

Fail Now or Fail Later....

PM'ony snicket: a series of unfortunate events

Adam Rose

2018 - Product Camp Dallas



Goals/Agenda

The Background

The Plan

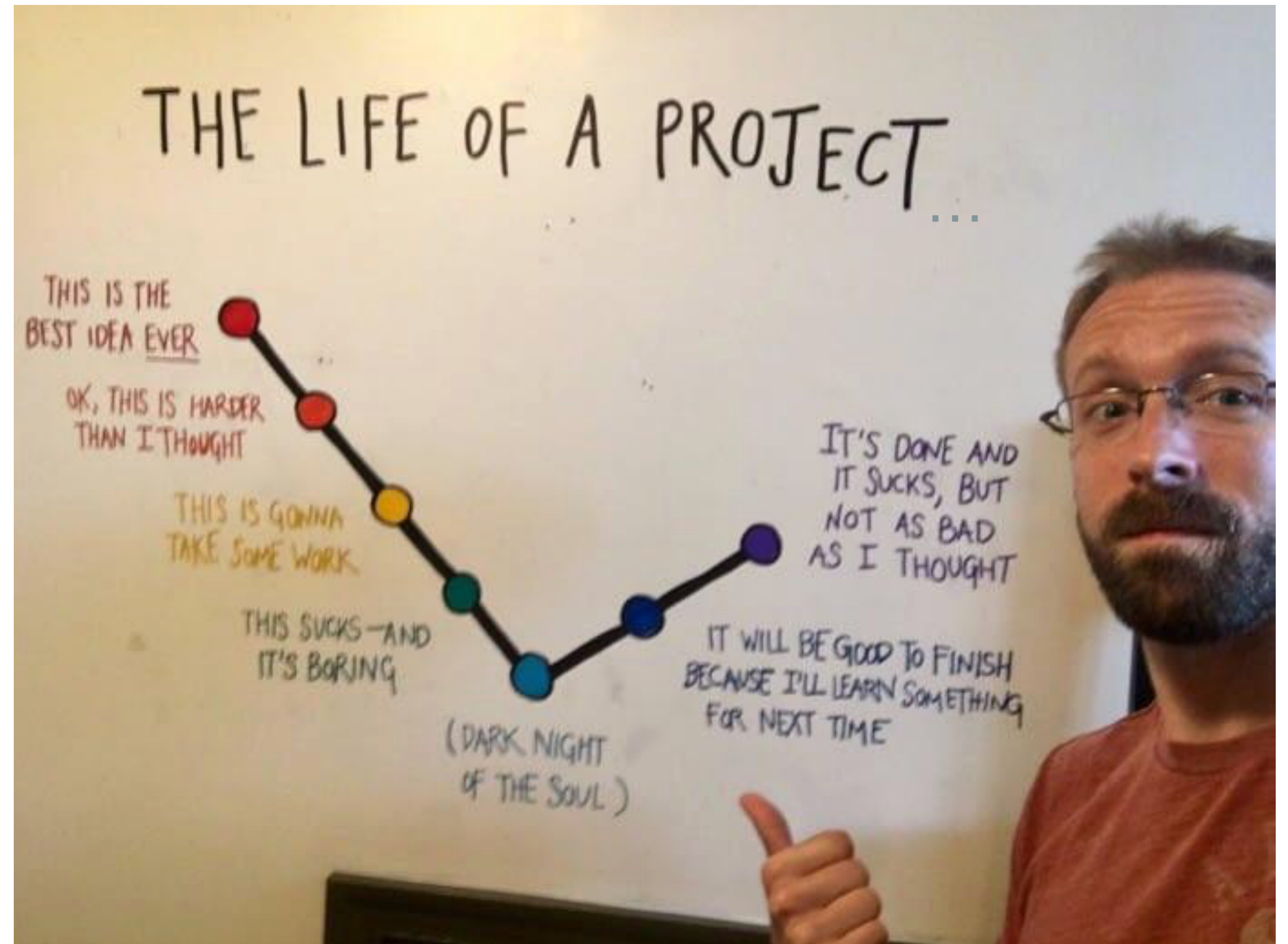
The Big Finish

The Problems

The Failures

The Solutions

The End



...or product...or release



Failure Background

Businesses run on profits

Profits come from risks

Risks result in failures

*the master has failed more times
than the beginner has even tried*

-Stephen McCranie

Product Background (c. 2014)

Product A

Launched 1978

Avg Cost: \$25,000

Delivered: Dongled

Shipped: Annual

Code: Fortran/C#

Teams: United States/England/France/Australia/Manila

Product B

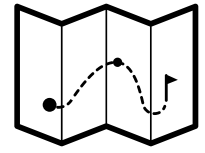
Launched 2016

Avg Cost: \$2,000

Delivered: SaaS

Updated: Bimonthly

Code: C++/.Net



The Plan: January 2016 (0% complete)

Connect the dots, grab the data, solve the things

Filters: [Default](#) | [By Sprint](#) | [By Status](#) | [By Employee](#) | [By Department](#) § **Current Sprint: -1** § **Current User: 1**

Management Summary

ID	Sprint	Department	Start Date	What	Who	Status	Notes	Update	History
5	3	Development	2/16/2015	Connect site to FogBugz	Adam Rose	Complete		Link	Link
1	4	Marketing	3/9/2015	xpswmm sanitary webinar series	Adam Rose	Complete		Link	Link
2	4	Marketing	3/9/2015	sanitary user persona development	Adam Rose	Complete	first draft done	Link	Link
3	4	Development	3/9/2015	xpswmm sanitary website	Adam Rose	Complete		Link	Link
7	5	Development	3/30/2015	connect site to Kayako	Adam Rose	Complete	have already contacted Cardno/devs	Link	Link
4	6	Marketing	4/20/2015	user goal/strategy development	Adam Rose	Behind		Link	Link
6	6	Development	4/20/2015	Connect site to Salesforce	Adam Rose	Normal	this might require app using different user	Link	Link
8	7	Marketing	5/11/2015	xpswmm sanitary webinar series	Adam Rose	Normal	Continuation of the series	Link	Link

[Make A New Record](#)

Name

Marcus Berry

Descriptor

Our very own power user

Quote

I probably know more than your dev

Other Software I Use

ESRI, AutoCAD

Net Promotor Score (1-10)

4

Who Am I

I am a mid-senior level technical specialist in Stockton, CA. My job is to review master plans, capacity studies, or any other submissions that involve sewer development or planning. I have been at the City for about 8 years. I maintain the current City model: when consultants or developers need to view the model I provide them with an EPA SWMM version and then merge that version back in when it has been approved.

What Are My Goals?

Making sure that the model has no errors. Being able to answer any questions the Director might have about the model.

What Is My Attitude?

Configuration over customization. We're an MS/ESRI shop and we have a standardize workflow for everything.

My Behaviors

How Do I Use This Software?

I set up all of models inside ESRI and use ESRI tools to manage workflows as much as possible. Python makes my life easier.

What Are My Trends?

I try to automate the tedious tasks, like import/export. I see us moving to the external cloud soon.

My Pains Are:

Comparing models & managing data

My Apathies Are:

Costs (relatively speaking)

How I Make Decisions:

Based on Facts. Show me some studies and other power users.

Update Information

**Occupation (ref only)**

Senior Engineer

Experience (ref only)

10 years

Firm Information (ref only)

Municipality (~100 people)

Your Competition

Innovyze (InfoSewer or similar)

Resources Required (0-100)

10

Personas

Num	Name	Occupation	Firm Type	Experience	Dev Cases	Support Tickets	CRM Entries	More Info	Edit
1	Marcus Berry	Senior Engineer	Municipality	10	141	0	TBD	Click Here	Click Here
2	Brittany Lawrence	Associate	Consultant	20	47	1	TBD	Click Here	Click Here
3	Melinda Perkins	Staff Scientist	Agency	5	67	0	TBD	Click Here	Click Here
4	Warren Vargas	Professional Engineer	Education	10	100	1	TBD	Click Here	Click Here
5	Christian Porter	Principal	Consultant	10	39	0	TBD	Click Here	Click Here
6	Clayton Franklin	Staff Engineer	Municipality	10	108	1	TBD	Click Here	Click Here
7	N.A.	Not Applicable			225	0	TBD		
	SUM				727	3	TBD		

Goals [\[+add\]](#)

Number	User	Goal	Type	Notes	Edit
1	Marcus Berry	Appear knowledgeable to other staff	Internal motivator	ego	Click Here
2	Marcus Berry	Work efficiently	Supervisor goal	business	Click Here
3	Warren Vargas	Do not appear foolish	Internal motivator	ego	Click Here
4	Brittany Lawrence	Minimize involvement	Internal motivator	Both for time and for upward promotion	Click Here
5	Christian Porter	Increase revenue & profit	External motivator		Click Here
6	Clayton Franklin	Appear knowledgeable to other staff	External motivator		Click Here
7	Warren Vargas	Work efficiently	Supervisor goal	business	Click Here
8	Melinda Perkins	Easy reporting from software	External motivator	Support other more primary job functions	Click Here

Strategies [\[+add\]](#)

Number	User	Goal	Strategy	Type	Notes	Edit
1	Marcus Berry	1	Provide high-level data intra/interoperability	Implicit	This enables him to work as he wishes without bogging down the platform for the other users	Click Here

Cases for User Marcus [\[Back\]](#)

Case	Title	Focus Area
5826	XP SWMM: Sanitary Sewer Refinements	Enhancement - User Interface
5827	XP SWMM Sanitary: Layer Control Differences	Enhancement - User Interface
11	EPA SWMM5 Exporter - no flows from sanitary mode	Maintenance - Interface
5828	XP SWMM: Sanitary Configuration - Units	Enhancement - User Interface
4758	Multiple DWF Patterns	Enhancement - User Interface
5823	Layer Control Panel: Default Appearance Changes	Enhancement - User Interface
5829	XP SWMM: Sanitary Configuration - Network Tools	Enhancement - User Interface
1004	Load units are out by a factor of 1000 in review results US unit models	Maintenance - Engine
6425	Add pollutant loading capability to RTK/RDII method	Enhancement - User Interface
2803	Kinematic Wave Routing - Get rid of tree structure restriction	Sanitary
5830	XP SWMM: Generate Thiessen Polygons	Enhancement - User Interface
871	DWF - investigate limitation	Sanitary
3980	Temporal Variation in sanitary mode on XP tables	Maintenance - Interface
6782	xpswmm: expand MGD configuration parameter	Version - Chinese
5876	consider adding ventilation tools	Enhancement - User Interface
6251	default date/year update - 1/1/2014	Maintenance - Interface
7115	xpswmm: add scatter graph support	Enhancement - User Interface
5851	XP SWMM Additional Data Fields	Enhancement - User Interface

Major XPSWMM Marketing Resources [\[+add\]](#)

1. Background [View](#) [Edit](#) [Delete](#)
2. Market [View](#) [Edit](#) [Delete](#)
3. What [View](#) [Edit](#) [Delete](#)
4. Who [View](#) [Edit](#) [Delete](#)
5. Qualifying Questions [View](#) [Edit](#) [Delete](#)
6. Leading Questions [View](#) [Edit](#) [Delete](#)
7. Major Selling Points [View](#) [Edit](#) [Delete](#)
8. Overcoming Objections [View](#) [Edit](#) [Delete](#)
9. Competition [View](#) [Edit](#) [Delete](#)
10. Min Specs [View](#) [Edit](#) [Delete](#)
11. Typical Workflows [View](#) [Edit](#) [Delete](#)
12. Business Case [View](#) [Edit](#) [Delete](#)
13. Training [View](#) [Edit](#) [Delete](#)
14. Tutorial [View](#) [Edit](#) [Delete](#)
15. Workflow 1: The CIP [View](#) [Edit](#) [Delete](#)
16. Workflow 2: The Wet Weather Evaluation [View](#) [Edit](#) [Delete](#)
17. Workflow 3: The Service Question [View](#) [Edit](#) [Delete](#)
18. Workflow 4: The Maintenance Questions [View](#) [Edit](#) [Delete](#)
19. Workflow 5: The Regulatory Questions [View](#) [Edit](#) [Delete](#)
20. Sewer FAQ [View](#) [Edit](#) [Delete](#)

Current XPSWMM Campaigns [\[+add\]](#)

- Sanitary Webinar Series | Start: 04/08/2015 End: [Edit](#) [Delete](#)

XPSWMM Resources [\[+add\]](#)

- [Link to SharePoint page](#) [Edit](#) [Delete](#)
- [Spatial Databases and XPSWMM](#) [Edit](#) [Delete](#)
- [Best Practices for RDII Parameters \(RTK Method\)](#) [Edit](#) [Delete](#)

XPSWMM Demonstrations [\[+add\]](#)

Important Sewer Problems [Delete](#)

Scheduling Planner

This area generates Trello Cards based on the following schedules. This happens automatically.

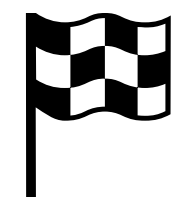
Daily tasks

- Check Trello [no card generated]
- Email as necessary [no card generated]

Other Tasks [auto-generated]

Count	Name	Next Event	Frequency	Content
1	Check Management Tabs	06/21/2017	+7 days	Check Tabs and Create and Delegate as neccesary
2	FogBugz Check	06/24/2017	+7 days	Check for anything assigned to you
3	Scrape Cardno	06/26/2017	+30 days	Scrape Cardno Knowledgebase for New Users - contact any new >3 users
4	Release xpsewer v1	06/30/2017	+180 days	Deliver first commercial xpsewer product
5	Competition Review	07/04/2017	+180 days	Review Your Competition and Report Back to Management
6	FogBugz Update	07/06/2017	+30 days	Assign cases to personas
7	Sprint Review	07/10/2017	+30 days	Review Your Sprint to See What You Need to Address
8	State of the Product	08/09/2017	+365 days	Review the year - look forward to the next year
9	Goal-Driven Design	08/26/2017	+180 days	How do your personas/goals/strategies look?
10	Schedule Review	10/02/2017	+180 days	What does your next six months look like?
11	State of the Users	02/09/2018	+365 days	Review the users and market - everything still the same?

[View Trello Board {private}](#)



The Big Finish: June 2016 (75% complete)

Getting to market with the right product

60% faster than company average

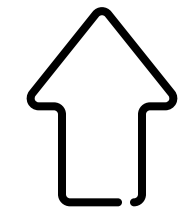
June 2016





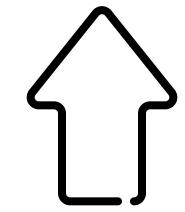
The Problems: April 2016 (50% complete)

failure to launch ... or launch to failure



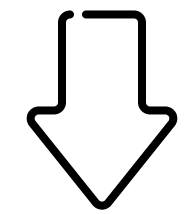
Marketing

Growing interest



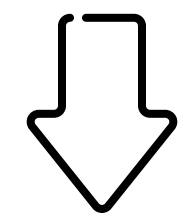
Sales

Pressing release



Product

Some persistently rough edges

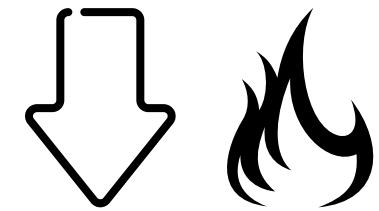


Technical

Scaling issues

Memory leaks

Scareboarding



**EXCEPT THE BIKE IS ON FIRE... AND YOU ARE ON FIRE...
AND EVERYTHING IS ON FIRE... AND IT IS ACTUALLY HELL.**



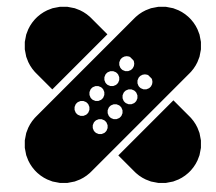
The Failures

what went wrong

Top Ten List

how problems can seep through data and process

Number	Category	Description
10	Sales	Early commitments that were allowed to fester
9	Operations	4 continents of workers on the project with hands off style
8	Marketing	Early messaging that was off center and didn't pivot
7	Product	Worked on user documentation too early
6	Management	Difficult end-user concepts that the team never fully understood
5	Management	Demos created hardening issues that disappeared vs feature frenzy
4	Product	Some bad choices (OS vs proprietary, etc.)
3	Cultural	15 days of no blockers != no blockers
2	Management	No engineering manager or QA directly working with main team
1	Management	Not enough quantitative feedback on an MVP



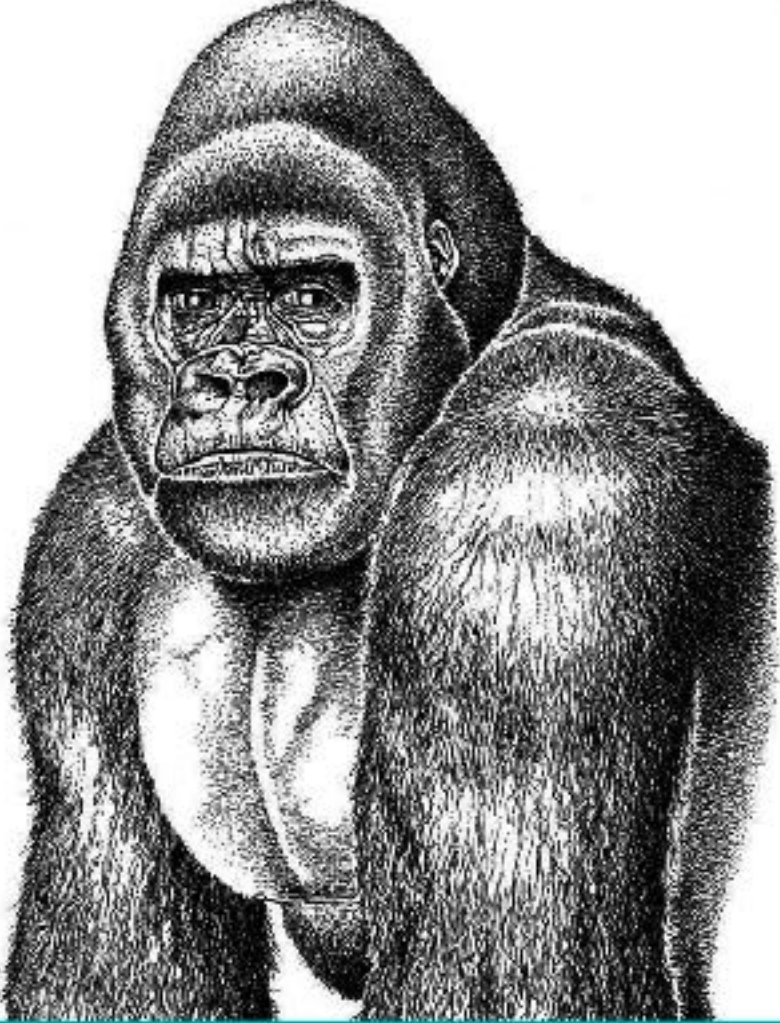
The Solutions

lessons learned

Two things left off this list, but worth doing better include:


- Sales/Marketing Alignment...or which tail wags what dog
- Operations/Staffing...or which people are on what bus
- Also worth not doing include:

Who are you kidding?



“Temporary”
Workarounds

Software can be chaotic, but we make it work



Expert

Trying Stuff
Until it Works

Suggestions for Next Time

data

- Keep the same level of internal data transparency
- Add external data (qualitative or quantitative)
- **Release some version to alpha testers**

mgmt

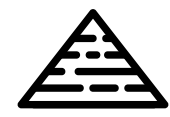
- Bad news gets worse over time. x2 for performance
- **Find a consistent way to measure real progress**
- Don't let bad dev apples spoil the group

product

- Consider tech choices holistically
- **Timebox your hard choices (spikes)**
- Avoid feature frenzy (hard)

business

- Set expectations downward and upward
- Understand price point goals early
- **Make sure you hire and retain the appropriate people**



Summary: Goals for Next Time

Trust but **verify**

Holistically evaluate **business value** of product over time

Be **Parks & Rec**, not DMV



The End

Adam Rose, PE, GISP

 /in/deroses

 adamberose

adam@modernmsg.com

