



CASE STUDY  **APIFY**

How Apify scaled its product team 4x while reducing backlog 99% – with airfocus

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I would recommend airfocus to opinionated companies that don't just follow a standard methodology, but build processes in a way that works best for them. Other PM tools dictate how you have to work – that's not the case with airfocus.”

Jan Ženíšek
VP of Product, Apify

Pain

Apify's product team rapidly grew from 3 to 12 in just a few months, resulting in a growing need for scalable product management.

Solution

By implementing airfocus, Apify has reduced its backlog by 99%, saved time through automation, and successfully scaled its product team without breaking its workflow.

About Apify

Founded in 2015, Apify gives developers, data teams, and enterprises to build, deploy, and monetize powerful web scraping and automation tools with over 4,000 of them available in the Apify Store. Companies like Thorn rely on Apify to fight child exploitation, and enterprise clients including Groupon and Intercom use it to streamline data operations. Apify pushes the boundaries of what's possible in making the web programmable.

The challenge: Rapid growth, and a massive backlog



"Almost every customer has a different use case. The width of the insights that we are receiving is enormous. We have thousands of new users per month – we are processing enormous amounts of data," said Jan. Their former platform was already struggling to keep pace with the volume of feedback, data and feature requests requiring prioritization – but with a scaling team, and ever expanding userbase, the VP of Product began the search for a new future-proof system.

"We had Productboard before but I would say it's a closed product. We couldn't do all the things we wanted to."

Jan Ženíšek
VP of Product, Apify

They had three key challenges:

- 1. Unmanageable backlog:** "Before, we had 5,000 unprocessed insights at one moment."
- 2. A growing team, and a need to automate:** "We have literally thousands of new users and thousands of new customers per month. The number of touchpoints is enormous, and we can't do it manually. We had to automate."
- 3. Inefficient cross-team communication:** "Before airfocus, on a quarterly basis we had to create a roadmap in something like Figma, print it, and put it somewhere so people could see what we were working on. Now, because everything is in airfocus we can just create different views and share it – it's always up-to-date."

The solution: A flexible, automated product management system

To regain control over its scaling operations, Apify's VP of Product implemented airfocus along with integration, allowing for a variety of custom automations. "We switched to airfocus because it gave us a lot of flexibility. We basically created a reflection of our operations in airfocus. In Productboard, we had to adjust ourselves to the tool – it didn't work," explains Jan.



Automated feedback processing & triage

- "I used the airfocus integration to build automations so that every Monday morning, an Apify actor I created checks Slack, processes messages, and assigns duties for triaging insights."
- "Now, when something is moved to 'marketing communication,' the automation triggers a Slack message to notify the marketing team. When it's moved to 'measuring success,' it waits one and three months to trigger a follow-up on the feature's performance."



Custom roadmaps for different audiences

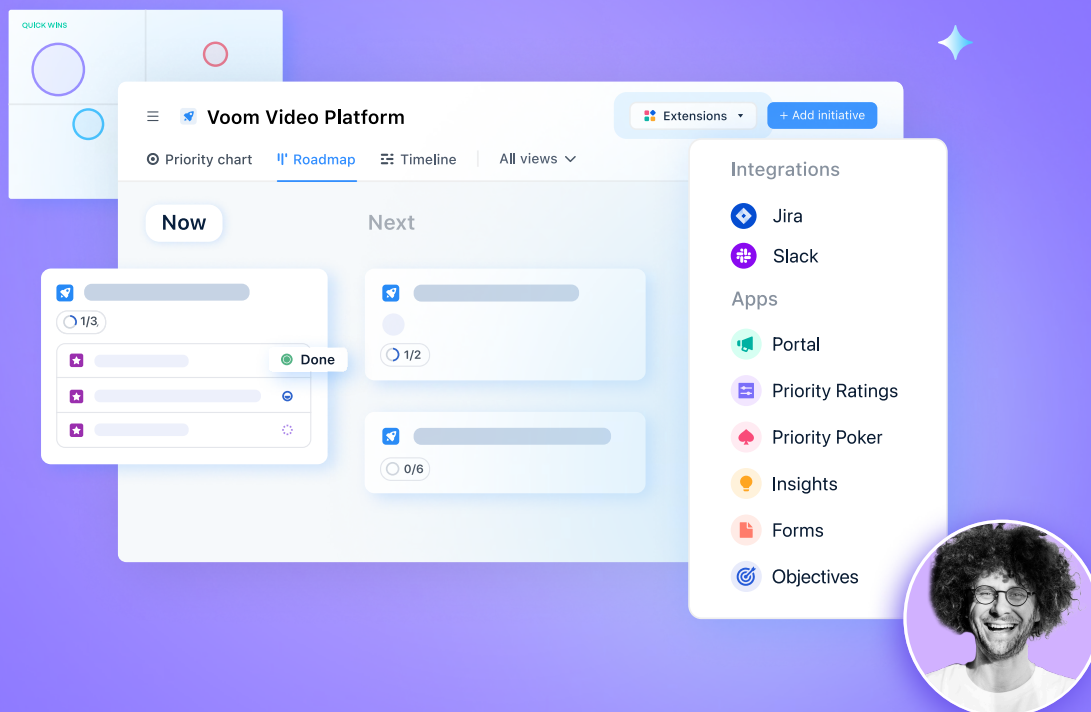
- "My PMs look at the roadmap in a detailed way – candidates, in progress, in development – but I also have a high-level roadmap for the company that's built on top of that."
- "Before, we had to manually create a roadmap every quarter. Now, we just share different views in airfocus, and it's always up-to-date."



Scaling the product team without breaking

- The product team grew from three to 12 in six months while maintaining structure and alignment. "What airfocus enables me to do is grow the product team. We went from three people to now 12 in a few months, and it's just working. It's not falling apart."

Results



Despite quadrupling reports, Jan has reduced the backlog, and maintained the team's workflows. "At this moment, I don't see any immediate limitations. If our insights volume grows, I'll automate even more. We're even integrating AI to triage insights automatically, feeding it into airfocus."

Eliminating backlog: They have had a 99% reduction in unprocessed insights.

"Before airfocus, we had 5,000 unprocessed insights. Now, we have at most 20."

Saved management time & improved transparency: "I spent a lot of time at your products to make everything automated. I'm building the middle management – the tier below me – because I cannot manage all the people directly. We try to make everything as efficient as possible. It's definitely saving time and it's quite transparent."

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