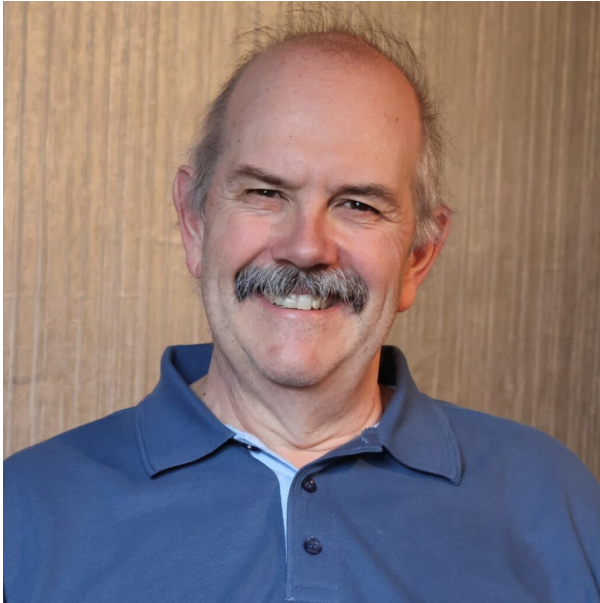


Project Management Global Exclusive: AgilePM3 and the Evolution of Agile with Andrew Craddock

July 17, 2024



On February 11-13, 2001, at The Lodge at Snowbird ski resort in the Wasatch mountains of Utah, seventeen people met to talk, ski, relax, and try to find common ground—and, of course, to eat. What emerged was the Agile ‘Software Development’ Manifesto. Representatives from Extreme Programming, SCRUM, DSDM, Adaptive Software Development, Crystal, Feature-Driven Development, Pragmatic Programming, and others sympathetic to the need for an alternative to documentation-driven, heavyweight software development processes convened.

[The Origins of Agile - Extract from [AgileManifesto.org](https://agilemanifesto.org)]

In today’s article, we undertake an exploration of the Agile way of working, reporting on its evolution to becoming, one of the industry’s leading project applications and its contribution to contemporary project delivery.

As the industry eagerly anticipates the imminent launch of AgilePM3, we sit down with one of the leading architects of Agile project management, [Andrew Craddock](#) of the Agile Business Consortium, to get an insider’s perspective.

Andrew, can you tell us about your background and how you got involved with Agile project delivery?

Andrew began his career as a software developer for British Airways in the late 1980s but quickly transitioned to IT management, a field he found better suited to his talents and interests than the

intricacies of software development. Although the cut and thrust of project management suited Andrew, there were intrinsic issues common in the delivery of almost all projects. “In those days, most projects ended up over budget, over time, and rarely met customer expectations,” he recalls. While skilled practitioners could employ work-arounds to minimize reported project failures, the outcomes of projects invariably left customers underwhelmed. Significant improvements in project success across the industry were elusive. However, this changed for Andrew and his team when they were introduced to an approach called the Dynamic Systems Development Method (DSDM), the precursor to AgilePM. “For the first time, I saw positive, consistent results in the rollout of our projects,” he says. DSDM’s holistic approach focused on the entire project team rather than just project management. It recognized the full lifecycle of the project, taking into account the project context and focusing on the wider business needs. DSDM laid the groundwork for what we now recognize as Agile Project Management. Its fundamental tenets can still be seen in the methodology today.

Can you elaborate on the evolution of Agile approach to projects?

“It was a collaboration that brought together stakeholders, practitioners, and delivery partners to address the root causes of project failures and successes.” This collaborative effort resulted in a methodology designed to overcome industry frustrations and improve overall project outcomes and in 1994, the DSDM Consortium was created to do this. A few years later, in 2001, Arie van Bennekum represented the Consortium in the co-creation of the Agile Manifesto, and a few years after that DSDM was effectively rebranded as AgilePM.

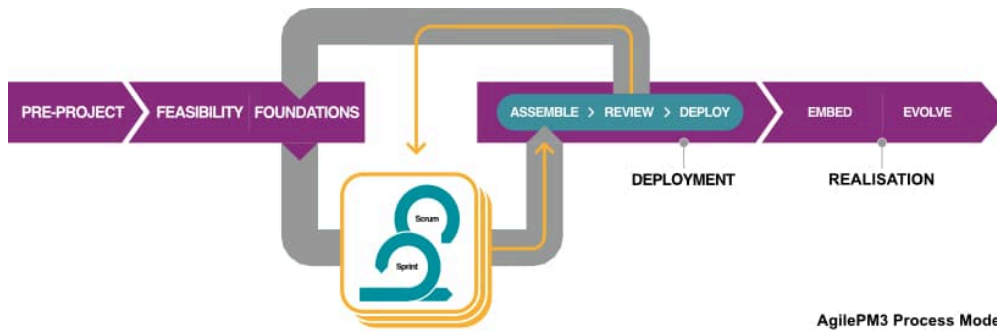
What differentiates Agile Project Management from other approaches?

“Agile Project Management emphasizes a collaborative approach amongst the leaders and participants of a project, optimizing the project environment and focusing on outcomes rather than solely on specific outputs,” Andrew notes. While other Agile approaches like Scrum deal really well with product delivery, they don’t really address the wider considerations of a project. Agility in product and project delivery are, however, closely associated and are often applied together to great effect.

How does AgilePM3 differ from previous iterations?

“AgilePM3 represents a significant shift,” says Andrew. Unlike its predecessors, which were tied to the project manager role as the central delivery agent, AgilePM3 emphasizes overall project leadership. “It proposes a trio of leadership roles within projects—the Business Visionary, Solution Architect, and Project Manager—ensuring projects maintain focus on delivering value rather than just completing tasks.”

The new version of the AgilePM also has guidance for scaling to the multi-team projects that we often see. In addition, the new AgilePM3 training courses incorporate modern more learning approaches, including new simulations to help learners apply theory in practice. “We are also growing a professional practitioner community to encourage sector-wide learning and support, further reinforcing continuous improvement in the practice of agility in projects,” Andrew adds.



What advice do you have for those aspiring to become Agile project management practitioners?

Andrew advises that aspiring project managers need not train as traditional PMs first. "With Agile's widespread acceptance, it's perfectly feasible to start directly with Agile methods," he says. Recognized by the Project Management Institute (PMI) and represented in the published 7th edition Body of Knowledge, Agile is increasingly seen as a foundation of project management.

What innovations and trends do you see on the horizon for the project management profession?

Andrew believes the industry is experiencing a resurgence, with project management becoming integral across a wide range of delivery organizations. What is changing is better application of project techniques and more appropriate implementation in the delivery of project value to clients and the wider market. "Excellence in project delivery is now defined by the value a project delivers throughout its lifecycle, not just by its outputs," he says.

The arrival of AI, Andrew sees as a positive development for the profession, enhancing human creativity and problem-solving capabilities. While it is impossible to predict the exact path for the industry in the future, there are a few areas in which focused development will inevitably lead to incremental improvements. "These include better learning methods, improved collaboration tools, and fostering a collaborative project culture within delivery organizations," he adds.

How important is organizational culture to project success?

"Culture is fundamental," Andrew asserts. He explains that smart organizations are shifting from command-and-control models to those emphasizing collaboration and recognizing multiple centers of control. "We need to optimize creative and collaborative skills within teams," he says. Effective project management centers around balancing the need for formal processes with more agile techniques, ensuring projects deliver real value within the operational constraints set.

What future directions do you see for Agile and the project management profession?

Andrew envisions ongoing integration of agility into more traditional frameworks. The industry is fast moving away from entrenched methodologies and project procedures, recognizing the benefits of blended approaches and hybrid project methods. "Agile is much less a formal set of actions, but more so a delivery

mindset, governed by a set of guiding principles,” Andrew asserts.

Andrew is resolute that beyond the launch of AgilePM3, there is still much to be achieved by the Agile Business Consortium team focused on agility in projects. “We will continue to promote and support the profession in the ways of project agility and continue to support the application of Agile Project Management wherever it adds value,” he says.

“Opportunities for new and early-career PMs are growing exponentially,” states Andrew with his parting advice for the next generation of project practitioners to remain curious and ensure their adaptability in the face of continuing industry changes. He encourages them to lean into the wave of innovation that is being created through the addition of AI and to be willing to accept uncertainty as a way of driving innovation and propelling their careers forward. Being open to new ideas and having the flexibility of learning, rather than staying entrenched in the stagnant ideas of the past, is key.

For more information on Agile Project Management, visit the AgileBusinessProducts.com site.

[Andrew Craddock](#) is a Product Architect with the Agile Business Consortium and is a leading expert in Agile project management. In his limited down-time from Consortium business, Andrew splits his time between consulting, training, coaching and mentoring. He will be providing the keynote address for the official launch of AgilePM3 in the build-up morning to the [Agile Alliance Conference 2024 European Experience in Manchester](#) on July 23rd.

[Connect with Andrew on LinkedIn for more insights.](#)