

Release Management Process

The scope of this process is to cover scenarios when new features or changes to existing features are being implemented onto the CrowdComms platform.

The process:

- All new features follow a design & development process that includes stakeholder feedback on the concept and execution of the UX design, rigorous testing, peer review of code and security review before being planned for release. Progress is managed throughout by the product delivery manager.
- During preparation for release, CrowdComms production staff will be trained to support our clients. All customer facing communications and internal training documents will be reviewed as part of the release testing.
- The release committee will conduct an impact assessment of the proposed changes and highlight any areas of concern or gaps in documentation.
- Once testing and documentation has been completed, the release committee will authorise the release. The new updates will be prepared for release, including scheduling release times to minimise any disruption.
- When considering release date and time, the team review upcoming event schedules and expected usage patterns.

Client communication:

Here at CrowdComms we are constantly striving to improve and enhance the platform in order to bring innovative functionality to organisers in order for you to deliver the best event experiences to your delegates. Our team of talented engineers not only maintain and deliver our huge product suite but also work on dozens of new features at a time so we can push our event technology, and your events to new levels of success.

Previously when new features were fully tested and ready for deployment our team would consolidate all work into one large release, often with multiple feature improvements and new functionality bundled together. In a platform running dozens of live, global events each day this can seem like a convenient way to release new work, However, with that connivence comes an element of risk. Building software is incredibly complex with many moving parts and with this in mind we have taken the decision to move to a continuous integration model of releasing product updates. What this means is each individual piece of work is isolated into its own development branch, allowing us to release each feature as soon as it's ready without bottlenecks and complicated dependencies. This release strategy minimises risk to platform stability and means if

we uncover issues we can roll-back or hot-fix with greater efficiency.

As a company we are still committed to informing customers of new features well ahead of their release. An email newsletter documenting features that affect the front end of your event app globally will always be sent out a minimum of two weeks prior to any release. The difference being that from now on these email newsletters will no longer contain a release date.

With a large amount of events happening each day we need to be agile when selecting safe times and dates to push work into the live app. It will always be a priority to find the quietest time to launch so we can manage disruption to ongoing events. With this in mind we will commit to informing clients a minimum of 72 hours ahead of any release and where appropriate circulate a pre-production link so all customers can check their upcoming event apps, adjust custom development if necessary and seek any compliance sign off they require.

By this time all staff will have been trained and we will always be happy to jump on calls to demonstrate, preview and support any imminent features. All you need to do is get in touch with your account manager and we will be happy to help in any way we can.

This new strategy will allow us to continue our innovation of the product at pace. We hope you agree that the last few years have seen some exciting advances in our technology and with your support, we hope to be able to continue that indefinitely.

To summarise:

- An email detailing the new features expected to be released in the upcoming month will be sent to admins who have access to the CrowdComms dashboard (CMS). This is scheduled to be sent to all customers before the start of each month and will always be sent out no less than two weeks prior to the release. This will no longer contain specific date and time of the feature releases.
- In addition a notification banner will be present on the admin CMS highlighting the upcoming changes.
- You allocated account manager and / or support manager will contact you no less than 72 hours in advance of the release date informing you of the exact time the release has been scheduled for.

Considerations:

- Please note, critical updates to ensure smooth operation of the CrowdComms platform will not always follow the above steps.
- The above process is followed for any new feature additions or any planned 'breaking change' where the user experience on the platform would be modified in any meaningful way.

