

Case Study: Fabrikam Fiber

Fabrikam Fiber is a fictional company that provides cable television and related services to the United States. They are growing rapidly and have embraced Microsoft technologies to scale their customer-facing web site directly to end-users to allow them to self-service tickets and track technicians. They also use an on-premises ASP.NET MVC application for their customer service representatives to administer customer orders.

You are part of the Development Team, which consists of 6-9 developers. They have decided to use Visual Studio 2013 and its ALM tools to manage their source code, run their builds, test their apps, and plan and track the project.



The Organization

Fabrikam Fiber is located in Boulder, Colorado. It was purchased last year, and is now a division of Contoso Entertainment. Contoso is headquartered in Bellevue, Washington. Contoso's IT department has over 500 people and a budget of \$50 million. Contoso's management structure is a traditional one. Contoso runs all projects, including software projects, using a waterfall approach. They employ a top-down, command and control, metrics-driven approach to ensure that all their resources (people) are being productive and not wasting effort.

The Product

Fabrikam Fiber's primary source of income is through its services. The *product* that your team will be improving is the website where these services are managed. Although profitable, there are many improvements and fixes the organization wants to make to the site.

The Team

The original team that built the website was small and Agile. Unfortunately, most of them left the company during the acquisition by Contoso. Fortunately, the visionary of the product (you) are still involved with the effort and have been given a role in Contoso with decision making authority and budget. Currently, the Website is maintained by a combination of folks from various teams:

- Part-time visionary/stakeholder (You)
- .NET and Web developers (Bellevue)
- Chief software architect (Bellevue)
- Domain experts (Boulder)
- Testers (Costa Rica)
- Part-time DBA (Boulder)
- Operations (Boulder)

The Process

The Contoso's development organization has had trouble delivering working software that meets requirements. When they do, it's over schedule and cost. As a remedy, a senior VP acquired and rolled out a major, modern methodology called the *Really Impressive Process* (RIP). Its rollout was planned and executed by the Software Development Support Center (SDSC) in a two-year timespan. Those working within RIP know that things are the same, if not worse. Management isn't convinced.

The Tools

Fortunately, all the team members are using Visual Studio 2013, including Team Foundation Server (TFS). TFS is used to manage all changes to the source code. Each team/location works in their own branch to ensure there are no conflicts. Merging between the branches is performed every other Friday. Contoso is not yet using work items, but wants to. Currently, requirements, feature requests, bugs, issues, tasks, change requests, defects, and enhancements are managed in disparate systems, including: Microsoft Excel, Bugzilla, BMC Remedy, Microsoft Project Server, ContosoTrac, Microsoft Outlook, whiteboard drawings, and sticky notes. One of your colleagues has attempted to combine these into a single document. Contoso performs automated builds and deployments using a collection of Make, MSBuild, and PowerShell scripts. Contoso has not begun to leverage Team Foundation Build. In fact, they're not even sure of its capabilities.

The Management

Contoso senior management have heard of Scrum, but are not interested in adopting it. They have just invested heavily in RIP. They are also unaware or unconcerned of any problems in their software development teams. Their project managers tell them that the products are working fine and customers are happy. Metrics don't lie. They feel that the schedule and quality slips are expected and will go away over time, as the organization gets better. Besides, Contoso is about to invest in a costly, value-chain study to reduce many wasteful practices in their change request process.

The Urgency

The original group of developers left shortly before the acquisition. They have since started up a competing company and there's a rumor that they're about to bring a new Website online that will have many more features than yours. Your stakeholders would not be happy losing this much potential value on the new acquisition.

For more information

Visit the Fabrikam Fiber website on CodePlex at <http://fabrikam.codeplex.com>.