

ATLASSIAN + DISH

“ We use Atlassian as our ‘lingua franca.’ We don’t speak English with our vendors. We speak Jira.

SAID BERRAHIL

Vice President of 5G Technology



90%

Decrease in issue triage time

94%

Decrease in defect resolution time

## How DISH Wireless is building the first “cloud-native, data-centric, fully-automated telecom network” with Atlassian cloud tools

DISH Wireless is building a new 5G network with a new way of working. See how they’re using Atlassian cloud tools to boost visibility, efficiency, and innovation.



#### INDUSTRY

Telecommunications

#### LOCATION

Littleton, Colorado

#### NUMBER OF USERS

4,500

#### ATLASSIAN PRODUCTS & APPS



**Jira Software**  
Project and issue tracker



**Tempo Timesheets**  
Time tracking and reports



**Confluence**  
Document collaboration



**Time in Status**  
Identify bottlenecks with reporting



**Jira Service Management**  
High-velocity ITSM



**ScriptRunner**  
The leading automation and customization App

For over 25 years, DISH Network has been transforming the way people across the US watch television. After venturing from satellite TV into streaming, the team is continuing to evolve their mission as a “connectivity company” by revolutionizing wireless communication – and they’re doing it from the inside out with the help of the Atlassian cloud platform.

While other telecommunication companies manage development in-house using on-premise systems, DISH Wireless wanted to explore better ways of working to achieve better results. By adopting a more open, collaborative approach with outside vendors as well as cloud-based infrastructure, they’ve unlocked better visibility, higher efficiency, and greater innovation as they build a groundbreaking 5G network.

## A new way of building a new 5G network

When T-Mobile and Sprint agreed to merge in 2020 to form the nation’s largest wireless carrier, DISH launched an ambitious initiative to build a rival 5G network and become a new nationwide competitor. But DISH didn’t just want to follow the same old playbook – they wanted to modernize their approach and revolutionize the wireless industry.

“Our vision is to develop the first cloud-native, data-centric, fully-automated telecom network,” says Said Berrahil, Vice President of 5G Technology.

Reinventing their approach included looking at the people, processes, and

platforms DISH works with. Typically, development and testing are done in house with limited support from outside partners. DISH Wireless had a new idea: invite multiple vendors to collaborate and compete against each other to maximize innovation.

As DISH developed this concept over time, they onboarded almost 3,000 partners across 70 vendors, including the biggest players in hardware and software. This expansive community of vendors helped the team innovate faster and work more flexibly. However, it also made tracking and planning much more complicated.

The spreadsheets DISH had been using for project management and issue tracking were too basic for such a large business unit with so many teams, dependencies, and complex workflows. DISH Wireless wanted all vendors to work together on one platform so they could track milestones and see a collective view of their work, while keeping sensitive information confidential between vendors. The company's enterprise-grade needs and open approach demanded an enterprise-level, open, secure cloud solution.

## Cloud-native, fully automated, data-centric

As DISH Wireless began considering cloud-based platforms, the team was pulled toward Atlassian Cloud Enterprise products. They were intrigued by the customizations, automations, and flexibility of Jira Software; having a central knowledge base and training hub with Confluence; establishing a service portal with Jira Service Management; and especially the peace of mind, time savings, and security that come with working on the cloud.

Adam Nichols, Senior Manager of Process, saw the potential of Atlassian cloud tools and offered to test them on behalf of the team. "There were 50 defects in a Google spreadsheet, and somebody said, 'Hey, we need to put these in a tool.' I said, 'I have an idea. Let's try a free Atlassian cloud subscription for a little bit and

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SAID BERRAHIL  
Vice President of 5G Technology

see if we like it,” he recalls. “Then people went, ‘Oh, I like this tool. Can I do this other task with it?’ I just kept saying ‘yes’ and somehow kept making it happen.”

Once officially all-in on cloud, Said, Adam, and their teams built out an Atlassian cloud ecosystem to conquer their quest to create the nation’s first cloud-native, fully automated, data-centric telecom network.

## Cloud-native

DISH Wireless considered implementing Atlassian Data Center, but ultimately decided on a cloud deployment for even stronger peace of mind and long-term scalability. “We knew where we were headed and the scale we were going for, so rather than worrying about upgrading later, we wanted to do it right the first time and start on the cloud,” Adam says. “I love knowing that we don’t have to do upgrades or maintenance support, and that security is handled by Atlassian, which works with the majority of Fortune 100 companies in the world. I feel great about it.”

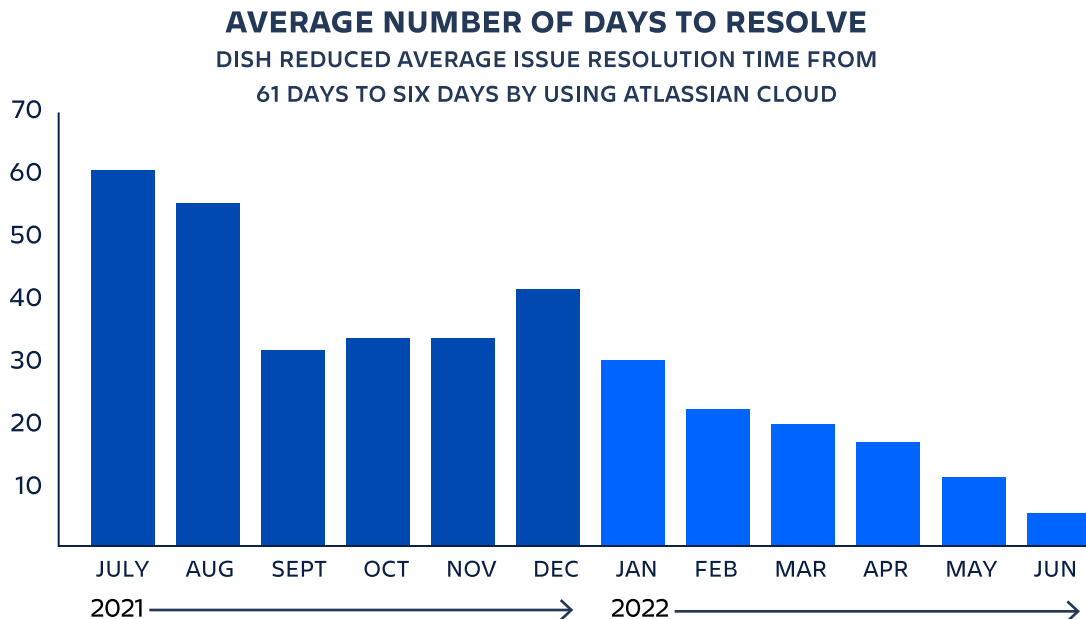
Security was especially important because DISH works with so many vendors. DISH’s Security department partnered with Atlassian’s Trust team to thoroughly understand Atlassian’s security, compliance, and privacy policies and architect the most secure setup for their unique multi-vendor situation. For example, with Atlassian Access and Okta single sign-on, DISH can onboard new people quickly and use group-level permissions to facilitate collaboration while maintaining confidentiality between vendor groups. “Two-thirds of our users are non-DISH employees. We were able to rapidly scale because of the flexibility of cloud,” Adam says. “[Atlassian Cloud Enterprise](#) also gave us early access to certain features, like [Atlassian Analytics and Data Lake](#), and better support. Analytics have been huge in helping us leverage native data in the system to build reports and dashboards that further drive and reinforce the behaviors we’re looking for. Turnaround time for support has been incredible too. Atlassian always gets back to us within an hour or two.”

## Data-centric

Speaking of leveraging data, DISH Wireless is embracing Atlassian cloud products and Marketplace apps to enrich their infrastructure with data to securely improve communication, collaboration, efficiency, and decision-making. All vendors are expected to use Atlassian tools for everything from project and product management, to ticketing, to invoicing, giving DISH unprecedented visibility and the ability to make more informed decisions.

“You need Atlassian cloud to be able to communicate, innovate, and work in parallel with multiple partners,” Said explains. “We use it as our ‘lingua franca.’ We don’t speak English with our vendors. We speak Jira.”

DISH Wireless set up their Atlassian platform in a unique way to balance vendor confidentiality with collaborative innovation. “We’ve been able to put in place security parameters to ensure vendor data integrity and security where necessary, while having a holistic view across the enterprise. That way, we have real-time data at the team level and strategic level to make even better decisions, track milestones, and understand what we need to do to deliver,” Adam says. Said adds, “It’s a very different conversation when we have data. We can say to a vendor, ‘The SLA says seven days, and you’re at 20 days. Let’s work together to reduce investigation time.’”



Marketplace apps have played a major role in DISH's data enablement. For example, the team implemented Tempo Timesheets for Jira and requires vendors to track time and submit invoices through Jira Software. Their Chief Networking Officer even has a poster outside his office that reads, "No Jira, no money."

Using Jira Software in this way and enriching the vendor payments flow with time-tracking data makes it easy for DISH to validate work billed vs. work completed in the same system. "Not only does this help us on the back end, but we also get transparency throughout the development life cycle about what's going on. It's been incredibly valuable," Adam explains.

Apps and integrations like these are helping DISH's team members take their ideas to the next level. "I have been humbled by the wealth of the Atlassian Marketplace," Said says. "I've learned not to try and do everything ourselves. I tell my team to collaborate, enable parallel innovation, and work with other people and technologies."

### **Fully automated**

DISH Wireless has automated their workflows wherever possible for efficiency and accuracy. "The human aspect of our work can be complicated. We want technology to help our team," Said says.

“ Think about how many staff would you need to have on hand to fix breaches and outages. I'm over here on cloud, sleeping like a baby because I know Atlassian's got it taken care of.

**ADAM NICHOLS**

Senior Manager of Process

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Take governance, for example. Said explains, “Governance is still a very human-centric activity, but there are limitations of human behavior. We’re looking at ways to automate parts of the process to make them easier and more nimble, such as ingesting contracts, double checking documents have been signed, and creating checklists and reminders to complete each task.”

In addition, DISH Wireless has automated the testing and root cause analysis processes and made them more data-centric. For testing, the team set up Jira Software automations to open tickets, enrich them

with additional data (such as XYZ), and close them when complete. What’s more, root cause analysis wasn’t even possible before because there wasn’t enough information. Now a ticket is automatically created, and new data is added every ten minutes. Adam says, “Now with Automation, we’re able to tie pieces together: what the issue is, who did it, when they did it, what they said, etc. Then we can start proactively mitigating issues because we’re able to collect that information across our vendors.”

By working on the cloud, leveraging data, and automating, DISH Wireless is on their way to transforming their organization and the future of 5G.

### **Working over 90% faster, tracking better, and “sleeping like a baby”**

DISH Wireless is not only staying on track internally with the help of Atlassian Cloud Enterprise. Collaborating on a central, integrated, cloud-based system has helped employees and dozens of vendors work faster throughout the product life cycle.

“Cycle time has decreased from X to Y, issue triage time is down from 61 days to six days, and defect resolution time has decreased from 120 days to seven days,” Adam reports. “Efficiency improvements are incredibly valuable because we could face millions in fines from the FCC if we don’t hit our milestones. Now, with Atlassian cloud, we see a collective view across the different domains to tell if we’re on track to hit those milestones.”

Engineers are not only working more efficiently, but are also able to focus on more strategic projects because they don't have to worry about security or downtime. "Think about how many staff you would need to have on hand to fix breaches and outages. I'm over here on cloud, sleeping like a baby because I know Atlassian's got it taken care of," Adam says.

All of Adam's 4,500 colleagues at DISH Wireless are now using Atlassian Cloud Enterprise. As a process leader, he has big dreams for scaling and streamlining across the organization. His team's goal is to help DISH Wireless grow substantially in the coming years, migrate other lines of business to Atlassian cloud, and connect all of their disparate vendors and systems to create one vendor-agnostic, tool-agnostic process for the DISH enterprise. "Each vendor has their own issue types, workflows, permissions, tools, etc. We're standing up an Atlassian Center of Excellence to take the best from each vendor into a scalable approach and one world-class, integrated system," Adam says.

As DISH marches toward their milestones with the support of Atlassian, their team is excited to be creating not only the nation's newest, fastest 5G network, but also the newest, fastest way for telecom providers and vendors to work together.

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