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Technology, Information Technology



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The success of any software development project depends on many factors, one of which is how changes to project scope is managed. On the other hand, project scope management is also subject to many factors, one of which is the software methodology in use. This paper outlines the influences of changes in software development methodologies on scope management.

Traditionally, there were numerous software development models, including the waterfall, spiral, and incremental models among many others. Whereas these models were widely accepted, several deficiencies have been realized on their effectiveness over time; the methodologies assume that project requirements can all be identified at the beginning of the project. However, this is not true as stakeholders always come up with new ones or modify existing ones as the project progresses.

Agile methodologies, which embrace iterations during development, were adopted to make up for the shortcomings of the traditional methodologies¹. The new software technologies operate in a manner that is totally different from traditional methods, making them simpler and faster than them. The developers work in small teams; they work hand in hand to come up with specifications and prototypes for the problems at hand. After that, developers work, with the specifications, to come up with designs, code and integrate units, and test them. The users evaluate the outcome of the activities and their views used to improve on the system's specifications in the next development cycle. This continuous

evaluation and testing of the system before release provides an avenue through which stakeholders can fine-tune requirements and specifications when they are still adjustable. The agile software development technologies rely on high level requirements. 2 Through a scope management technique called scope creep, which allows customers to verify and control requirements, agile technologies accommodate changes even at the late stages of system development. Customers are tasked with the responsibility of defining requirements and approving or dismissing outcomes for every stage. In this way, the client has control over step of the development process, giving him, or her authority to remove or add requirements as it suits him or her. Agile software development methods are object oriented, making it possible to practice component based software engineering. The system is broken down into its functional components and development done independently; components are developed independent of each other and interfaces developed for inter-component communication. The components are then linked together to form the complete system. Extra interfaces are included in the modules in anticipation for future additional components. In the event that the customer finds it necessary to make adjustments to requirements, only the affected component is modified. Requirements that necessitate the development of a new component are handled differently; the component is developed independent of the system and tested before being linked with the main system through the expansion interfaces. This not only makes scope management easy, but also timely and cost effective. 3 Whereas requirements are bound to change during software product development, scope creep management makes sure that the

chances of having changes that are unwarranted are reduced. This is because some changes affect the whole project; hence, if they occur, despite being unnecessary, they can have a catastrophic impact on the entire project. Agile methodologies, through scope creep management, therefore, eliminate, or reduce the chances of unnecessary changes from occurring, thereby helping in the regulation of a project's scope. The adaptation of iterative development in modern software development methodologies provides a platform through which developers can accommodate new requirements in successive versions of systems. In addition, component based nature of the methodologies enables developers to make changes to sections of the system without affecting the rest of the system; this ensures limited interference with other sections that do not need adjustment. Finally, the existence of a well-structured scope management mechanism, scope creep, ensures that unnecessary changes are avoided, thereby making the process not only economical, but also timely. Bibliography Dekkers, C., and Forselius, P., 2007. " Increase ICT Project Success with Concrete Scope Management," Conference on Software Engineering and Advanced Applications, (SEAA 2007). Korkala, M. and Abrahamsson, P., 2007. " Communication in Distributed Agile Development: A Case Study" In the Proceedings of the 33rd EUROMICRO Conference on Software Engineering and Advanced Applications, 28-31 Aug. 2007, pp. 203-210. Rehman, I. U., Ullah, S., Rauf, A., and Shahid, A. A., n. d. Scope management in Agile Versus Traditional Software Development Methods.