Talking with Steve McNew

* Project manager and auditor

My top 7 areas of focus for the audit:

* 1. System Architecture
* 2. Implementation Plan(s)
* 3. Metrics - system monitoring, key development metrics
* 4. Configuration Management
* 5. Root cause analysis
* 6. Risk management plan and process
* 7. Standards compliance, for example PCI

Other stuff:

* 1. Org Chart
* 2. V&V approach
* 3. Estimation methods
* 4. SW development methodologies
* 5. QA / QC approach and practices

Org chart, testing and validation, software development methodologies

* Looking at a long term play
* We are OK with learning along the way
* We know that changes sometimes cause problems… we aren’t trying to cause a train wreck, but we are trying to improve
* Questions from Steve B. – What do they think of the audit and the direction we are heading?
  + Mike R. – They have been getting questions along these lines. They want to be able to pitch the product and the protocols that we have.
    - Figure out a plan and work with the parties involved.
    - Overall project plan
  + Tim L. – Question about the virtualization of the adilas/Herbo platform. Talks about Docker and other VM options. Quick and reliable spin ups. Tim would love to see some design charts and what not.
    - There are tons of technologies that are out there… AWS, Google, MySQL, tons of others.
    - Questions about enterprise queueing systems
    - Scalability and reliability (controllability)
      * You are going to need more and more tests to test all of those things
      * Include files, logic, view model, SQL, methods, functions, dependencies
      * Figure out the standards and then code to those standards
    - Break the A-Z type model – break into smaller teams that follow specific coding standards
    - Plan for where we want to go and how to get there.
    - Shift from transactional data to more aggregated data columns and tables.
    - Small talks about indexing and helping to preset and prepopulate certain database tables – he mentioned his enterprise queueing systems.
    - Talk with a smaller team and then bring it back to the bigger team.
  + Steve M. – He would love to develop some metrics and monitoring
    - How do you get to a stable baseline and then roll forward from there?
    - Set your priorities
    - He likes the transparency and candid responses for the staff to each other – very encouraging.
    - Working though some growing pains
    - He has already passed a 10 page findings report on to Steve B.
  + Wayne A. – He would love to work more towards Docker containers. He said that there were some code issues that prevent us from clustering servers.
    - Our database structure – we would like to break things into a smaller corp-specific architecture.
    - We also store images and other resources on a physical box. This would need to be changed to get into a clustered environment.
    - Our focus is more on the service layer – the storage could be anywhere, the database could be anywhere, the code could be anywhere – we are planning on using commercial hosts to handle that part of the puzzle.
    - Database normalization and database issues – switching from MyISAM tables vs InnoDB tables (different table engines in the MySQL database).
    - DAO’s – Database access objects – Wayne has been pushing on this and Alan has been working on new code there. Making progress.
    - Wayne provided some stats… 23,418 query statements across 2,057 .cfm files. 10,816 querys across 132 .cfc files, 34,234 actual individual query statements.
    - Relating software to his kids and grandkids – sometimes we do stupid things and look back on some of the history/happenings and just roll our eyes.
    - We have to be open and direct… calling a mess a mess.
      * The audit is what it is… it’s not personal, it is what it is.
    - The size of the databases is already a problem
    - All of our database queries go through the database at one point or the other. The database is the main source of all data interactions and queries.
  + Alan W. – He would like to see the risk management sections and options. He would like to make some goals and solutions.
  + Steve B. – We have built this thing over the years and are trying to match the price with the project.
    - Some of our clients get drunk on technology – they keep demanding more and more and more.
    - Trying to mix operations and accounting… it gets super deep.
    - The whole thing is built on parent/child relationships and one-to-many relationships
    - We really want to help make the customers happy
    - We are moving into more of the same… if we have a guideline, that would be awesome.
    - Personal take – we are all on a path of evolution – Everything keeps changing. We started with modems and copper wires… it just keeps going. He can’t see an end to it. We need to keep evolving at a rate that we can afford and sell. There is a balance point.
    - Get the smartest minds in the room and figure out the next steps – to help our clients succeed.
    - Analogy of cars on a freight train… each year is a new car on that freight train. We have to be able to handle that and even monetize that transactional storage. He offered an idea of the aggregated data and data warehouses.
    - Auto processes that feed data off to other storage options
    - SaaS (software as a service) keeps changing… we need to keep evolving as well. There is no known path for everything that we are doing. We are still pioneering things and trying to mix changes and updates to tech, logic, and talent.
    - Keeping the earn and burn ratio all working together
    - Refining virtual AI (artificial intelligence) and then refining those pieces on all fronts. Progression.
    - Talking about organizing the core and the standard options per section and/or group. What is available and how do I get to it.
    - Some of the easy stuff is already completed… some of the new stuff gets super deep into predictive levels and advanced data relationships and logic.
  + Kelly W. – Our clients want to be comforted and secured in their thought patterns. She would really like to see what our processes are.
    - Adilas has been more of an organism vs an organization
    - We tend to love the freedom
    - Lots of talents but not much organization and structure
    - There is a huge learning curve and minimal pass down of knowledge
    - Organizational structure – who talks to who and who does what?
    - Core vs custom – We really need to make sure that the core is tight and solid.
    - Adilas has sooooooo much, it makes it hard for everybody to know what exists vs what they think that they need. Sometimes the feature or function already exists but people don’t know how to use it or how to get to it.
  + Cory W. – She is down for whatever new processes need to play through on the project level.
* Steve McNew – you have our permission to keep going and poking away! Steve Berkenkotter will be the main contact for Steve McNew.