

## TECHNOLOGY AUDIT

# PragmaticAgile Services









## RADTAC

### BUTLER GROUP VIEW

#### ABSTRACT

RADTAC is a software services company offering: delivery services; consulting and training in Project Management; Systems Development; Process Improvement; and Agile Methods. In the Agile Methods space RADTAC's offering is based around its PragmaticAgile model which aims to help organisations transform their software development practices in an evolutionary and pragmatic manner, rather than being revolutionary or prescriptive. The methodologies that RADTAC can offer range across all the leading Agile practices: Scrum; XP; Lean; Dynamic Systems Development Method (DSDM) Atern; RUP; and others. It has an emphasis on full Project Lifecycle Management, and to this end it employs appropriate Agile practices within a wider project management framework (based on local practices or methods such as PRINCE2 or PMI) according to the needs of the organisation. In Butler Group's opinion, RADTAC should be considered as a mentor for medium-to-large organisations that seek to adopt Agile practices and who lack their own in-house expertise, whether this be in Agile methods or the Organisational Transformation approaches required for its successful adoption and sustained use.

#### KEY FINDINGS

- |   |  |
|---|--|
|  Offers a range of Agile development practices designed to fit client needs.   |  Has particular strength in full project lifecycle management.                                  |
|  Business manpower structure ensures availability of high-calibre consultants. |  Can offer accreditation in Scrum, PRINCE2, and DSDM / Atern as well as non-accredited courses. |
|  Considerable experience built up in large-scale Agile projects.               |  Agile adoption may face problems against entrenched, contrary cultural practices.              |
|  RADTAC is a key contributor to the DSDM Consortium.                           |  Company philosophy is in introducing pragmatic, attainable changes that deliver big impacts.   |

Key:  Product Strength  Product Weakness  Point of Information

#### LOOK AHEAD

RADTAC has plans to offer an offshore development capability, add further professional accreditations and e-learning solutions, develop more 'out-of-the-box' solutions, and also expand core personnel and Associates.

## FUNCTIONALITY

### *Product Analysis*

Agile Software Development has increased its profile considerably since the Agile manifesto was published in 2001: this document espoused common principles held by leading software developers and gave an impetus to movements such as Extreme Programming (XP), Scrum, Dynamic Systems Development Method (DSDM), and others. The Agile approach is foremost a reaction against the traditional Waterfall method, a gated sequence of steps that starts with requirements, follows into design, code construction, and then testing before final delivery and deployment, with sign off at each gate. Whilst iterations may occur across adjacent segments, the overall Waterfall sequence is a serial process. There are two key flaws with this approach: first, 'full' requirements are signed off after often lengthy research, but typically end up being revised, so there is much wastage involved. Second, the testing phase is left to the end, when delivery is looming and schedules will have likely already slipped. Testing, if it is not cut-down, may be hurried, resulting in poor quality, and any revisions at this late stage become highly expensive to correct.

Despite the limitations of Waterfall, it is still widely practiced, and although the above description highlighted its flaws, there are circumstances when it is appropriate: such as when development teams consist of relatively large numbers of trainee programmers, or the application being developed is well understood and characterised. There is another aspect to consider, and that is the embedded know-how that individual practices of Waterfall contain within organisations that have been using it over many years. There is also the project management and higher dimensions to consider; breaking existing practices can end up losing value to the organisation if transition to Agile is too abrupt.

It is in facing up to these real-world problems that RADTAC, a consulting, mentoring, training, and application delivery service provider, has devised what it calls *PragmaticAgile*: an evaluation and transitioning programme to enable and deliver Agile best practices, intended to run alongside valuable existing business practices, the emphasis being on pragmatic transformations, rather than prescriptive ones.

### *Product Operation*

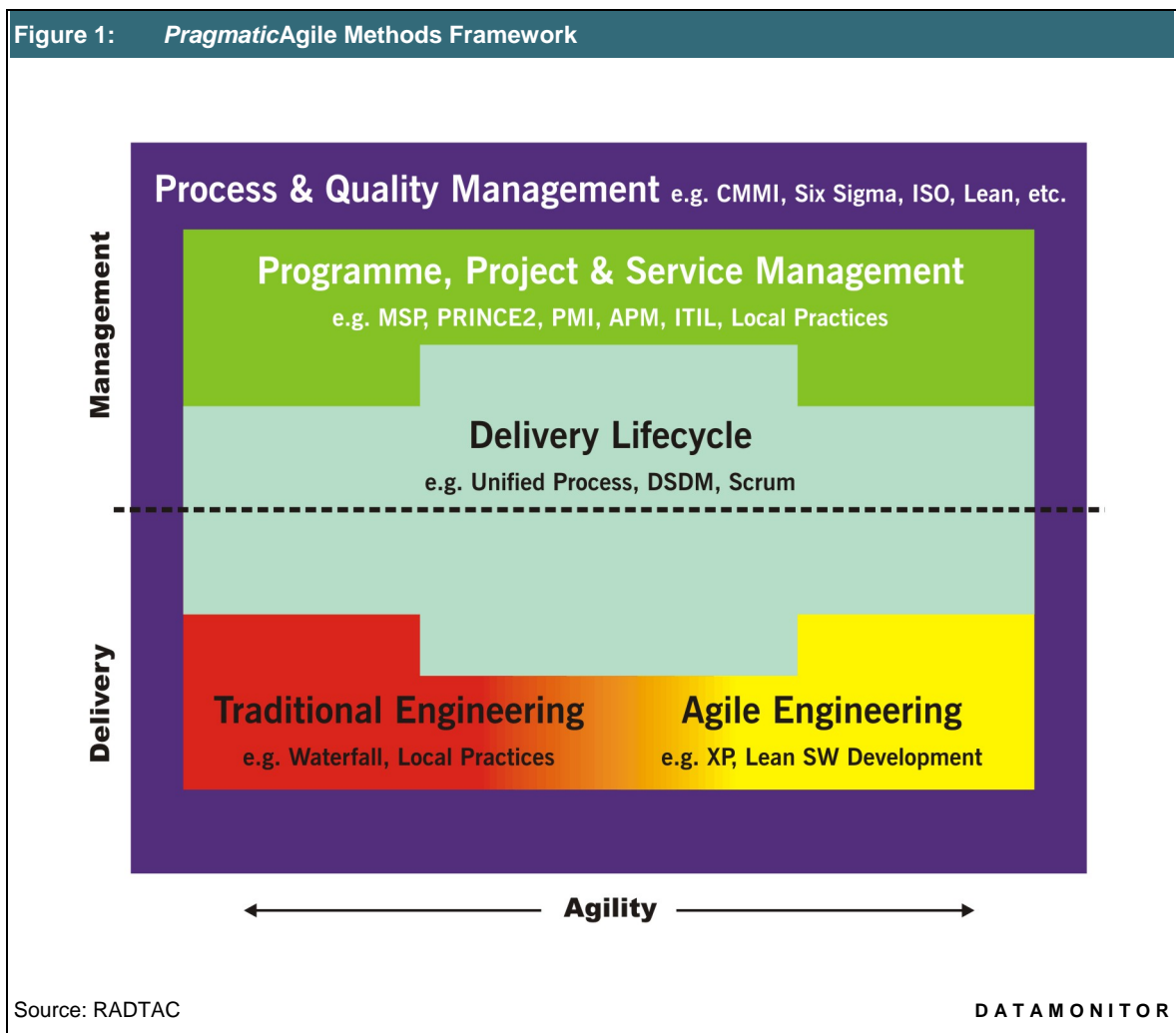
RADTAC has taken the view that the client understands its business best and that rather than replace wholesale existing software development processes, it is more pragmatic to introduce Agile practices gradually alongside existing processes. This 'evolution' rather than 'revolution' approach helps the client get up to speed with the new practices without losing any time in their productivity.

The selection of the appropriate Agile practice is also made in discussion with the client, so that the best match to the business is ensured. This means that where Agile is inappropriate then the business does not suffer as a result of sweeping changes. RADTAC always starts with a clean sheet, clear of assumptions, and works with the client to transform its organisation. RADTAC has in-depth experience with Transformational Change Management, in particular with deep cultural changes necessary for significant and sustainable improvements in performance.

RADTAC further distinguishes itself in being able to offer in-depth expertise and experience in all of the leading Agile methods, thereby being in a position to match the right approach for the individual organisation. Thus RADTAC is able to provide *PragmaticAgile* consulting, training, and delivery services that use the best approach or mix of approaches for each individual client. One size does not fit all.

The full *PragmaticAgile* Methods Framework shown in Figure 1 illustrates the range of methods that RADTAC services support. Together with RADTAC, clients are able to mix and match from the following Agile practices:

- XP
- Scrum (including fully accredited Scrum Training and certified ScrumMasters).
- Test-Driven Development.
- Lean Software Development.
- Agile Unified Process.
- DSDM Atern (including fully Accredited DSDM Training and certified DSDM Practitioners). Atern is the latest version of DSDM, now in the public domain, which had active input from RADTAC.



RADTAC can also offer in-depth expertise and understanding of traditional project methodologies and management approaches, the pragmatic value that they have for clients and how to successfully integrate Agile practices with them. This includes:

- Development approaches ranging from traditional Waterfall to the full Rational Unified Process (RUP) for very large projects. RADTAC believes that although Waterfall still has its place the default consideration should be Agile – Waterfall should only be used if necessary, and where it adds true value.
- Project management approaches such as Project Management Institute Project Management Body Of Knowledge (PMBOK) and PRINCE2 (including fully Accredited PRINCE2 Training and certified PRINCE2 Practitioners).
- Portfolio and Programme Management approaches such as the Office of Government Commerce's Managing Successful Programmes (MSPs).
- Process, Quality and Service Management approaches such as Capability Maturity Model Integration (CMMI) and IT Information Library (ITIL).

Thus RADTAC works with businesses seeking to understand and evolve towards Agile, while maximising their existing methods and investment and/or improving their wider project lifecycle management at the same time.

The overall goal of RADTAC's *PragmaticAgile* Transformation Service is to provide the client with a significantly improved and sustainable Agile capability. It achieves this firstly by recognising that successful Agile enablement is an exercise in organisational change or 'transformation', which needs to take account of the implications of Agile across the organisation. In most organisations, Agile practices have the best chance of success where the organisation itself undertakes significant change. Secondly, RADTAC recognises that to be successful and sustainable, each organisation must adapt and use Agile approaches in its own way. Inappropriate practices which are forced onto an organisation and its projects without genuine buy-in from stakeholders will be short-lived.

The RADTAC *PragmaticAgile* Transformation Service has five strands that work together for effective transition to a sustainable step-change in performance. Each of these service strands can be supplied individually or in any combination as appropriate to client needs.

- 1. Transition Management:** RADTAC helps the client manage the transition as a proper project or programme with clear vision, objectives, measures, fully-engaged stakeholders, and a properly costed plan. RADTAC uses *PragmaticAgile* to deliver *PragmaticAgile* through a series of incremental, iterative improvement deliveries.
- 2. Process Routemap of Guidelines and Standards:** RADTAC works with the client in selecting the right Agile practices for the circumstances, tailoring and integrating them with relevant wider project lifecycle management processes, providing guidance and standards to the desktop, and ensuring that feedback from usage is gathered and acted-upon.
- 3. Training and Education:** RADTAC works with the client to define the portfolio of training and education that is required, ranging from detailed 'Practitioner' courses to short targeted briefings. A training plan and organisation is established using RADTAC Trainers and/or 'train-the-trainer' to enable internal Trainers and champions to take ownership. Training can be adapted from RADTAC's portfolio of training material in the leading Agile practices (XP, Scrum, Lean, DSDM/Atern, Agile Unified Process) and wider Project Lifecycle disciplines such as Project Management, Business Analysis, Facilitation, UML, Estimating, etc.

4. **Support:** RADTAC provides transformation consultancy at the senior-management level, together with coaching and mentoring of internal Agile experts and champions, technical and business project staff, and skilled interim resources, such as project managers, architects, analysts, developers, and testers, to work alongside client team members. The emphasis is on knowledge and skills transfer to establish the client's internal support capabilities that can take-over from RADTAC.
5. **Capability Building:** RADTAC provides expert coaches, consultants, trainers, and interim personnel to improve all of the related capabilities that the client needs to address in order to make their new Agile ways of working sustainable and to continue 'business as usual'. As well as the core Agile capabilities, this may also focus on areas such as cultural change, working with third parties, off-shore and distributed Agile, managing the pre-project portfolio, project tools and facilities, Agile HR management, etc. – dependant upon the evolving needs of the client and the areas that they need to address.

RADTAC's operational structure can be visualised as three concentric circles: the inner-most circle contains the core, permanent employees and founders of the company and currently numbers five people. The next circle contains the RADTAC Associates – these are leading Agile and Transformation professionals who work primarily with RADTAC and are called upon to lead consulting assignments: they currently number around 60 and roughly half will be working on RADTAC projects at any given time. The final outer circle is made up of a network of skilled and experienced specialist professionals, all known or recommended to RADTAC, and pre-screened through a rigorous quality control process before being trained in the RADTAC *PragmaticAgile* approach and contracted to projects. This final circle represents a wider pool that may feed in to the Associate level over time. This agile structure enables RADTAC to provide the best team for the job rather than having to select from 'the bench' or a lengthy and costly process of recruitment.

## Product Emphasis

RADTAC *PragmaticAgile* focuses on the complete Agile Project lifecycle and in particular on Agile Project Management, an area that can end up being neglected with the attention on code production, but which is equally, if not more important in ensuring successful Agile project delivery. RADTAC also aims for a 'light touch, heavy impact' relationship with its clients and project management. The pragmatic approach of the service means that RADTAC can apply management frameworks, such as PRINCE2 and CMMI compliant standards with any of the Agile methodologies such as XP, Scrum, Lean, DSDM/Atern or AUP, that are being used for delivery.

RADTAC has found that organisations can embark on Project Lifecycle Management programmes too quickly – without proper consideration of their objectives, outcomes, desired benefits, and measures – and lose their way as a result. It recommends the use of a managed, evolutionary approach to Agile enablement using the principles of transformational change.

## DEPLOYMENT

A client will generally need to make its management, technical, and administration staff available to work with RADTAC during the project engagement. Ongoing resources may also be necessary: and the clients' HR function may need to be targeted to provide or produce skilled and experienced staff to continue the implemented *PragmaticAgile* practices. The Project Management Office and/or Quality and Project Assurance function must be able to provide expert support to projects and programmes using the Agile approach on a continuing and evolving basis.

RADTAC helps clients build these sustainable capabilities internally, so in most cases they are largely done by the clients themselves, but RADTAC services tend to be retained on an occasional, ongoing basis for a variety of reasons: training of new joiners; supply of skilled interim project and consultancy staff; the delivery of a complete project by a RADTAC delivery team. RADTAC finds that it is also retained to assist with further capability building or transformation efforts in other areas of the business.

The *PragmaticAgile* service has 'out-of-the-box' elements such as: standard training courses; definitions and templates for the leading methods; and certain standard service offerings such as project Kick-offs, Sprint planning sessions, Retrospectives, Agile Readiness Assessments, and Agile Audits. These elements are most effective when tailored to the precise needs of the client; often the fit to the client's culture is a critical aspect.

Technical support is delivered on an as-needs basis either on customer site, or off-site at RADTAC's training centre. RADTAC also operates a range of public training courses in all of the leading Agile methods.

RADTAC can deliver specialist resources from its Associates to fulfil interim management capability, from Team Leaders to Managers of multi-million pound programmes; delivery Specialists who can provide clients with highly skilled and experienced individuals; and Project / Programme / Service Managers, Architects, Analysts, Developers, Designers, and Testers. Finally, RADTAC can supply managed teams to deliver specific products, projects, and systems.

## SERVICE STRATEGY

RADTAC targets any industry sector that develops software, whether applied to a single project, to a programme, or to an entire enterprise. Measuring ROI can be difficult for those organisations that do not have a baseline of project delivery metrics against which to compare figures, and this is the majority of clients. However, collection and measurement of project metrics is a vital element of the RADTAC *PragmaticAgile* implementation approach and means that going forward ROI can be quantified.

RADTAC sees a market opportunity in observing that, to date, whilst there have been many significant examples of success with Agile on individual projects, there are too few where Agile has become "business as usual" within a company. The company believes that failure to implement Agile beyond the pilot stage is due to initial projects taking on too much in a single step, particularly in large corporate organisations. It sees the remedy in the need to take account of existing systems, methods, and priorities, to include them where appropriate and to avoid unnecessary large, single steps. It is the recognition of these requirements that led RADTAC to develop its *PragmaticAgile* approach to enable Agile transformation in the real world.

RADTAC's key business partnerships that support its services include: DSDM Consortium, Agile Alliance & Scrum Alliance.

RADTAC undertakes projects from small pilots to significant enterprise-wide transformation projects – anything from a few thousand to several million pounds.

In the longer term RADTAC has the following plans: grow the core team of permanent and Associate professionals, establish an off-shore development capability; secure more professional accreditations and develop e-learning solutions for its training operations; and develop more 'out-of-the-box' service solutions for kick-starting consulting assignments.

## COMPANY PROFILE

RADTAC is a privately-owned company with headquarters in Redhill, Surrey, and an additional office near Bristol. The company employs the Associate Business Model to deliver services to its clients; this enables it to cover a wide geography: RADTAC has delivered services to client projects throughout the UK and Ireland, in Europe, India, Hong Kong, Singapore, Canada, and the USA. Founded in 2000, the Senior Management Team of RADTAC is David Hicks, Peter Measey, and Les Oliver.

David Hicks is a founder member of the Agile Alliance. His interest and expertise in iterative and Agile development approaches dates back to his post-graduate thesis on Rapid Application Development, which was published by the British Computer Society in 1987. From 1997 to 2000 Hicks managed the roll-out of DSDM across the whole of British Airways 5,000-strong IT department and provided consultancy to the Terminal 5 project on its use of Scrum.

Peter Measey's background is in IT-driven Organisational Transformation. He led a Business Re-engineering team as British Airways Engineering System Manager before joining BA's Agile DSDM Programme and subsequently taking over from Hicks to complete the Agile transformation by formalising the definition of the framework and making it the mandatory standard for all BA IT projects. With over 150 Agile project deliveries over three years and an average 80% improvement in project productivity, yielding savings of over £23 million, this was one of the largest and most successful Agile transformation programmes ever undertaken.

Together, Hicks and Measey initially established RADTAC to provide continuing support to BA after completion of its Agile programme. They were later joined by Les Oliver; a leading Agile Business Development professional with extensive previous experience at Unisys, Oracle, IBM, and Thoughtworks. Oliver has unique and comprehensive expertise in Services-led project sales – specialising in large-scale Agile-based projects.

RADTAC has grown and developed to help clients realise the benefits of using the leading Agile methods and other best-practice approaches. Today RADTAC provides a comprehensive package of consulting, training, and delivery services across the scale from individual projects to complete enterprise transformation programmes.

The company currently has five employees and 30 Associates. A further two employees are planned to be added in the next 12 months, as well as growth in the number of Associates.

The following are the names of six key clients that are willing to be named: Fidelity International, Friends Provident, Jardine Lloyd Thompson (Profund Solutions), BT, British Airways, and HM Customs & Excise.

RADTAC has 12 customers currently using its services and a total customer base of over 40 customers.

## SUMMARY

RADTAC has been offering its customers a blend of development practices that can be recognised as Agile for many years prior to the Agile methodologies movement. It has a particular focus on full Project Lifecycle Management, and today RADTAC can offer a range of contemporary and traditional Project Management and delivery methods, including: XP, Scrum, DSDM Atern (the latest version of DSDM), Agile Unified Process and Rational Unified Process, Lean, PRINCE2, ITIL, Managing Successful Programmes, and Waterfall.

*PragmaticAgile* is the company’s approach to engaging with clients, whereby it will focus on delivering results, such as gradual transformation to Agile practices, rather than introducing a big bang or revolutionary changes. The existing culture of an organisation needs to be understood before changes in its work practices can be successfully achieved, and RADTAC works closely with the client to ensure that the culture is adapted to any necessary change. Butler Group believes RADTAC should be considered by MLEs seeking to transform their development practices in an Agile way; the company’s strong track record in industry and the public sector, marks it out in the field and should be placed on a consulting short list.

Table 1: Contact Details	
<p><b>RADTAC Head Office</b> Abbey House 25 Clarendon Road Redhill Surrey, RH1 1QZ UK Tel: +44 (0)1737 852121 Fax: +44 (0)1737 852101 E-mail: enquiries@radtac.co.uk www.radtac.co.uk</p>	<p><b>RADTAC South West</b> Mary Street House Mary Street Taunton Somerset, TA1 3NW UK Tel: +44 (0)1737 852121 Fax: +44 (0)1737 331640</p>
Source: RADTAC	<b>DATAMONITOR</b>

**Headquarters**

Europa House,  
184 Ferensway,  
Hull, East Yorkshire,  
HU1 3UT, UK  
Tel: +44 (0)1482 586149  
Fax: +44 (0)1482 323577

**Butler Direct Pty Ltd.**

Level 46, Citigroup Building,  
2 Park Street, Sydney,  
NSW, 2000,  
Australia  
Tel: + 61 (02) 8705 6960  
Fax: + 61 (02) 8705 6961

**Butler Group**

245 Fifth Avenue,  
4th Floor, New York,  
NY 10016,  
USA  
Tel: +1 212 652 5302  
Fax: +1 212 202 4684

**Important Notice**

This report contains data and information up-to-date and correct to the best of our knowledge at the time of preparation. The data and information comes from a variety of sources outside our direct control, therefore Butler Direct Limited cannot give any guarantees relating to the content of this report. Ultimate responsibility for all interpretations of, and use of, data, information and commentary in this report remains with you. Butler Direct Limited will not be liable for any interpretations or decisions made by you.

For more information on Butler Group’s Subscription Services please contact one of the local offices above.

