

# AGILITY @ LOTARIS

## A REAL LIFE CASE STUDY

(Florian Poulin, October 4th 2012)

# AGENDA

- LOTARIS
- HISTORY OF SCRUM @ LOTARIS
- DIFFICULTIES ENCOUNTERED
- JIRA IN ACTION
- DISCUSSION

# LOTARIS

WHAT IS THAT ?

# Lotaris [SA | Pte. Ltd | Inc. | KK]

## ● A COMPANY

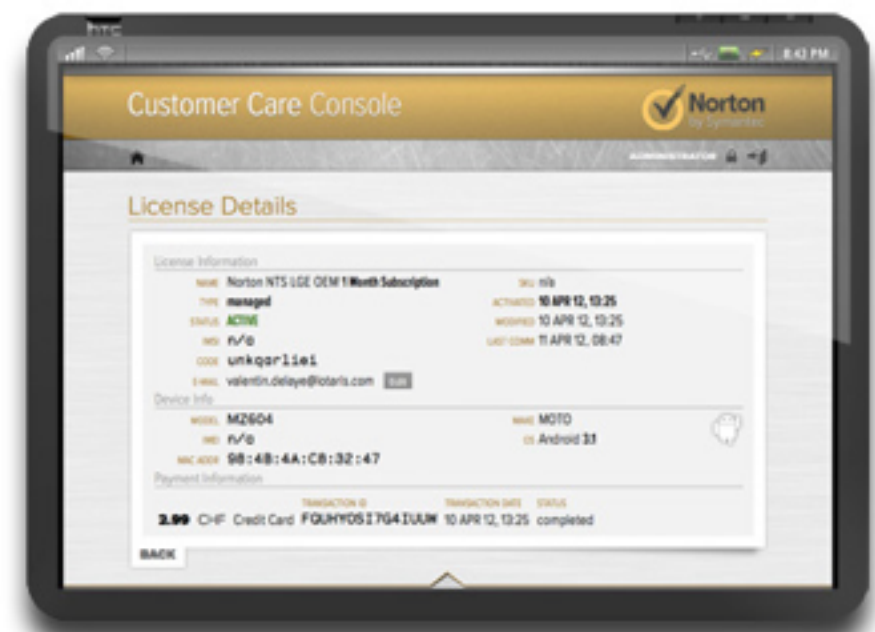
- ~35 employees, founded in 2007
- Headquarters in Yverdon (Y-Park)
- Offices in Singapore, San Francisco and Tokyo

## ● THE MAIN BUSINESS

- Licensing (LME)
- Analytics (LPE)

## ● AN INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

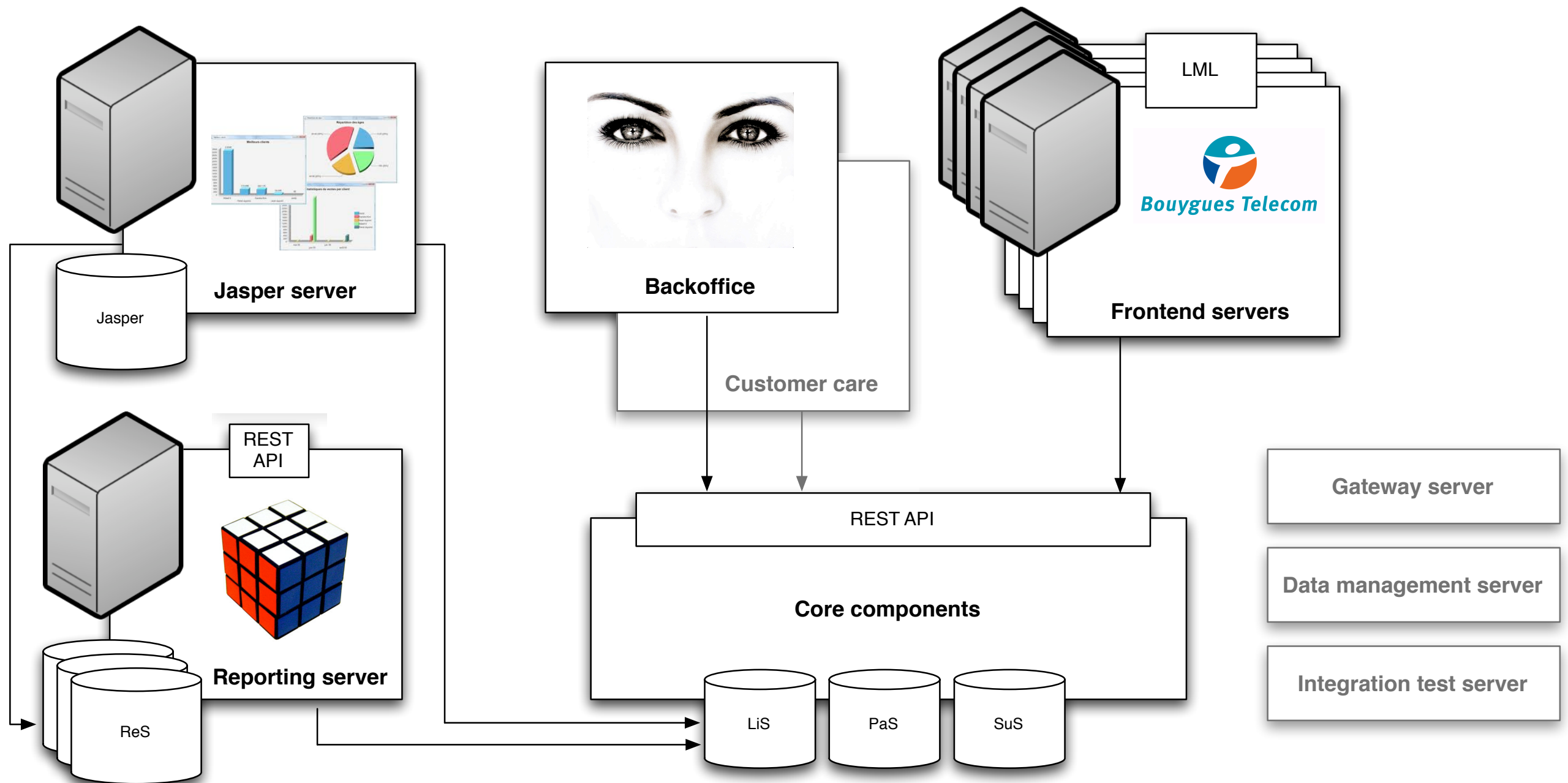
- Customers mainly in Asia and USA
- End users \*everywhere on earth\*
- Engineering in Switzerland/Romania
- Sales in USA / Japan / China



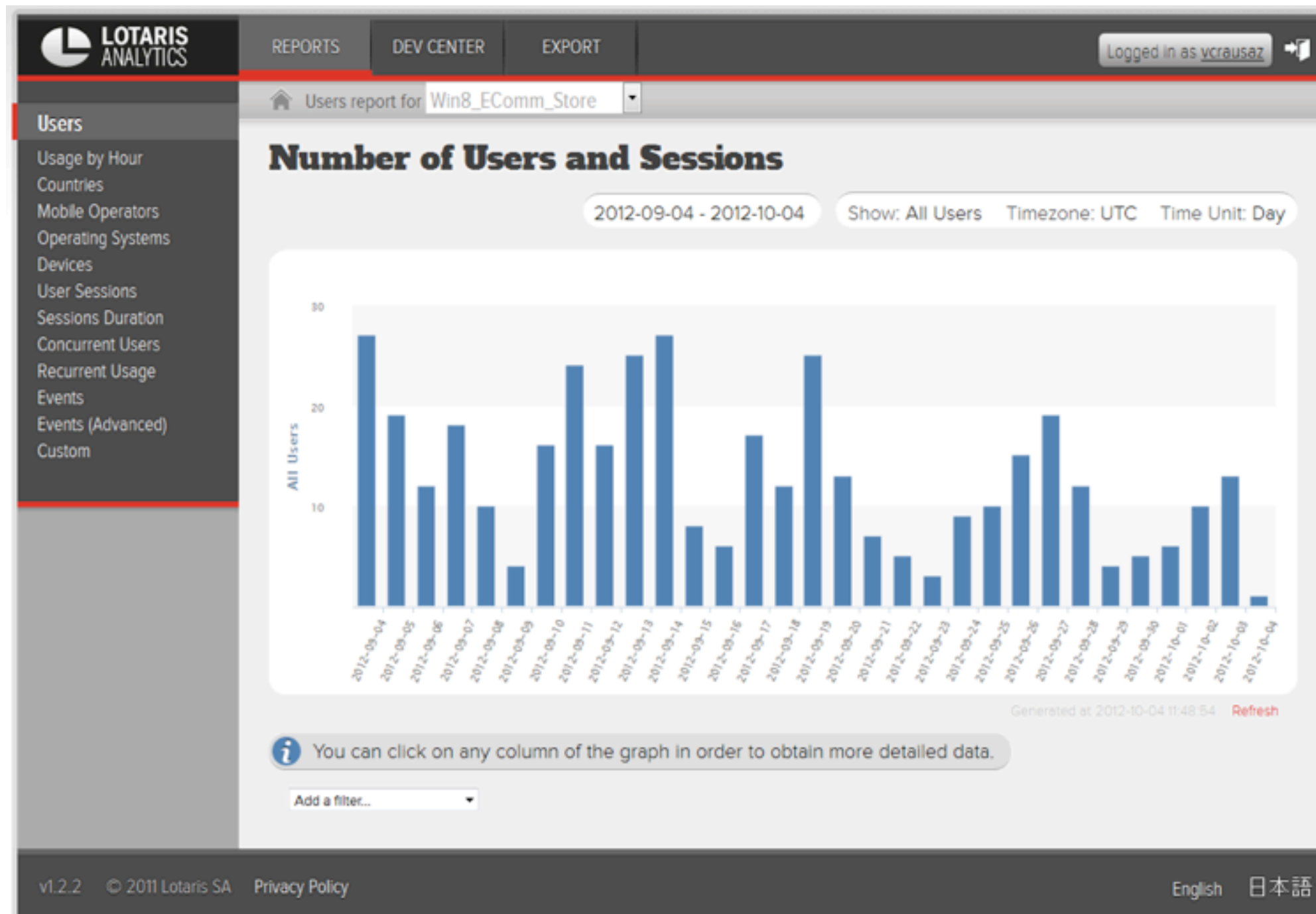
# Licensing with LME



# Licensing with LME



# Analytics with LPE





# Behind the scene

- **THE STARTUP \*FLAVOR\***
  - Permanently growing team
  - Permanently evolving product
  - Opportunity-based roadmap
- **OPERATING THE PLATFORM**
  - Live customers \*everywhere on earth\*
  - Service Level Agreement of 99.5%
  - PCI Level 1 compliancy
- **TEAMS & ENVIRONMENTS**
  - Developers: Dev (CI), Integrations
  - QAs & Ops: QA, Preprod, Prods, DRP
  - Sales & partners: Demo, Ad-hoc servers

geeks live here





# SCRUM @ LOTARIS

A BIT OF HISTORY

# Mid 2009

- **CONTEXT:**

- Delivery team: 1 dev
- Deadlines: yesterday ...
- Requirements coming from the boss(s)

- **AGILITY:**

- Probably not needed at that time ...

- **FLAVOR:**

«So let me remember ... what do I have to do. I have ten works in progress, 9 of them are extremely high priority, but the 10th is cool ! Anyway ... I am three weeks late. The customer can wait a bit ... » (A developer)

# End of 2009

- **CONTEXT:**

- Delivery team: 4 devs
- Deadlines: ASAP !
- Requirements coming from the CTO

- **AGILITY:**

- 1st attempt of applying Scrum, using Excel
- Task board stucked on the door
- Daily scrum meetings lasting between 15 minutes and 3 hours

- **FLAVOR:**

« Damnit ... I forgot to report my remaining work on the door ... but who cares anyway !? » (A developer)

# Mid 2010

- **CONTEXT:**

- Delivery team: 6 devs, 1 QA
- Deadlines: “Do the best you can !”
- Requirements coming from the CTO

- **AGILITY:**

- Too much pressure, no time for that anymore
- “RT” used as a ticketing system
- (Warrior mode)

- **FLAVOR:**

« Am I dreaming or we used to have daily meetings ? And what is this useless piece of paper stucked on the door ? Anyway, time for some coffee. » (A developer)

# End of 2010

- **CONTEXT:**

- Delivery team: 8 devs, 2 QAs
- Deadlines: “Customers can’t wait 2 weeks, do it for tomorrow”
- Requirements coming from the CTO and the project manager

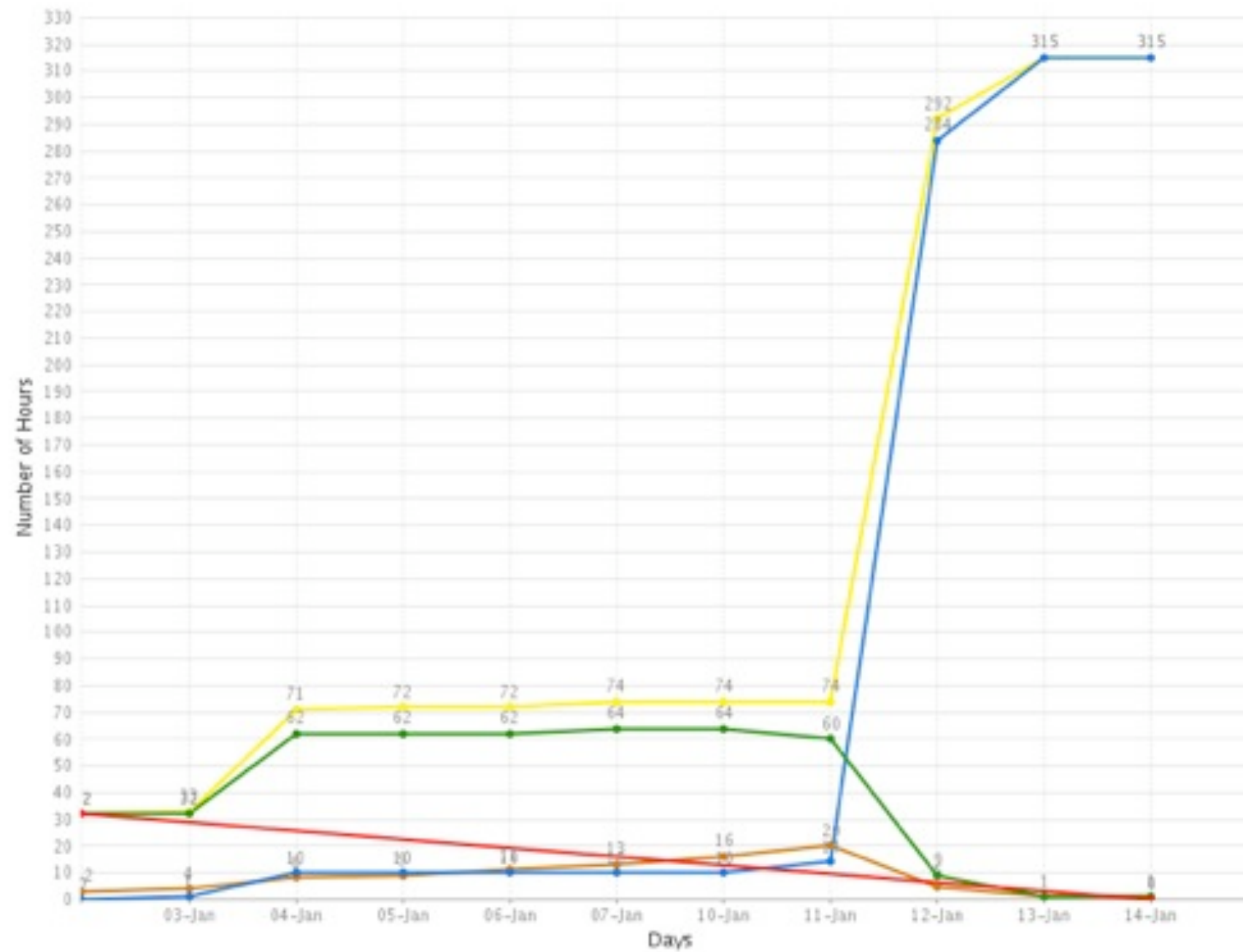
- **AGILITY:**

- Daily scrum meetings, pigs can talk while chickens listen
- 2 weeks sprints, but weekly deliveries (if not more)
- Jira used to track activities, in an explorative and \*freestyle\* way

- **FLAVOR:**

« Cool, Jira has fancy colors ... RT was too blue. I think I will log again next week to check if something has changed. Cool, I can drag-and-drop stuff .. no idea why, but it’s cool ! » (A developer)

# End of 2010



# Mid 2011

- **CONTEXT:**

- Delivery team: 10 devs, 4 QAs
- Deadlines: End of sprint (victory !)
- Requirements coming from the product owners & project manager

- **AGILITY:**

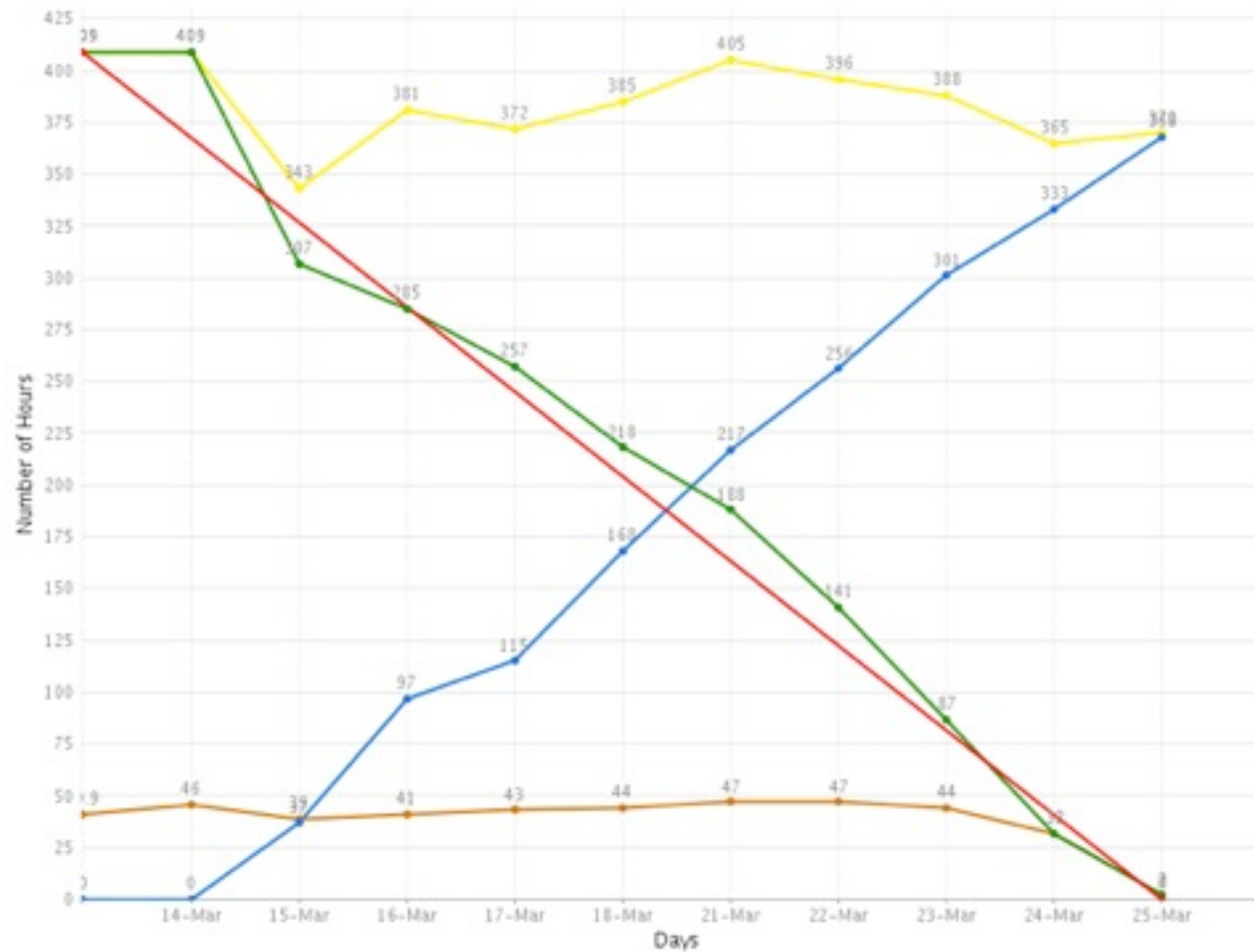
- Daily scrum meetings & planning meetings
- Devs understand the basics of Jira and use it (but under pressure)
- Scrum is adopted by the company, and the partners

- **FLAVOR:**

« He is (again) late for the daily scrum, it looks like he will need to bring croissants. Tuesday and wednesday are already booked, so it will be for thursday. Tough times, we need a diet. » (The whole team)



# Mid 2011



# End of 2011

- **CONTEXT:**

- Delivery team: 10 devs, 5 QAs (3 in Romania)
- Deadlines: End of sprint
- Requirements coming from the product owners & project managers

- **AGILITY:**

- Introduction of the review meetings (non-techies don't get the point)
- Code reviews are explicitly part of the issue workflow on Jira
- Team is big, people get bored in the meetings ...

- **FLAVOR:**

« The sprint ends in three days, we still have to test your 45 stories and there are 12 bugs waiting to be fixed. So please do your code reviews and tell us when we can deploy on the QA server. » (A tester)

# Today

- **CONTEXT:**

- Delivery team: 14 devs (4 in Romania), 6 QAs (4 in Romania)
- Deadlines: End of sprint
- Requirements coming from the product owners & project managers

- **AGILITY:**

- 3 autonomous scrum teams (multi-site)
- 1 QA in each scrum team
- Quality review meetings compliant to non-techies (multi-site)

- **FLAVOR:**

« Wow, things are working like a charm. Looking back it seems we've acquired quite some experience on Scrum. We should share this with my students. Any availability next week? » (The CTO)

# DIFFICULTIES

BECAUSE SHIT HAPPENS

# Pitfalls on the agile road

## ● ADOPTION OF SCRUM

- In the beginning, you need (at least) a motivated evangelist
- Don't underestimate the power of croissants for the team adoption

## ● THE RIGHT SIZE FOR A STORY

- It must fit in a sprint ! Break epics into meaningful stories
- You need to teach your brain to design incrementally

## ● UNPLANNED ACTIVITIES

- Sometimes it's okay to just say "no" to your boss
- Team velocity has to be calculated accordingly

## ● PRODUCTION ROLLOUTS

- Developing a product and operating a platform are way different
- There has to be a production rollout plan, sprints must fit with it

# Current hot topics @ Lotaris

- **BACKLOG GROOMING**

- The product backlog is key for a realistic planning / commitment.
- Dedicate ~10% of the sprint to the backlog, involve the product owner.

- **WHAT MAKES A STORY “DONE” ?**

- Developers, QAs and product owner understand stories differently.
- Acceptance tests help reaching consensus. Add them in your workflow.

- **QA / DEV COLLABORATION**

- QAs take over the stories once devs are done (sounds like “waterfall”).
- QAs should be part of the teams and test on-the-fly.

- **WHO SHOULD BE THE SCRUM MASTER ?**

- The scrum master is also developer and technical lead (schizophrenic).
- Should project manager become scrum masters? Who should? ...

# JIRA IN ACTION

## BURNING A REAL BACKLOG



# DISCUSSION

YOUR TURN