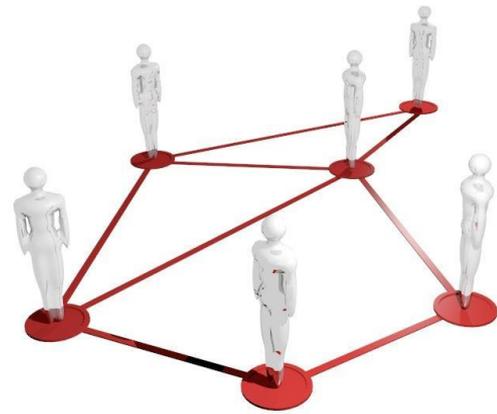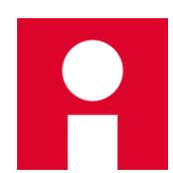# socitm

**Agile Business Conference
'A prince for our times'**
6th October 2015

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Agenda

'Finding the right balance of discipline and agility in delivering our future digital strategies'

- Agile vs traditional project management
- Combining the methodologies to deliver a successful framework
- The key components
- Quality outcomes and some examples

Why Agile?

Finding solutions is hard enough but, once identified, how can we implement them quickly?

- Agile provides one answer
- Incorporates management thinking from a variety of sources and from much earlier:
- Show and tell, Kaizen, Kanban, 'just in time', RAD, JAD, SPRINT, Scrum, Time-boxing, Lean, Agility, Extreme programming

Other traditional PM methods

- Main alternative tool is PRINCE 2, developed by public sector for use by the public sector
- Most apply the Pareto principle, using approximately 20% of the features, which, for them, deliver 80% of the benefits
- Underlying logic of a time sequence of events, known as the 'waterfall' approach
- Most projects tend to proceed linearly through the sequence
- Requirement for a 'sign-off'

Comparison of the approaches - Waterfall

- Development typically spanned many months if not years, and operational environment made this tolerable
- Clients to define and sign off their requirements in a system specification written by analysts from the project team
- Significant time gap between the client specifying the requirement and commencing acceptance testing, with little or even no interaction in between
- Change was not an important factor to accommodate
- PRINCE 2 principles sit less comfortably with today's dynamic public services environment

Comparison of the approaches - Agile

- Agile approaches are lightweight. Embrace change. Collaborative, involving the client and/or user to the fullest extent of their availability. Not sequential development, Agile is iterative: revisiting and refining products within tightly controlled timeframes
- The focus is on the user: will the product be acceptable and usable?
- Process provides a continuous stream of usable product
- Agile expects a constant and sustainable level of activity throughout the project

Can there be a 'Hybrid' version

- Yes
- Hybrid approaches attempt to get the best of both worlds, used by those who are reluctant to completely let go of the 'tried and tested' waterfall methodology.
- Has proved less successful in practice?
- Combining Agile and PRINCE2 helps modernise service delivery processes to meet the challenges of today's operational environment

Agile methodology

Critical steps required to adopt Agile approaches successfully:

Step 1 – Prepare for Agile
Step 2 – Recognise the potential barriers
Step 3 – Specify the objectives
Step 4 – Capture the learning from the pilot
Step 5 – Train the trainers

Detailed steps

Step 1 – Prepare for Agile
- Management culture
- Development Teams

Step 2 – Recognise the potential barriers
- Management and culture
- Governance
- People
- Language

Step 3 – Specify the objectives
- Understanding the benefits
- Selecting a suitable pilot project
- Choosing the team

Step 4 – Capture the learning from the pilot
- Applying the lessons learnt

Step 5 – Train the trainers
- Future development capacity

Lessons learnt from Socitm Agile pathfinders

- Application of Agile is not confined to projects; equally applicable to managing workflow
- Managing uncertainty is a critical issue to get right
- Enjoyable process to work with
- It is a successful approach (but don't view it as a prescriptive methodology)
- Take care if attempting to extrapolate the approach, particularly to large projects because it does not scale well; difficult to get all players together every 2 weeks
- Business doesn't appreciate jargon; 'backlog' is a negative term, 'scrum master', 'stories' and 'sprints' do not help

Lessons learnt from Socitm Agile pathfinders

- Business collaboration is a key factor; once won, is powerful
- Business gets a real understanding of the system, not just how to use it. (Consistent experience across the public sector pilots and in the private sector)
- The competence of the person in the product owner role is a key factor
- There are other ways to be agile than using 'Agile'. It is neither a prescription nor a formal methodology.
- The approach has significant implications for governance (particularly the management of uncertainty)
- Encourages innovation

Challenges in adopting Agile

- Changing the culture of those involved
- Providing effective governance arrangements
- Trying to scale up successes with similar projects to larger and/or more complex ones
- Iterative development, possible escalating costs?
- Products developed within strict time limit, impact on quality?