deliverables for that feature, can be anticipated, given approval is received within a certain timeframe – all customer requested/funded development will be handled on a case by case basis and timelines are dependent on many factors. As time progresses, Aries will narrow down the timeframe to one quarter, two releases, and eventually a single target release as the delivery date gets closer.

Once a client authorizes the development of an FRA into a feature, the feature will be scheduled with our development team. Clients will now be presented with a set of Acceptance Criteria for that entire feature, or for the separated deliverables for that feature, for review instead of a specification as they had once received under the old process. Any substantial departure from the initial analysis in the FRA may require further discussion and lead to potential delays in scheduling.

What is Acceptance Criteria?

Acceptance criteria will be shared with clients in place of specifications. It is a set of criteria and requirements that are used to define the scope of a feature request that must be met. It sets the limits and framework of the tasks that must be fulfilled before a feature can be marked as 'complete'.

For more information regarding changes to our process please refer to our Agile/CICD Process Change FAQ.