Release Often

Automate! Automate! Automate!

Automated testing and continuous integration are key disciplines that power great releases. Ensure that build times and testing times are as short as possible, and remember that builds that are easy to validate are easier to release. That's because the validation cycle more closely follows the team.

Expand your testing capacity, get faster feedback, and improve quality through test automation. You already know the value of software testing. But fast-paced software development environments can create time and cost constraints that make it difficult to thoroughly test an application prior to release. If defects slip undetected into the production environment, the result can be customer dissatisfaction and increased maintenance costs.

Test automation allows your team to execute more tests in less time, increasing coverage and freeing human testers to do more high-level, exploratory testing. Automation is especially beneficial for test cases that are executed repeatedly, such as those for cross-browser and cross-device compatibility, and those that are part of a full or partial regression suite.

Automating a release is the best way to improve a release culture. If releasing is not automated today, start by automating the release to a staging environment. Once everyone sees how simple it is, the natural step will be to automate production deploys as well. If releases are difficult, make it a practice to release frequently–even if it's just to staging. Having the development team feel the pain points of release will inspire innovation to make it easier (and automated).