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A Bit of Agile in Waterfall Project Approach

EmbedIT
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Agenda

- < **Who ?**
- < **What We Do**
- < **Traditional Project Approach**
 - < Key Principles
 - < Challenges
 - < Benefits
- < **Working Agile Bits**
 - < Iterations
 - < Daily Stand-ups
- < **Not For Us (at least for now)**
 - < Complete cross functional teams
 - < Life without detailed estimations

Who ?

< EmbedIT

- < Part of Home Credit International, owned by PPF
- < 650+ professional covers all elements of IT lifecycle
- < In house provider of core systems for Home Credit around the world (11 entities as clients)
- < Running 17 data centers around the globe with full 24/7 support

< Jakub Mišina

- < Head of Professional Services
- < Overseeing deliveries for 4 countries (VN, IN, ID, PH)
- < „Ultimate“ scope owner/negotiator with entities

What We Do

< Core systems for Consumer lending (financing, Cash Loans, Credit Cards) and Deposits

- < Delivering to 10 Home Credits and partially to Air Bank

< Using Standard Enterprise Software Stack

- < Middleware Java – Weblogic, Spring, Hibernate, Wicket, ...

- < Database – Oracle everywhere

< Providing full software lifecycle

- < Project Management

- < Analysis and Development

- < Testing including UAT management and content support

Traditional Project Approach

Key Principles

- < **Waterfall based approach inspired by a number of standard PM methodologies**
 - < Prince 2, PMI, IPMA, *Common Sense*
- < **One fits all principle**
 - < Ranging from 10 MD to 20000 MD projects
- < **Standardized reporting**
 - < Overview report spans across hundreds of PPT pages
- < **1 PM in CZ, 1 PM in country split**

Traditional Project Approach Challenges

- < **Detailed estimates required at the beginning by virtually everybody**
 - < Drives scope, not time
 - < Premature detailed estimation cripples scope
- < **Countries require detailed estimations based on a single sentence description**
 - < All planning based on estimation, not value added
- < **Release planning**
 - < MDs everywhere, drive virtually any decision on the project
- < **No visible Business Case or Value Added**

Traditional Project Approach Benefits

< **Control from management perspective**

- < We always know what will be delivered
- < ... Unless we de-scope due to bad initial estimations or hiccups

< **Easy to work across multiple time zones**

- < Email is sufficient for most communication
- < Video and Audio conferencing also helps

< **Project Managers simple view**

- < Waterfall is a commodity

< **Helps countries to plan way ahead**

- < Business announcements, initiatives

Working Agile Bits Iterations

- < **First successful break into waterfall**
 - < With only small mindset shift
- < **Scope finalization as late as possible**
 - < Last minute changes do not kill a project
- < **Gradual planning of Releases**
 - < No need for huge task list at the beginning
- < **Better view of current activities**
 - < PM know better activities for current day/week/month

Working Agile Bits

Daily Stand-ups

- < **Huge improvement in communication**
 - < Not answered email is not a valid excuse
- < **People get to know each other**
 - < Each name has a face and personality
- < **Phone is ok, Video is great, Face to face is ideal**
 - < Multiple locations in CZ means more travel and bigger phone bills
- < **Faster identification of problems**
 - < PM more involved in short term issues
 - But requires PM knowledge*
- < **Less arguing over email or IM**

Not For Us

< Complete cross functional teams

- < Time zones kill interactivity

Sometimes only 2 hour work day overlap

< Less commitments at the beginning

- < Business activities must be planned well ahead as well

< Life without detailed estimations

- < Good for scope negotiations

- < Move from numbers to Shirt sizes (S, M, L)

Helps basic understanding of the expect volume of work

Wrap Up

< We like concepts of Agile

< However putting in practice brings challenges that are still ahead of us

< Personal responsibility of those delivering is hard to change

< People love processes.... To hide behind them (at least some)

< We will continue looking for elements of Agile

< And try to change the whole delivery chain