

## Agile development – Delivering better products, faster!

Lots of people have bright ideas they know could turn out to be great. The problem is that most ideas get lost inside big organisations.

Take John - he's experienced and savvy, certain that he's spotted an interesting gap in the market. His idea is too sketchy for classic software development - frustrating!

He knows he's right because he discusses it with Sally, Stella and Alex, they are enthusiastic too. However, all they have to go on between them is a few notes and a concept.

That's often more than enough! Success doesn't always need big R&D budgets and long development times.

What many winning ideas have in common is the need to be modelled quickly, tested intelligently, modified responsively and taken to market with minimum delay. In other words, they are perfect opportunities for Penrillian's Agile development process.

Agile starts with a few thoughts, lots of discussion, a rapid series of prototypes, swift client trialling, feedback and final polish - **all to a fixed, tight, controllable budget.**

In tight times, this can be an important and very profitable route into a competitive market.

### To market, to market

Agile means exactly what it says and is totally flexible in turning inspirations into solid professional products.

Typically, we start with a joint brainstorm session. This soon generates a range of pragmatic options, or 'stories', for customers to think about and begin to make a few key decisions.

With discussion, the best 'stories' go on to development. Customers find it useful to run these by colleagues for comment or focus groups for marketplace reaction. This is usually the first time they will have seen their idea working in practice.

A rapid series of iterations means that the \$64,000 question of whether a bright idea does have a market is soon answered. Surprisingly often the answer is yes.



Agile is attractive to many mobile innovators. Research almost always has a value. The track-record of successes usually makes the relatively modest costs well worthwhile. In budget terms, thousands replace millions!

Reputations can be made; there is nothing worse than not knowing if your vision could have been a reality.

### A perfect example

Many ideas 'on the back of a fag packet' have proved to be major advances. This can become a formal exercise, as happened at an O2 conference supported by Penrillian.

O2 staff were challenged to produce innovative iPhone application ideas. The winners provided just two or three slides on their vision for a colourful, active pre-school application.

From this the team bid in a stock-market-style for their favourite elements to be included - this was a perfect example of Agile working in practice.

It took two months to go from initial brief to commercial marketing. O2 Solution Designer, Stuart Proctor, said working with Penrillian was fast and painless with great help in avoiding practical pitfalls. iPlay&Learn has since had 7,000 downloads a month from the App Store.

### **Key to success**

The Vodafone Mobile Connect USB was also based on Agile. Quick to win a 46% market share, and cited in the annual report as a 'key success factor' for Vodafone data services, it went on to win numerous awards and has since been adapted across many hardware types.

A range of creative options led to prototyping of the most popular, with rapid iterations until a final product was launched

Often exciting, frequently demanding and almost always eventful, Penrillian has made bringing vision and reality together enjoyable and profitable.

If you have thoughts, great or small that you would like to develop and take to market, or want to make more use of existing platforms, with new applications and software, then contact [rachel@penrillian.com](mailto:rachel@penrillian.com) today and arrange a free informal chat.