Platform engineering explained: why it is replacing the DevOps team

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Platform engineering builds the shared tools and paved roads that product teams use to ship software. The aim is that a team can create, deploy and run a service without becoming experts in every layer underneath it.

TL;DR The short version

- Platform engineering builds the shared tools and paved roads that let product teams create, deploy and run services.
- It reduces the cognitive load and inconsistency of every team assembling its own pipelines and monitoring.
- Treat developers as customers and make the right path the easiest path, rather than mandating it.

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The problem it answers

When every team assembles its own pipelines, infrastructure and monitoring, the cognitive load is high and the results are inconsistent. A platform removes the repeated work and puts good defaults in one place.

What a platform team provides

- Self-service creation of services, environments and pipelines.
- Standard, secure and observable defaults.
- Documentation and support for the people who use it.

How it differs from a DevOps team

DevOps is a way of working that joins development and operations. A platform team is a team that builds a product for developers. The two fit together: the platform makes the DevOps practices easy to follow.

Making it work

- Treat developers as customers and ask them what slows them down.
- Make the right path the easiest path, rather than mandating it.
- Measure whether teams actually use it and ship faster.

Related credential: Agile Delivery Practitioner. Explore the exam facts and syllabus.

Sources and further reading

1. CNCF Platforms White Paper. tag-app-delivery.cncf.io/whitepapers/platforms/.

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