The Authorised Biography of a Complex System

Bevan Arps
Senior Analyst Programmer,
Reserve Bank of New Zealand

ABSTRACT

The Financial Sector Information System (FSIS) is held out as a success story for the Reserve Bank of New Zealand, since it went live—on time and on budget—in November 2009.

Thanks to FSIS, the Bank's Statistics Unit were able to significantly improve their processes and analytics, grounded on the programming team's ability to not just maintain, but adapt to the users' evolving needs.

Senior Analyst Programmer Bevan Arps "lifts the lid" on this complex .NET system in this rare look into an organisation's significant development project. Arps reveals what worked, what flopped, and what his team would have done differently, had they known better.

The Developer Ecosystem

Curtis Bailey
SmartJobs
Auckland

Keran McKenzie
MYOB

ABSTRACT

What makes for a great application programming interface in the age of the cloud?

If APIs are simply what makes systems talk to each other, there is still the devil in the details. Curtis Bailey and Keran McKenzie discuss the technical challenges their companies faced to create a new cloud-based management solution, combining SmartJobs's scheduling, time-tracking and mobility solutions with MYOB's cloud accounting products. From this partnership, SmartJobs gained access to a larger pool of potential customers, while MYOB expanded its solution portfolio, but it was all hinged on getting that critical API relationship right.

Just how critical was your Criticality Assessment?

Stephen Coates
Information Security Manager,
Waikato District Health Board

ABSTRACT

A quick criticality analysis at the start of a system, application, or process you undertake could save you quite a bit of time and trouble down the road. These days, apps make almost everything easier, including criticality assessments.

Taking 30 minutes out with the project's owners before it begins could clarify the security requirements, and identify the possible threats that can do anything from interrupt a system to a total loss of data.

Stephen Coates gives an overview of good criticality assessments and the tools you can use to assure the best outcome of a project.

Raising Capital in Five Minutes

Nicolás Erdödy
Open Parallel

ABSTRACT

Building a next great product is anything but a trivial matter. Making that idea grow into a viable business, even if it already has countless hours of blood, personal investment, and a few customers under its belt, is often the most difficult obstacle for entrepreneurs to clear.

Nicolás Erdödy introduces IT professionals on the verge of the million dollar idea to the world of angel and venture capital investment. It's a tough nut to crack, because early stage investors say "no" most of the time, and they usually form their views in the first five minutes meeting with you.

This presentation outlines what happens in that initial encounter, with tips on how to make it past the first five minutes with a potential investor, and onward to raise capital for your IT start up.

SKA: The Ultimate Big Data Project

Nicolás Erdödy
Open Parallel

ABSTRACT

The Square Kilometre Array (SKA) is one of the most complex projects ever conceived; a global effort involving hundreds of engineers, computer scientists, astronomers and specialists working together to deliver a remarkable technology and scientific facility.

SKA will be a mixture of thousands of radio telescopes to be built in Southern Africa and Australia, to monitor and survey the sky in one of the 'Big Data' challenges of the decade. Data rates involved will require real-time analysis of 10 terabytes per second; that's the equivalent of streaming one million HD movies at once. New Zealand's Open Parallel is the only IT company -globally, leading two work tasks of SKA.

Founder Nicolás Erdödy discusses the challenges his team faces in leading the Software Development Environment work package for SKA and how they are working towards a Big Data solution that could be applied to major industrial IT projects in New Zealand

Business Success with Supplier Engagement Models

Rob England
IT Commentator and Consultant

ABSTRACT

There is much talk about engagement models worldwide, but little guidance and few examples. How do organisations seamlessly meld with their outsourcing partners?

Managing a development, hosting, application or other outsourcing relationship typically focuses on documenting the processes across both organisations. This ends up as a redundant, often contradictory recap of existing documentation, with the potential for all manner of confusion. Rob England discusses a smarter approach to outsourcing engagements by designing and documenting how two operating models mesh together.

Tipu: Successful Continual Improvement

Rob England
IT Commentator and Consultant

ABSTRACT

Enough theory: this is how to actually manage an IT improvement programme.

Improvement changes the way people think and behave. Improving the practices and tools are secondary to changing culture. You can change software in minutes. You can change process in days. But people take much longer to change.

Improvement should happen in an incremental manner: evolution not revolution. Improvement is not a project - improvement is normal behaviour for professionals: to devote a certain percentage of our time to improving the systems we work with. We should all expect that things will be better next year. We should all expect that we will make a difference and leave systems better than we found them. Improvement is business as usual.

This presentation looks at the huge amount of potential improvement in most organisations, and how improvement goes on as part of the professional's daily work. We describe a method of breaking the task down to make it manageable, and then organising that improvement based on small increments, agile approach, empowering staff and a "relaxed" attitude - a pragmatic way of dealing with our constraints.

How Technology Profits the Non-Profits

Henrietta Hall
Principal ICT Advisor
Infoxchange

Marcus Harvey
Consulting and ICT Services
Manager, Infoxchange

ABSTRACT

A lack of profit-mandate does not eliminate the need for efficiencies. Technology can help non-profits make the most of staff and volunteer time, improve client outcomes, and support the organisation to operate effectively in the event of a disaster. The problem is they often find it challenging to provide staff high quality, cost effective ICT.

Henrietta Hall and Marcus Harvey talk about their organisation's work with small-sized not-for-profits in New Zealand, with ICT reviews and development plan, the first step toward ensuring an organisation has the right technology to support their efforts. They address how IT professionals can help to address many of the challenges facing this sector, in their local communities.

The State of the State's ICT Programme Management

Adrian Hendry
Principal Consultant,
Empirica Consulting

ABSTRACT

Information technology is the lynchpin of Government's drive to make public services ever-more efficient. "Doing more with less" is not simply a mantra. It is the demand for systems capable of delivering up-to-date information, on demand.

A number of high-profile ICT programme failures and delays, however, have raised the question of how well public service agencies manage their ICT programmes to meet Government expectations. Public Sector ICT consultant Adrian Hendry looks at how mature New Zealand Public Services agencies are in managing ICT programmes, where they get it right, and what can be improved.

Raising the ICT Game for Boards of Directors

Robin Johansen
Consultant, Nelson

ABSTRACT

The emergence of "The third platform" of outside technology services and consulting has not rendered ICT irrelevant to the enterprise. Research, nevertheless, indicates that boards of directors suffer from a lack of competency in governing enterprise technology.

This presentation explores the challenges and problems facing boards of directors and what role ICT professionals can play to raise organisational game. Consultant Robin Johansen discusses the rise in demand for people with solid ICT experience in governance roles and open career opportunities for ICT professionals who augment their technical skills with business savvy and strong communication skills.

The presentation will explore these possibilities and offer some career development ideas.

ICT Transformation: More than meets the eye

Mei Fern Johnson
Russell McVeagh

ABSTRACT

ICT transformation projects are inherently complex and risky because they overhaul an organisation's entire technology base and impact the core business processes needed to flourish.

Mei Fern Johnson talks about what to do and what not to do, focusing on case studies from New Zealand and Australia. She will break down a transformation project to its key phases and then discuss the do's and don'ts of each phase. The discussion will go beyond legal principles to project management, procurement and support of the technical IT team working on the project.

Evolving in the Cloud Era

James Knapp
Chief Solution Architect, ViFX

ABSTRACT

The era of the cloud requires IT professionals to shift their thinking. It's not about infrastructure management, but service provider management. What may be a new concept for most professionals will be in how they consider the new operational and governance capabilities that are required.

James Knapp guides us on a journey to the hybrid model of the cloud, and discusses us why the transformation is less about technology than people and processes. Knapp presents interesting questions and potential challenges organisations face in a typical cloud transformation project, and what steps organisations need to take in order to get there.

Learn how to assess cloud opportunities, the operational maturity gap to a Hybrid Cloud state and how to develop the adoption and transition roadmap to achieve the new-reality future state.

Identity Verification: without people, you get dogs

Joanne Knight
Senior Business Advisor in the Digital Transformation unit
Department of Internal Affairs, Te Tari Taiwhenua.

ABSTRACT

As the well-known cartoon caption states, "On the internet, no one knows you're a dog". It's ok to be a dog when identity doesn't matter, but if you want to ensure your customer is a real person, does IT deliver?

Joanne Knight looks at identity verification, how it has moved from business process to IT functionality, and why people still have to play a part. Joanne discusses the dog's breakfast that often results from weaknesses in establishment and provisioning processes.

She will also use the RealMe® online identity verification service as a case study in putting people into a process that ensures a user is definitely not a dog.

Plugging IT into Life

Dave Lane
Catalyst IT.

ABSTRACT

Information Technology does not have to be a mystifying adjunct to everyday life, something that is consumed rather than utilised. But the fact is, people outside the world of IT rarely dive beneath the surface to explore how technology can improve their lives.

David Lane discusses his vision to foster a New Zealand where experts with the time, aptitude, and passion for IT are encouraged to share their knowledge with the community at large, from the school room, to the marae, to libraries, and retirement facilities.

Lane talks about how institutions can be built up, with professionals and students leading the way, to demonstrate how technology complements and improves learning, creativity, and critical thinking skills.

Depression "To Be or not To Be"

Keith Lightfoot

ABSTRACT

The number of New Zealanders on antidepressants has doubled in the last six years, with 1.4 million prescriptions now filled annually. Depression is clearly a more commonly recognised disease than at any other time in New Zealand history, and the condition impacts IT professionals as much as anyone else.

Author Keith Lightfoot talks of his own experiences, including examining the types of mental and physical actions he's found have directly affected thinking and bodily health, while using a tested method, Positive Psychology, to deal with depressive thought patterns.

Rescuing 111

Neil McDougall
Ingenious International Associates

ABSTRACT

This is the story of how significant changes to technology and processes saved the day in the modernisation of New Zealand's 111 service.

Faced with failing obsolete systems, the service needed help, with everything from keyboard-based processes that limited operators' capacity to handle calls and large-scale emergencies to streamlining handover procedures and call recording.

Neil McDougall discusses the lessons learned from Hurricane Katrina, and how radical changes to processes were introduced despite the initial scope calling for a 'like for like' replacement of the antiquated system, and how operational staff were involved throughout the project to become the strongest voices for change.

Innovating with Natural Language Processing

Alyona Medelyan
Entropix

ABSTRACT

Leading technology companies such as Google, Apple and Microsoft have successfully commercialised technology that came out of Natural Language Processing, a field of computer science hinged on analysis of how people speak and write.

In this presentation Alyona Medelyan gives an overview of NLP, with a look at commercial and open-source NLP software, and an explanation of how this technology can solve a variety of business problems. Medelyan discusses how NLP can help make the right investment decisions, monitor the competitive market, and understand and predict customer behavior.

Big Data? Dont Panic: Automation to the Rescue

Dave Morris
WhereScape

ABSTRACT

Big Data continues to challenge organisations to create more value for business from copious amounts of information at their fingers. The problem can be tackled via a fundamental approach to the Data Warehouse.

It is now becoming clear how much Data Warehouse Automation (DWA) can evolve the way organisations build, renovate and maintain information stockpiles to integrate with business processes. DWA is essential when it eliminates breakdown, increases responsiveness, improves data quality, lowers costs, and empowers professionals and executives to derive value from the copious amounts of unstructured information flooding their networks.

This presentation looks at the increasing convergence of the data warehouse with Big Data, and how businesses can use DWA to mine the ore of information at their fingertips.

iBeacon and the Internet of Things

Mark Pascall
3Months

ABSTRACT

Apple quietly announced in 2013 a nerdy-sounding feature of its operating system that was said to give apps a new "level of location awareness". Since then, the potential of iBeacon has gained attention from business users around the world.

The technology uses a new incarnation of Bluetooth that allows transmitters to tell nearby smartphones of their presence. Combined with the right smartphone software, iBeacon opens exciting possibilities to connect the online and offline worlds and move us one step closer to the Internet of Things. Mark Pascall discusses the prospects of iBeacon, using real world examples from New Zealand and abroad.

The Digital Revolution

Rodger Perkins
Client manager,
Assurity Consulting

ABSTRACT

If you thought technology underwent a revolutionary change over the past ten years, wait until you hear what's coming in the next decade. Technology will alter every aspect of our lives, from our professional occupations to our day-to-day routine.

Rodger Perkins takes us on a time-traveling tour of technology, with a challenge to New Zealand to become a globally recognised, technology-based powerhouse economy in 2024, if we can only start working on it now.

Rodger looks at what our relationship was with technology ten years ago, then looks at how technologies are already transforming our very existence, and what impact they will have on us, our jobs and our economy in the coming decade.

The Future of ICT Security

Andy Prow
CEO
Aura Information Security

ABSTRACT

As technology gets smarter, the threats to ICT security become more sophisticated, and the issues surrounding privacy grow more complex.

Andy Prow discusses the technology behind the attacks his firm have seen, what to expect down the road, and how to shore up our defences, as organisations and individuals. Drawing from his experience and real-world case-studies in New Zealand and overseas, Prow explores the current state of security, while separating the facts from the fear-mongering, and clarifying the issues that professionals hear about, but don't always understand.

ICT Project Failure: The Human Factor

Peter Salmon
Senior executive and consultant,
Manning Charles & Associates

ABSTRACT

The reason a lot of ICT projects fail comes down all too often to human nature.

Peter Salmon looks at the root cause of project failure, why they continue to fail despite our best efforts, methodologies, and governance. Peter draws from decades of experience as a consultant, executive and project manager to consider the roles of managers, executives, vendors and consultants, and how governance itself affects project execution.

He provides some common sense steps IT professionals can take to reduce the chance a project will fail, while poking holes in the conventional wisdom.

The Privacy Pendulum Swings Back

Rick Shera
Lowndes Jordan

ABSTRACT

Once upon a time you could think of your home as your castle, and enjoy the privacy that entailed, behind closed doors.

However the defining lines of privacy have grown fuzzier in the digital age, as many details of our lives become exposed, wittingly or not, online or on some government or commercial agency's back room server. And whether it be emails or photos best left private, it seems it's now open season on privacy - even in New Zealand.

Public concern is not limited to backlash sparked by whistle-blowers such as Edward Snowden. There is a move toward the "right to be forgotten" by search engines, and for online consumer protection regulations with sharper teeth.

This state of affairs is challenging how businesses and Government function, and the endgame will play out almost entirely in the ICT environment. Rick Shera explores the contemporary privacy scene, and offers a view of where the pendulum should come to rest.

Key Elements to Sealing the Deal

Stuart van Rij
Negotiator-Pro Inc
USA

ABSTRACT

IT professionals face a multitude of negotiation scenarios, from dealing with scope creep and requests for discounts, through to securing the next engagement. In the complexity and urgency that plagues many of these negotiations, what are the most important things to focus on?

Stuart van Rij presents ways IT professionals can improve their negotiating skills, examining the negotiator's Achilles' heel, how to drive a negotiation forward and the key focus area when navigating the tricky waters of a business dialogue

Coding Bootcamps: Growing the tech talent pool

Joshua Vial
Enspiral

ABSTRACT

Coding bootcamps have spread like wildfire around the tech centres of the world, making junior developers out of raw talent by the thousands. These programs typically run for nine to 15 weeks, scoring high post-graduate placement rates, filling a niche in IT education.

Joshua Vial explores how bootcamps work, their strengths and weaknesses, and how bootcamp graduates differ from university and polytech graduates. Joshua speaks from experience with Dev Bootcamp and launching New Zealand's first programming bootcamp, Enspiral Developer Academy.

Legal Trends in tech that impact you

Michael Wigley
Wigley + Company

ABSTRACT

There's plenty going on affecting all in ICT, ranging from B2B, B2C, IP, etc. Especially big for ICT are the changes from June to the Fair Trading act around industry dealings for the big end of town to sales to consumers. We'll overview these and work through scenarios delegates choose.