: What is DevOps and is it important to decision support?

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DevOps is a made-up term for a software/systems development method, practice or technique that combines IS/T Developers (Dev) and IT Operations (Ops) staff into a collaborative team that emphasizes and promotes automation, continuous software integration, continuous software testing, continuous software delivery, and continuous software monitoring, cf., Novak, 2014. According to software analytics company New Relic, "DevOps recognizes the interdependence of software development and IT operations and helps an organization produce software and IT services more rapidly, with frequent iterations." DevOps can and should result in better decision support systems (DSS) and better analytics, deployed faster and at lower cost.

DevOps combines the concepts of "development" and "operations" into an agile software development method. The key is to integrate development and operations teams. DevOps supports rapid development in a continuous delivery world (Sharma, 2013).

Sharma and Coyne (2015) assert DevOps is essential for any business aspiring to be lean, agile, and capable of responding rapidly to changing customer needs and a changing marketplace. Decision support and analytics are critically necessary to meeting changing customer needs and adapting to a changing marketplace of online, realtime channels for transactions, information sharing, and feedback.

Building analytics and decision support must become more agile. Building analytics and DSS should emphasize "Individuals and interactions over processes and tools; Working software over comprehensive documentation; Customer collaboration over contract negotiation; Responding to change over following a plan (Beck, et al., 2001)"

As decision support and analytics expands in organizations and more rapid analytics development environments are created, agile development and DevOps methods should/will become important for building new decision support capabilities. The long development times associated with data warehouses and business intelligence will **not** meet the competitive needs of organizations. More, better, revised, revamped, tuned and fine tuned analytics and decision support is necessary in a rapidly changing, digital world.

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