



# Beyond Projects

Or *The End of Projects*  
*and what happens next*

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#BeyondProjects

Tampere goes Agile!  
October 2015



# Allan Kelly...

- Training for Agile
- Advice on
  - Agile, adopting Agile
  - Organizing teams

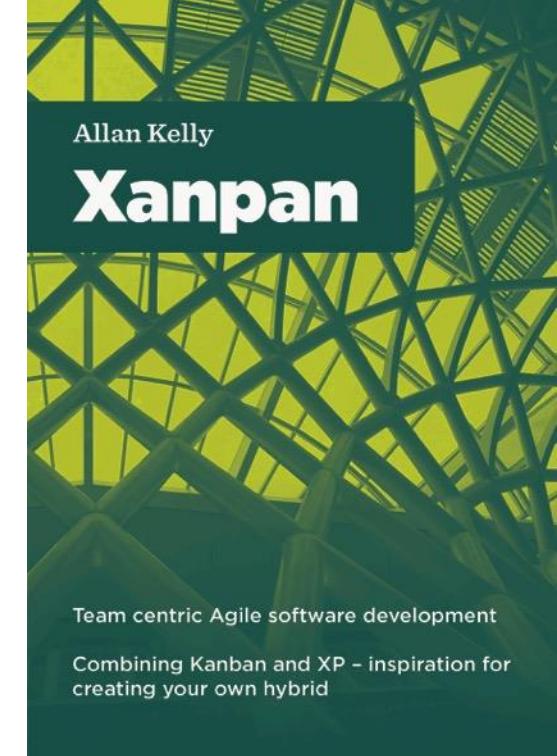
## Author

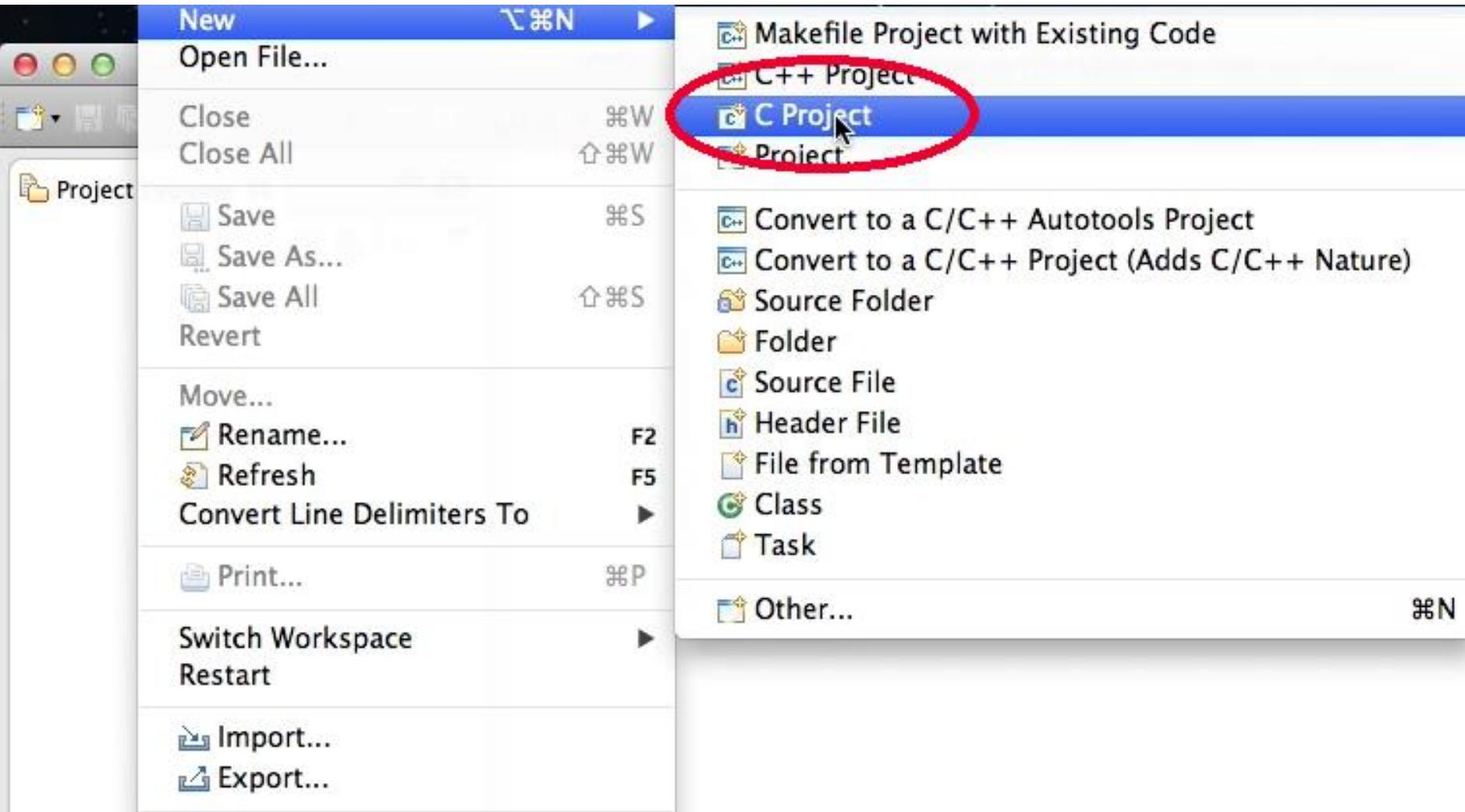
- **Xanpan: Team Centric Agile Software Development**  
<https://leanpub.com/xanpan> (2014-2015)
- **Business Patterns for Software Developers** (2012)
- Changing Software Development: Learning to be Agile  
(2008)

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Taken from <http://armstrap-documentation.readthedocs.org/en/latest/getting-started-eclipse-development-tools.html>

# project

noun | 'prɒdʒekt|

**1** an individual or collaborative enterprise that is carefully planned to achieve a particular aim: *a research project | a project to build a new power station.*

- a piece of research work undertaken by a school or college student: *a history project.*

- a proposed or planned undertaking: *the novel undermines its own stated project of telling a story.*

**2** (also **housing project**) N. Amer. a government-subsidized housing development with relatively low rents: *her family still lives in the projects.*

# A project is....



"PMI defines a project by its two key characteristics:

- it is temporary and
- undertaken to create a product, service, or result that is unique."

Project Management Institute - <http://pm4id.org/1/2/>

# Problem #1 - Benefit

## Project Success Criteria

- On Schedule
- On Budget
- On Quality (Features)

Where's the  
value?  
£ \$ €



# Project Model Assumptions

1. Value is knowable
  - And is known before start
2. There is no value in flexibility
  - i.e. Options are valueless



# Pre-defined outcome?

## Requirements change

The observed rate of change  
in the US is about 2% per  
calendar month

Compound to  
~27% per annum

Capers Jones, 2008

The world changes, get over it

# IT/IS & Business Manager survey

70% believe they are failing to identify and quantify the benefits adequately

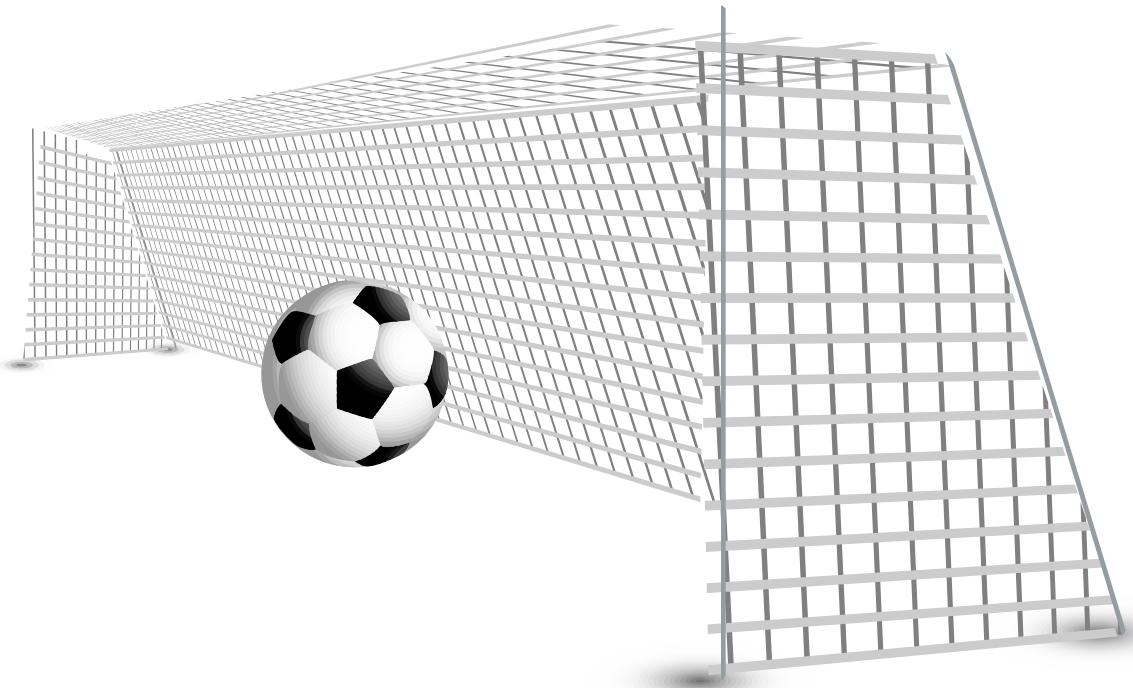
38% openly admit they overstate the benefits in order to obtain funding

80% report that the review and evaluation of completed projects is also inadequate

due to the focus on [achieving] cost, time and quality objectives and not on whether the intended benefits were realized.

Delivering value from IS and IT investments, John Ward, Cranfield School of Management, 2006 – survey of UK & Benelux managers <http://www.som.cranfield.ac.uk/som/dinamic-content/research/documents/deliveringvaluereport.pdf>

# The Project model leads to...



Conflict and....

Goal displacement

- Chasing date over benefit
- Chasing time over benefit
- Chasing cost over benefit
- Chasing features over benefit

# Solution



# Focus on Benefit not The End



Ask not, “When will the software be done?”

Do ask: “When will the software deliver value next?”

Think: Stream of Value  
(which might stop one day)  
Not: An end date

# Change Governance

- Base Governance on actual delivered benefits
  - Not milestones completed
  - Not documents
  - Not budgets

What have you delivered for me lately?



Picture from Picasa - Creative Commons License  
[http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:House\\_of\\_Parliament\\_6\\_2012-07-08.jpg](http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:House_of_Parliament_6_2012-07-08.jpg)

# Governance based on results

- Experiment friendly
  - Failure tolerant
  - Fail fast, fail cheap (salvage)
- Align with strategy
- Governance through *Iterative Portfolio Management*



# Iterative Portfolio Management

- Fixed schedule for gate reviews
- Review what is ready on a date
  - Benefit delivered to date
  - Potential benefit if continued



## Problem #2 – The End

Software isn't temporary

# Successful software doesn't stop

Successful software continues to change

Only dead software has an end-date

Projects end  
Successful software  
doesn't



# Successful software?

Search Results for "Web Browser"		Sort By:	Relevance
Showing page 1 of 13.			
<b>Moodle</b> Moodle is a Course Management System (LMS), also known as a Learning Management System (LMS). It is a free and open source software.  Moodle is a Course Management System (LMS), also known as a Learning Management System (LMS). It is a free and open source software. Learning Environment (VLE). It is a free and open source software. <a href="https://moodle.org/">https://moodle.org/</a> Last Updated: 3 days ago  <b>4.7</b>   <b>WebTorrent</b> Webtorrent is a web based GUI written in JavaScript for Bit Torrent Library. It is designed for server applications.  Webtorrent is a web based GUI written in JavaScript for Bit Torrent Library. It is designed for server applications. installation of desktop bt clients are no longer required. Last Updated: 2013-04-17  <b>PerlORD - A web-wrapper for Perl</b> PerlORD is a Perl module that converts ANSI text from a telnet client or any other program into HTML.  PerlORD is a Perl module that converts ANSI text from a telnet client or any other program into HTML. The program converts ANSI to HTML. Last Updated: 2013-02-25			
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<b>Web Torrent</b> Webtorrent is a web based GUI written in JavaScript for Bit Torrent Library. It is designed for server applications.  Webtorrent is a web based GUI written in JavaScript for Bit Torrent Library. It is designed for server applications. installation of desktop bt clients are no longer required. Last Updated: 2013-04-17  <b>PerlORD - A web-wrapper for Perl</b> PerlORD is a Perl module that converts ANSI text from a telnet client or any other program into HTML.  PerlORD is a Perl module that converts ANSI text from a telnet client or any other program into HTML. The program converts ANSI to HTML. Last Updated: 2013-02-25	<b>Web Torrent</b> Weekly downloads: 0 Last update: 17 April 2013 (9mths)  <b>PerlORD</b> Weekly downloads: 0 Last update: 25 May 2013 (8mths)		ENTERPRISE

1) If they use it,  
it will change

## 2) Only Dead Software Stops changing

## Data from SourceForge search for “WebBrowser” 19 Jan 2014

# End dates damage quality

- Short term thinking leads to...
  - Corner cutting
  - Known & unfixed bugs
  - Residual technical debt
  - Knowledge lost



End Date considered harmful

Late requirements considered  
inferior



# A Project is...

**“A temporary organization that is needed to produce a unique and predefined outcome or result at a pre-specified time using predetermined resources.”**



PRINCE2 definition  
of project

Continuous flow

Continuous improvement

Continuous delivery

Continuous benefit

Continuous not Temporary

Software  
Development



Project  
Management

A Match Made in Hell

Software is forever

Projects are  
TEMPORARY



# Rational end dates?

In the US more than half of the large projects ... predetermined end date is selected, and it is forced on the project by arbitrary decree.

Capers Jones, 2008



# Solution



Work to the business  
deadline

Do what you can in the  
time

Do good work

Deadlines Good



End dates Bad



# Temporary organizations

The most destructive idea known to software development

# Temporary Organization?

- Storming
- Norming
- Forming
- Performing
- Destroying

}

Takes time & money!



*Why destroy performing teams?  
Why spend that money?  
Why lose knowledge?*

# Temporary organizations

The most destructive idea known to software development

Disbanding teams destroys

- Knowledge
- Capability
- Performance

## **Corporate Psychopathy**

Process by which corporations  
disband performing teams and  
release staff



# Solution



Base work around  
stable **teams**

Aim for continuity



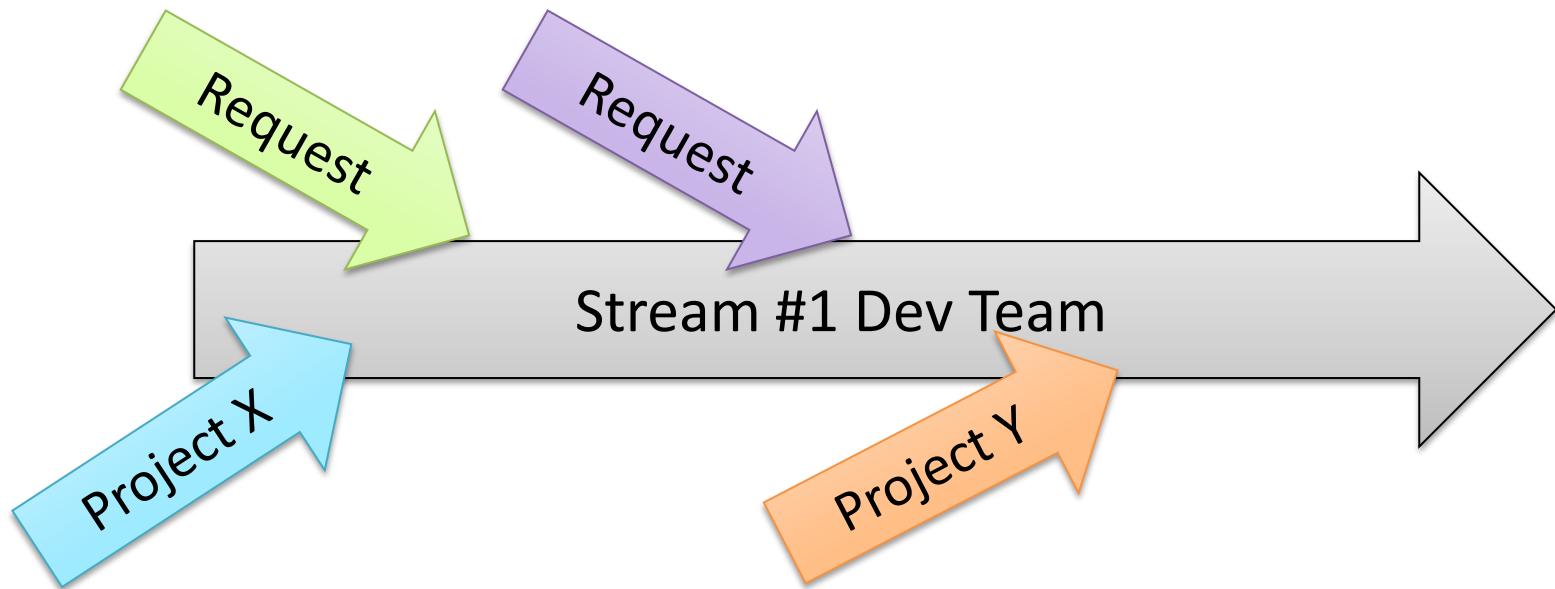
Bring the work to the team

Bring the work to the team

Bring the work to the team

Bring the work to  
the team

# Organize by business stream & team



- Aim for stable teams & continuity
- Close to business
- Manage queues within capacity

# What to do about it...

- Keep teams together
- Flow work to the teams
- Work in the small
- Work continually
- Demonstrate value



# Problem #4 – Projects are Big

- Project model is optimized for big
- Used on small pieces of work it inefficient
- Projects push big decisions up
  - to big men
  - with big cheque books
  - top-down authority

# Software development...

- Does NOT have economies of Scale
- Development has DISECONOMIES of scale



OCT 06 <SELL BY



MILK  
VITAMIN D ADDED

**MILK**

VITAMIN D ADDED  
GRADE A  
HOMOGENIZED PASTEURIZED  
NET 8 FL OZ 237 mL

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NET 8 FL OZ 237 mL

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VITAMIN D ADDED  
GRADE A  
HOMOGENIZED PASTEURIZED  
NET 8 FL OZ 237 mL

Milk is cheapest  
in BIG cartons

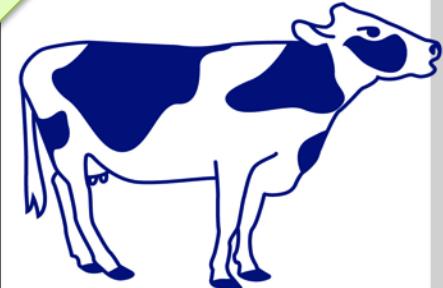
Software is  
cheapest in  
lots of small  
cartons

And small cartons  
of software  
reduce risk

OCT 06 <SELL BY



**MILK**  
VITAMIN D ADDED



**MILK**

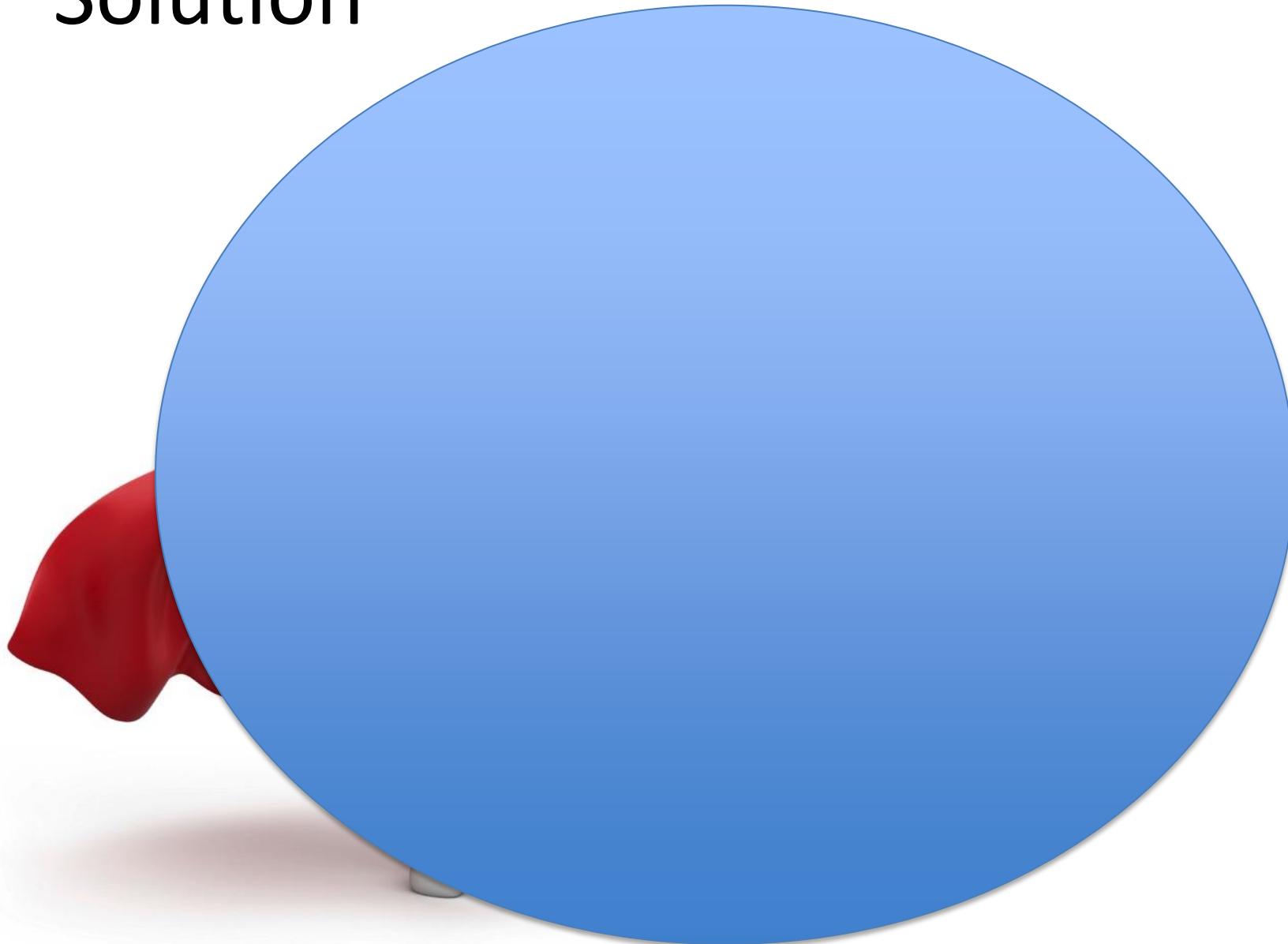
VITAMIN D ADDED

GRADE A  
HOMOGENIZED  
PASTEURIZED

NET 32 FL OZ (1QT) 946 mL

Big increases  
risk

# Solution



# Software development...

- Does NOT have economies of Scale
- Development has DISECONOMIES of scale

Therefore

- Stop thinking BIG
- Start thinking SMALL



Project A: Risk = 30% Value at risk = £1m  
Therefore risk weighted value = £300,000

### Consider for a large project

Prj B: Risk = 15%  
Value @ risk = £½m  
Therefore ... = £75,000

Prj C: Risk = 15%  
Value @risk = £½m  
Therefore ... = £75,000

E: Risk = 6%  
@risk = £2  
Therefore =

F: Ris  
@risk  
Therefo

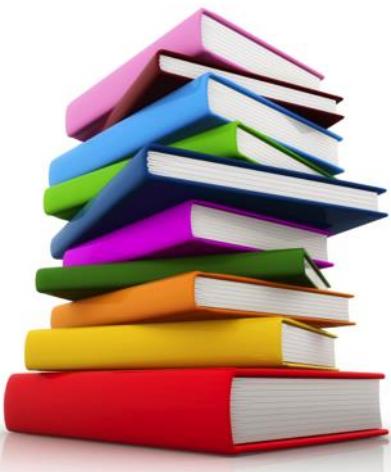
G: Risk  
@risk = ;  
Therefore

H: Risk = 6%  
@risk = £  
Therefore

I: Risk = 6%  
@risk = £2  
Therefore =

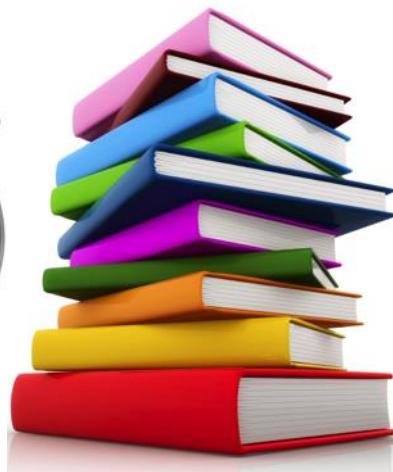
J: Risk = 6%  
@risk = £200k  
Therefore = £12k

# Big Batch Size



Wait

Build this!



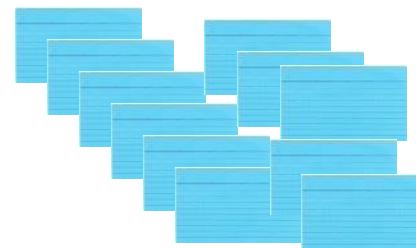
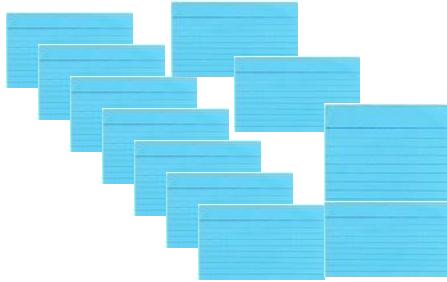
Wait

Deliver this!



Make lots of this!

# Small Batch Size



... and keep going

# The End of Projects



- Projects are accounting codes
  - Finished Software is Dead Software
    - Living software changes
    - Dead software doesn't
    - Living software doesn't end
  - Project thinking kills software



Not fair!  
You misrepresent us!



Project Manager



So what is “A project”?

# Wait a minute....



We don't  
Break up teams, or  
Stick doggedly to  
requirements

Why does Prince 2 contain this definition?

And what does a “Project Manager” actually *Manage*?

We do  
- Allow change  
- Consider value  
- Work continually

Project Manager

# Problem #3: Language

# “False Projects”

When the language of projects is used to discuss work which is not a project



Confusion!

Stop confusing people  
Stop misleading  
yourselves

# Solution – New Language

Initiative	MVT exploring a possibility Might grow with time
Work stream	Established team working on continuing/sustaining product in support of business and generating value
Client engagement	Team serving the needs of a client (May be a <b>Initiative</b> or established <b>Work Stream</b> )
... and some ..	... more (haven't worked it out yet)



# Beyond Projects

A new model....



# Waterfall 2.0 Continuous Flow



Jonathon's Run Fall, Pennsylvania by Hubert Stoffels (<http://flickr.com/photos/22195940@N00>)  
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# Continuous flow

- Work in the small
- Get good at doing small things
  - Deliver small increments of value
  - And evaluate results
- Go fast
- Value seeking
- Repeat, don't stop



# Organize for...

Work management optimized for small

- Lots of small decisions
- Devolved authority

Base work around stable

- Teams

Aim for continuity

# Could this ever work?

- Governance by results?
- Fail fast, fail cheap?

Seems to work  
well on Sand  
Hill Road ...



khosla ventures



# #NoProjects / Beyond Projects

- It ain't ever over
- BAU is not a dirty work

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