

## Changing your Test Practices

One of the key issues with Agile development projects is the new approach that the QA team has to take with Quality Assurance. QA is an integral part of the Agile Development team and the whole team focuses on delivering quality software. Agile QA involves the right balance between automated testing (which is vital for a fast moving Agile team) and manual testing which brings full power of 'exploratory testing' to the team.

## Message Labs – 'Mission Impossible'

MessageLabs (UK) is one of the world's leading providers of internet and email security services designed to protect, control and manage clients' email at the internet level before it reaches its clients' corporate networks and end users

Fronde and MessageLabs undertook a green field development of a fully managed, subscriber-based, anti-spyware and anti-virus internet service, which needed to be scalable to 20 million users across 4 centres worldwide with network management capability.

The three months development was completed in total secrecy with only five key staff in MessageLabs available for contact. An alpha product was required within 2 months with a full product launch in 5 months. It was named 'Mission Impossible' due to the tight delivery deadlines, unproven technology configuration, and performance requirements which needed to be globally capable of processing 30,000 HTTPS requests per second with less than 1 second latency.

The project was developed by Fronde using Agile Project Management and Agile Development techniques to manage global development teams (India, UK and NZ) and was considered a complete success and met all key deadlines.

## Sentinel – SFDC implementation

Sentinel is a NZ financial services company specialising in home equity release loans. Sentinel decided to implement a new CRM system and with the help of Fronde used both Agile Project Management and Agile Development techniques to successfully implement their Partner Relationship Management portal.

## Sovereign – Liberty implementation

Sovereign is one of New Zealand's leading financial services providers, offering a comprehensive range of insurance, home loan and investment products. The Agile Development Methodology that Fronde utilised (DSDM framework) gave Sovereign the security of a fixed cost and timeframe, whilst also accommodating a constantly evolving scope. Agile Development techniques enabled Sovereign stakeholders to largely drive the direction of the final solution by giving them the ability to prioritise key deliverables. The project was delivered on time and to budget and also delivered the required business value in terms of reduced administration costs and increased customer satisfaction.

# APN

## What is the Agile Professionals Network

**The Agile Professionals Network (APN) launch is a call to action to New Zealand professionals to investigate, evaluate, implement and improve New Zealand's Agile future. The aim of the APN is to provide a community for professionals to explore all facets of agility in the organisation, in order to help New Zealand Business maximise their return on IT investments.**

**The launch of the Agile Professionals Network will provide a host of innovative presentations designed to turn Agile from simply a buzz word into an integral part of New Zealand's business practices.**

## Key Themes of the APN

The goal of the APN is to enable New Zealand Agile practitioners to meet together and support each other in their use of Agile techniques to assist businesses to truly experience 'business agility'.

The APN will be independently run by the members and will aim to provide information regarding sustainable agile environments through innovative and practical presentations/working sessions on all topics around business agility.

Key themes include:

- ✓ Agile Project Management – where effective and profitable engagement of stakeholders is the norm rather than the exception;
- ✓ Agile Development Methods – where successful software is 'what you want not what you asked for';
- ✓ Agile Analysis – User Stories – where software requirements are made simple;
- ✓ Agile Quality Assurance – where quality is integrated throughout the project and involves collaboration with peers;
- ✓ Agile Enterprise Architecture – where complexity is managed.

## APN Format

At this stage the APN is in its infancy and there is still some work to move it from a good idea to the leading agile community in New Zealand.

## Next Steps

We are looking for volunteers to attend an APN kick-off meeting on Wednesday 28th November at 3pm at Fronde. The idea is that at the end of this meeting we will have an organisational structure enabling us to hold APN events.

## Kick-off Meeting Agenda

1. APN Charter
2. APN Working Party
3. APN Financing
4. Event Topics

## Suggested APN Topics

Follow-up sessions will be scheduled beginning early next year, on Thursday 24th Jan 2008, with the following topics as the provisional list which will be enhanced and confirmed at the APN kick off meeting in November:

### ETSL

Fronde has been engaged by ETSL to deliver a pilot project by Dec 3rd within a tight project delivery timeframe (11 weeks from project initiation) and against a fixed budget. Agile Project Management and Agile Development Methods are being used effectively where an iterative fixed timeline is set in stone and the scope is actively managed through prioritisation. The team have created a trusting relationship where the business owner attends daily scrums, the whole team is co-located and an ETSL project manager is also fully allocated to manage ETSL stakeholders and system changes. Agile burndown charts and scrums are an active part of daily project life. The solution has evolved and will be delivered to a satisfied client on 3rd Dec, on time and to budget.

## Portfolio Management and Agile

ASB is a leader in the New Zealand banking industry, priding itself on being 'one step ahead' and Brian Fair is ASB's Group Manager - responsible for the operation of the group-wide project management office, referred to at ASB as the Group Programme Office (GPO).

In 2006 ASB began implementing Agile Project Management (APM) with the help of Rob Thomsett and Fronde. The implementation of APM coupled with the re-positioning of their GPO within the organisation has helped the GPO provide information which is critical to the selection of high-value projects and the prioritisation of projects which are sound investment decisions for ASB.

## 'Managing Complexity'

Managing complexity is the key factor in reducing risk and delivering value from your IT projects. If you don't control complexity, it will quickly bury you. The Simple Iterative Partitions (SIP) process dramatically slashes Enterprise Architecture complexity, resulting in much higher returns on IT investments. SIP fits perfectly into any organisation looking to increase their business agility.

According to Roger Sessions, CTO of ObjectWatch and a director of the International Association of Software Architects, the cost of IT complexity is rising exponentially. *"In the 1980s, the cost of a failed IT project was typically tens of millions of dollars. By the 1990s, that cost had risen to hundreds of millions of dollars. Today, failed projects can cost in the tens of billions of dollars. Clearly, the current methodologies for controlling complexity are not working."*

## ASB and the 'Living Business Case'

Business cases are often a point-in-time representation of a project, and serve little more purpose than to carry the signatures of the stakeholders approving the project budget. The new paradigm considers the business case to be a critical and continually evolving project artefact, used for communication, guidance, and benefits realisation. ASB is moving to this new use of the business case by following Agile principles.