



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

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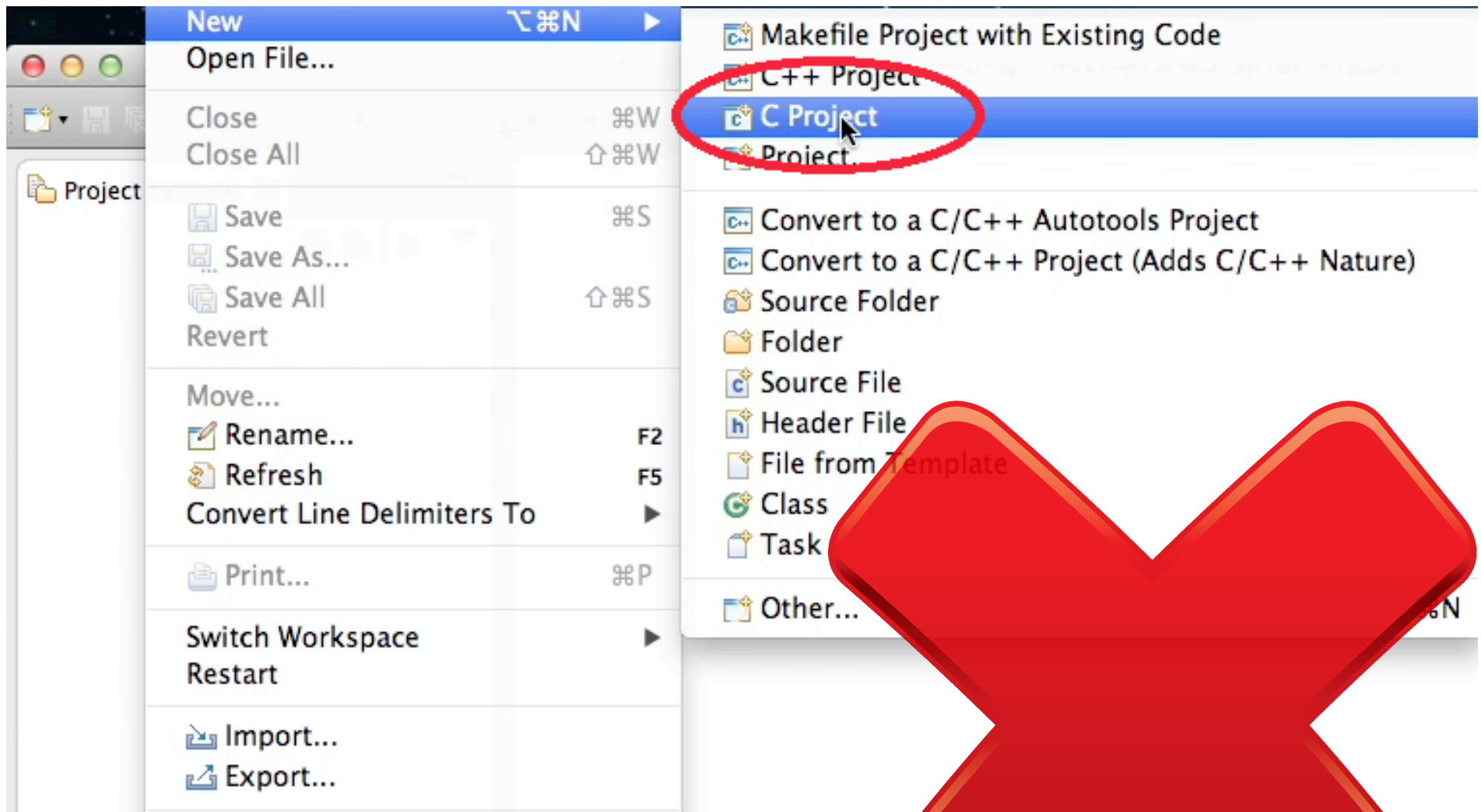
#BeyondProjects

**Oredev**

Malmö

November 2016

What is a “project”?



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 – Success?

## 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



# 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



Governance based on **actual** delivered benefits

Iterative portfolio management

# Focus on Benefit not The End

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

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



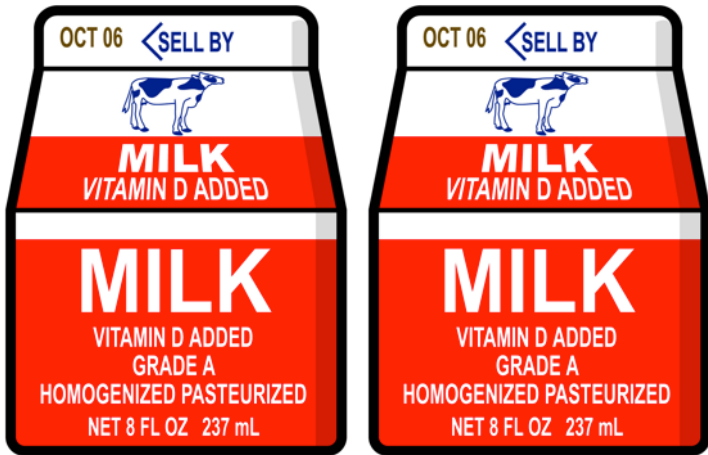
# Problem #2 – Projects are Big

- 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

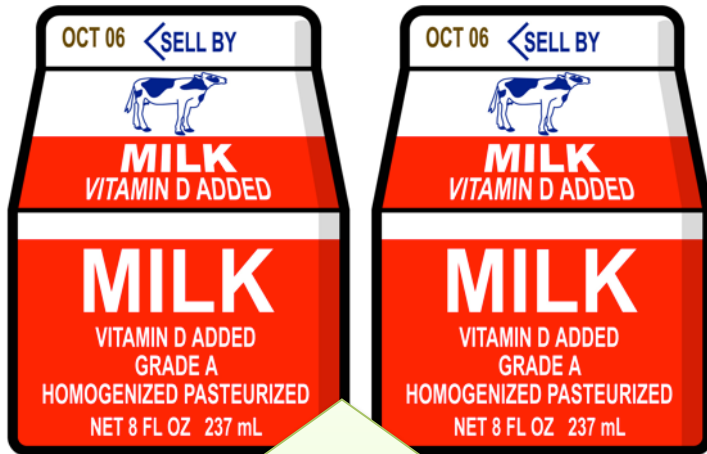
# Software development...

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





Milk is cheapest  
in BIG cartons



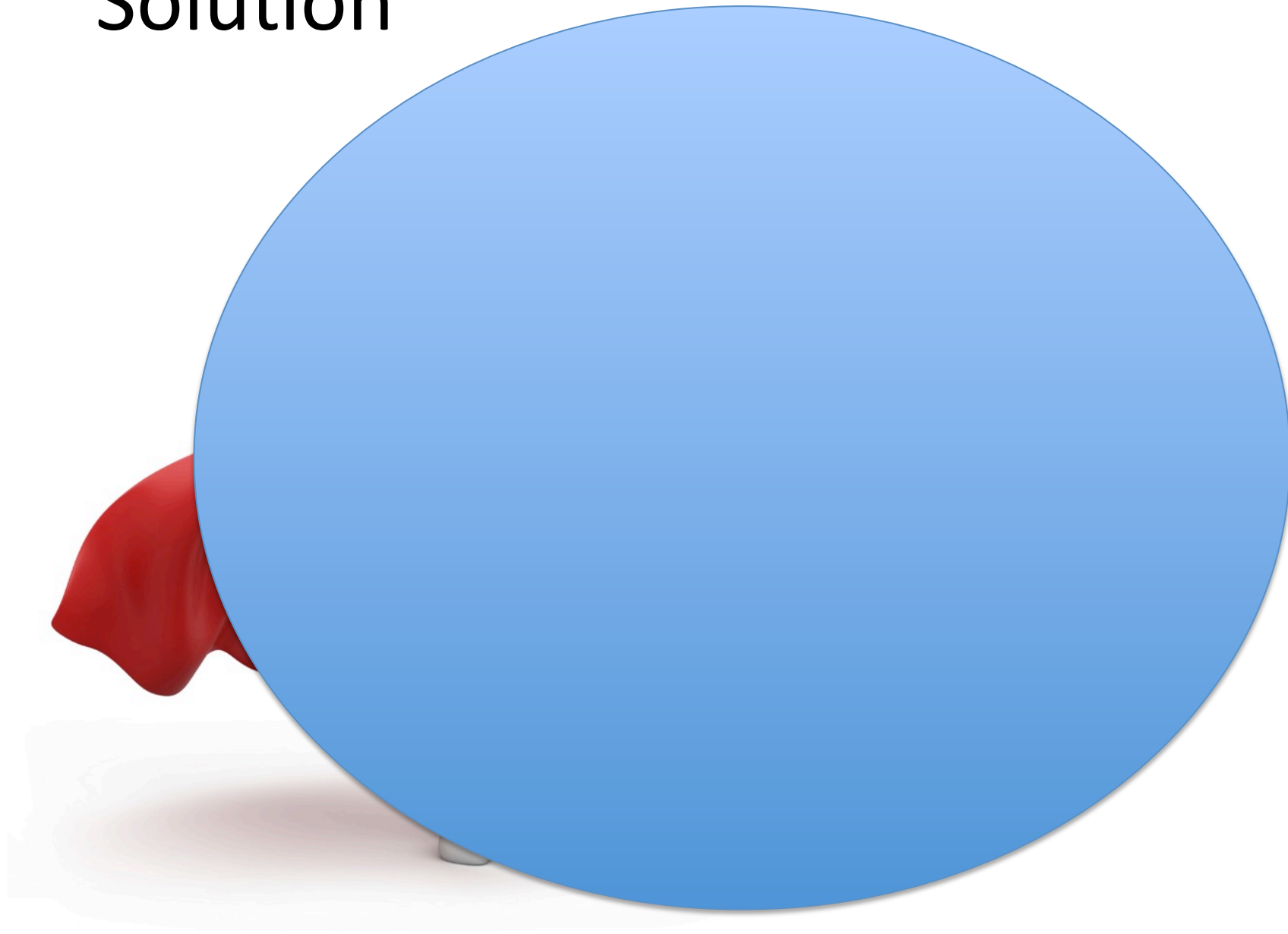
And small cartons  
of software  
reduce risk

Software is  
cheapest in  
lots of small  
cartons

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 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 = £200k  
Therefore = £12k

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

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

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

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

Projects are big batch

Small batches best for software

Small batches reduce risk

Regular delivery increases ROI

# Problem #3 – 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.

**Moodle** ENTERPRISE  
Moodle is a Course Management System (CMS), also known as a Learning Management System (LMS).  
23,239 weekly downloads

Moodle is a Course Management System (CMS), also known as a Learning Management System (LMS). It is a Learning Environment (VLE). It is  
<https://moodle.org/>

Last Updated: 3 days ago

4.7  
★★★★★

Download Now

**Web Torrent**  
Webtorrent is a web based GUI written in JavaScript for Bit Torrent Library. It is designed for server applic...  
0 weekly downloads

Webtorrent is a web based GUI written in JavaScript for Bit Torrent Library. It is designed for server applic...  
installation of desktop bt clients are no...

Last Updated: 2013-04-17

**PerlLORD - A web-wr**  
Web wrapper for the up...  
0 weekly downloads

Web wrapper for the up...  
program converts ANSI to telnet client or anyt

Last Updated: 2013-02-25

**Moodle**  
Weekly downloads: 23,239  
Last update: 3 days (16 Jan)

**Web Torrent**  
Weekly downloads: 0  
Last update: 17 April 2013 (9mths)

**PerlLORD**  
Weekly downloads: 0  
Last update: 25 May 2013 (8mths)

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





# 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**



Problem #4 -

Temporary Organizations

# Temporary Team?

- Forming
- Storming
- Norming
- Performing
- Destroying



Takes time & money!



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

# Temporary organizations

The most destructive idea known to software development

Disbanding teams destroys

- Knowledge
- Capability
- Performance

# Solution

Base work around  
stable **stream teams**

Aim for continuity

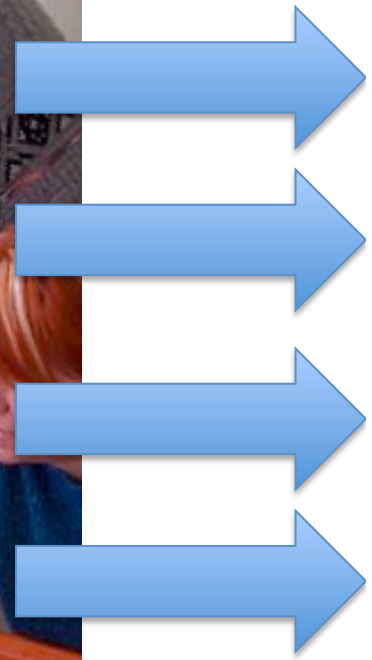


Bring the work to the team

Bring the work to the team

Bring the work to the team

Bring the work to the team





# What to do about it...

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



# 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

# 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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# Get good at small

Optimize & Organize for lots of small

Deliver small increments of value

And evaluate results



# Stream Teams

Continuity in teams

Align with business

Product

Service

Business Line

Devolve authority:

Efficiency in making lots of  
small decisions



# Value seeking & delivering

Value seeking

Identify

Deliver

And EVALUATE

Governance of teams

Repeat, don't stop



# Could this ever work?

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

Seems to work well on Sand Hill Road ...

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# #NoProjects / Beyond Projects

- It ain't ever over

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