

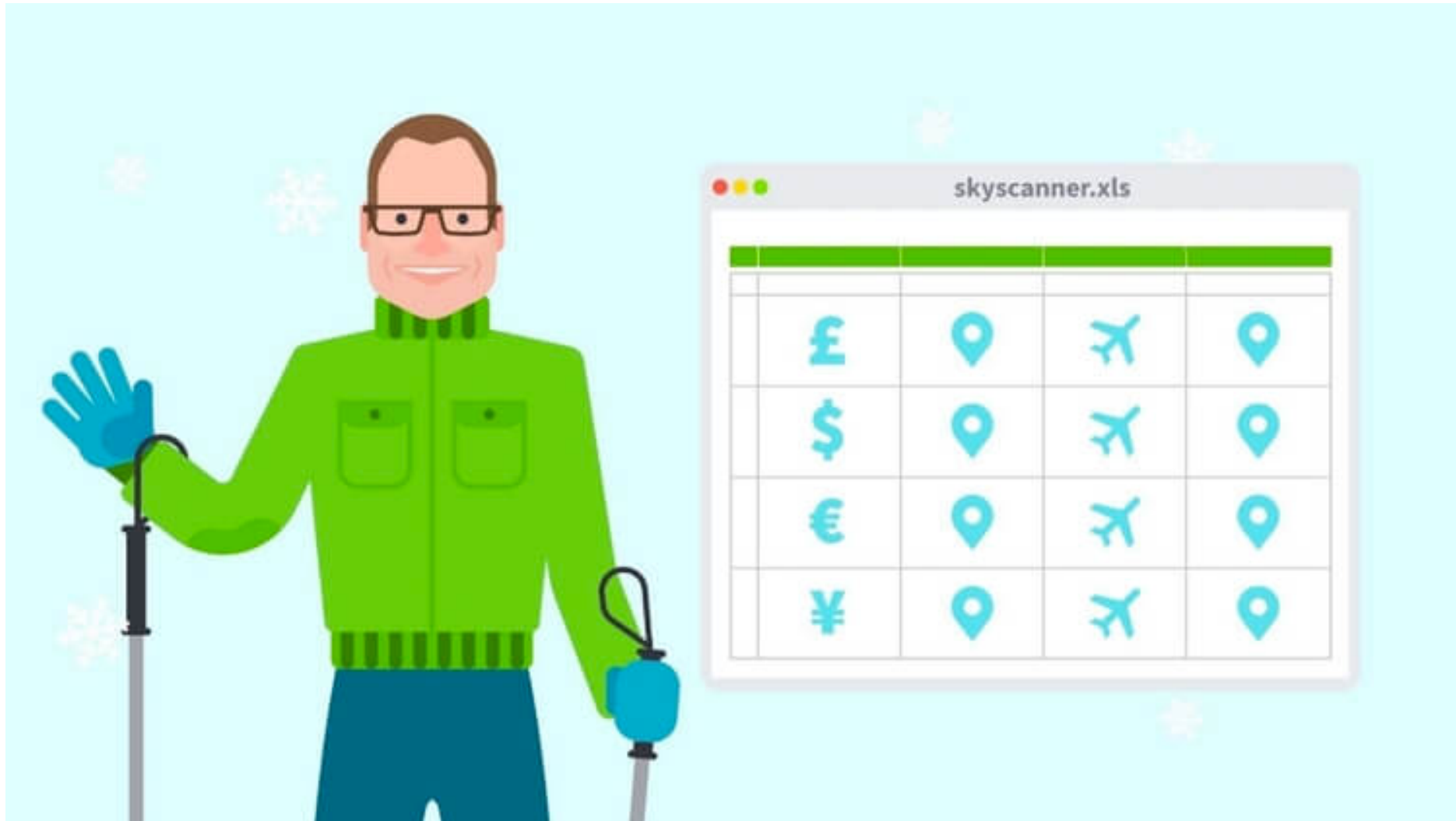
Start-up Culture at Scale

How Skyscanner attempts to create a start-up culture with lots and lots of engineers

About the Talk

- Who is Skyscanner?
- How things looked in 2014
- How Skyscanner fixed things
- What did Skyscanner learn?
- Did Skyscanner succeed?

From Tiny Spreadsheets



Skyscanner is Born



Can you find me the cheapest air fare from Bologna to Berlin?

I'd like to know how much it would cost me to fly from Barcelona to Paris



A'm needin' a flight oot o' Glesgae, ah dinnae care whaur tae, juist git me oot o' Glesgae!!



Search Everywhere

Return

One way

Multi-city

Map

From

Glasgow (Any)

To

Everywhere

Depart

28/06/2017

Return

(One way)

Cabin Class & Travellers

1 adult, Economy

Add nearby airports

Add nearby airports

Direct flights only

Search flights →

Who Is Skyscanner?

- Founded in 2003 in Edinburgh, Scotland
- Over 800 employees, over 50 nationalities
- Over 60m Unique Monthly Visitors
- Over 60m App Downloads
- Over 1200 global partners

Engineering in the Stone Age



The Culture Isn't Just Physical

Daylight is Precious

Master Teach Learn

Collaborate to Comp(l)ete

Our Mothers use Skyscanner

Time for a Change

Learning From Web Natives

SEQUOIA 



Linked 



Spotify®



twitter

Skyscanner Had to Stop to Go Faster

Squads

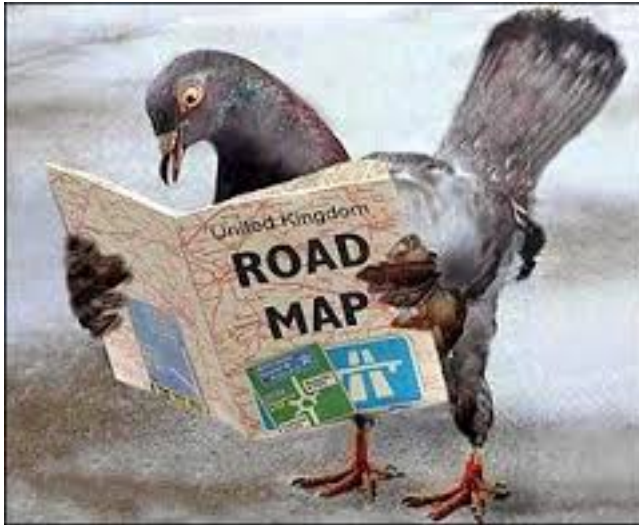


- *Small team of engineers*
- *Owns a small number of products*
- *Guided by a mission statement*
- *Loosely coupled with other squads*
- *Self Service Model*
- *Self organising*

Skill Diversity



Leaders and Support



Product Owner

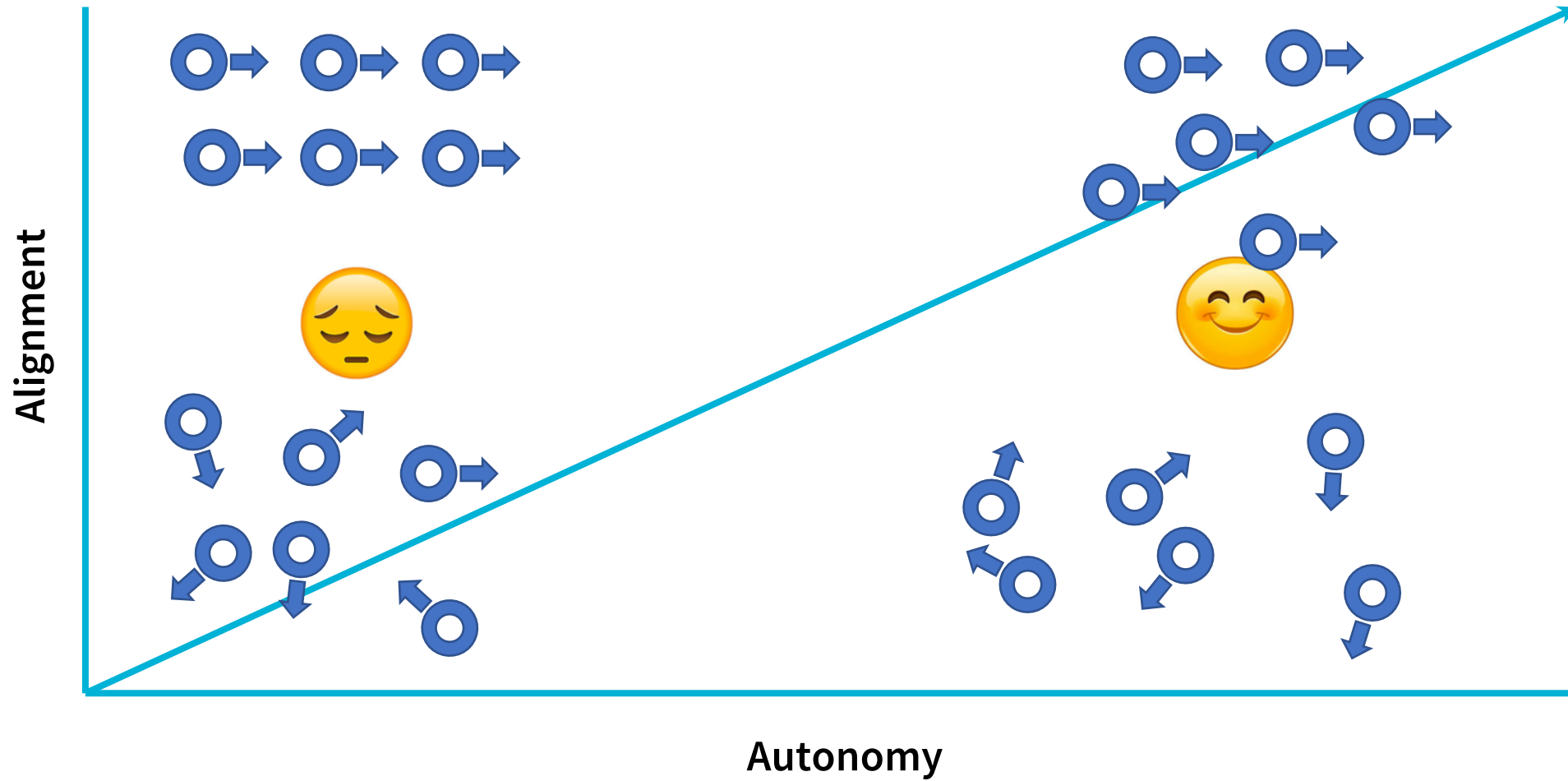


Squad Lead



Agile Coach

Autonomy vs Alignment



Trust



Tribes

Developer Enablement Tribe



Microservice Shell

Service Routing & Discovery



Cloud Ops

Deployment Orchestration



Test Automation

Experimentation Services



- *Groups squads with common purpose*
- *Tribe level mission statement*
- *Tribe Lead thinks about product*
- *Tribe Engineering lead thinks about tech*
- *Self Organising*

Guilds

- No requirement to be a member
- Anyone can set one up
- Self Organising
- Allows communication of ideas and best practice



We had to learn how to do this

Getting it Wrong



- **Squads with too many responsibilities**
- **Squads placed in the wrong tribe**
- **Tribe structure needs to be right**
- **Need to review regularly**

Be Flexible

- Pop up Squads
- Disband when necessary
- Create when necessary



Too Much Autonomy is a Bad Thing



- Limits Squad Mobility
- Tooling is difficult
- Prevents Velocity
- Friction with internal open source model

Final Thoughts

What Has Changed

- Collaboration has improved
- Vision of whole business is still hard
- Whole company now operates this model
- Other areas lost focus?

Has Skyscanner Succeeded?

Thank you for listening

<http://www.skyscanner.net/jobs/>

@mjslane

Questions?