

A Modified Agile Methodology for an ERP Academic Project Development

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1. Introduction

The economy and market globalization have forced all kind of enterprises (large, small and medium enterprises, SME) to compete against their counterparts from other countries, reaching high competence levels. This fact exposes a clear and essential need to be continuously improving business processes for reaching high levels of competitiveness. Regarding information management, Information Systems (IS) have responded to the increasing necessity of organizations to improve their capabilities to process and manage data. This need arises because the capability of providing the right information at the right time brings tremendous rewards to those organizations (Hossain et al., 2002). In that kind of competitive market, both big and SMEs need information systems for tackling the direct rival pressing, keeping their position in the market (Valor et al., 2007) while improving competitiveness by cost reduction and better logistics.

Due to this situation, a SME from la Comunidad Valenciana (Spain) called Chair's Collection S.L. (CC), contacted our university, Universidad CEU-Cardenal Herrera, in order to establish a collaboration deal consisting in the creation of an Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP). Being a great opportunity, the University suggested the Company that it should consider the ERP as a final degree project for a last academic year student, which was accepted.

Assuming the way the collaboration deal was going to be carried, it was necessary to plan how to face the project. It was clear that a traditional software development approach wouldn't imply the programming features and flexibility needed. Considering the project as a final degree project, there was a variable amount of time available for developing the project (between 10 and 12 months at least), so a methodology which allowed to change requirements and software features without a high effort and time cost was needed. Agile methodologies were quickly taken into account.

These kinds of methodologies are people-centred (allowing the student guide and support and the customer attention and care). They give more importance to software over documentation (allowing us to develop a real project to be used after the final degree project handing in) and respond to change over following a plan (which met one of our first needs: the change acceptance) (Beck et al., 2001). Among all the existing agile methodologies, the