IBM Podcast

MATHENY: Welcome to this IBM Podcast, Measuring the
Return on Investment of Requirements Driven Quality
Solutions.

Today's podcast is a conversation with Lisa Buckley and
Alice Cockrum on Achieving Predictability and Desired
Business Outcomes Through Requirements Driven Quality, and
an opportunity for you to estimate the return on investments
you can achieve from implementing such solutions from IBM
Rational using the new Requirements Driven Quality ROI
Calculators. I'm Angelique Matheny with IBM. Hi Lisa and
Alice, welcome to the podcast. Thanks for joining us.

BUCKLEY: Hello, Angelique.
COCKRUM: Thanks, Angelique, thanks for having us.

MATHENY: Lisa, let's start with you first. Let's start
by defining, what exactly is meant when we say a Rational
Requirements Driven Quality Solution?

BUCKLEY: Great question, Angelique, and I'm happy to
take a couple of minutes to provide the audience with an
understanding of what we mean when we do say Rational
Requirements Driven Quality Solution.

And I'll begin by sharing one tidbit from a recent IAG
Consulting Business Analysis Benchmark Study done in 2009.
In this study, participants indicated that a mere 15 percent
of them feel they have excellent requirements software and
only 13 percent would agree with the statement, quote, our
business analysis tools are integrated to one another as
well as integrated to the tools we use in development and
testing -- end quote.

I wanted to share that, as I think those results are a good
example of why we have designed an integrated solution to
deliver greater requirements quality in software. And so in
this day and age of ongoing economic and market shifts,
there is an ever-increasing amount of pressure to produce
high-quality software that meets the needs of the business
while cutting risk and cost in an effort to stay ahead of
the competition.

And with that, requirements form the foundation of effective
software delivery and getting complete and correct
requirements is essential not only to better understanding
what it is you're building but also to how you are going to
test and validate what you build.

And all the while, you need to ensure constant alignment
back to the business strategy and needs of the business.
This is no easy task, as I'm sure many of our listeners will

agree. And we see time and again here at IBM, organizations driving their software and product organizations into the ground trying to produce high-quality solutions in as little time and with as little cost as possible.

Rational Requirements Driven Quality Solution looks to help organizations improve their software quality in less time. And there are three distinct benefits I'd like to highlight here.

First, a Rational Requirements Driven Quality Solution helps organizations reduce their business risk and cost to rework by better unifying project team members -- and that is, stakeholders and software project team members. This focuses on the impact that being late to market can have on an organization's bottom line and what if the loss of ROI could be avoided.

As our listeners may already know, as you go through the software delivery lifecycle, the later in the lifecycle you discover a defect or a bug, the more expensive and time consuming it is to fix. Up front requirements visual and textual elicitation techniques that build stakeholder consensus, for example, coupled with full requirements traceability across the lifecycle helps cut risk and the cost of rework from those unclear, ambiguous and ongoing changing requirements, improving the time to value and

quality.

The second point around a Rational Requirements Driven
Quality Solution is that it helps organizations speed time
to market by automating time-consuming error-prone
activities. This focuses both on the efficiency and
effectiveness of automation. Not everything in the process
of delivering software can or should be automated, but
employing automation where it makes sense can be a value
added initiative.

For example, things like automating process flows that
ensure that key validations, hand offs and sign offs don't
fall through the cracks. Or, things like employing a type
of test autopsy, if you will, where there's an automated
audit trail that helps to trace the root cause of the defect
back to its original source requirement.

And, other productivity boosters using tags, collections and
queries to better organize and retrieve information quickly
in a manner that would be most intuitive to the user.

And then third and final, Rational Requirements Driven
Quality Solution helps organizations make confident go, no
go project decisions. The focus here is on anywhere, for
any role and in real time, being able to see project quality
progress and trends delivered through customized reports and

dashboards for accurate, reliable and timely decision making.

So those are three of the key business benefits sprinkled with a few example capabilities that deliver Rational Requirements Driven Quality Solution.

METHENY: So we've heard time and time again how difficult it can be for customers to measure the return on software investments. Alice, how can these new ROI calculators help customers determine how fast they will be able to recoup their acquisition and ramp up costs with a Rational Requirements Driven Quality Solution?

COCKRUM: Yes, so it's always important to acknowledge that with any kind of estimation tool you're going to get out of it what you put into it. And many times, and I know I feel this way, it's tough to put much faith into the results you derive because there quite simply aren't a lot of estimation tools out there that can give you really true-to-life results.

But I will say that when you go in and use these ROI calculators I think you'll be pleasantly surprised. The calculators are extremely comprehensive in both the depth of questions that you're asked and the results that are provided based on your input.

But at the same time, the default values, right, are set up using industry averages and experiences from the IBM sales force and data from customers to allow you to also use it as kind of a back of the envelope estimation, if that's what you're looking for. I think that's particularly helpful for those who might not have all the numbers at their fingertips or simply not even have a role in the organization where you would necessarily know all the answers to the questions.

But if you know you have unique traits in your organization or within a project team where you want results that are specific to those unique qualities and are very relevant to your business, we've spent a lot of time structuring the calculators to provide you with that level of detail as well.

So with regards to what kind of results you're going to see, the results that you receive are going to show you estimations on how fast you can recoup your acquisition and ramp up cost over the course of a few years. So you'll receive a benefit/cost analysis on the specific categories or areas where our solution can help you save money.

So whether it's by reducing requirements rework and avoiding loss requirements or a reduction in test cycle time, for example, alongside the cost details of what it takes to

purchase, implement and then run that particular Rational solution over that same amount of time.

Then we also provide a break even analysis that shows you the cumulative benefits and costs over that same span of time. All this information, it can be depicted in both, you know, either a table format or in graphs and put into a report that you can clearly print out and give to your boss. Or, you know, keep for yourself if you, in fact, are the boss.

So, again, I reiterate that these are tools where you get what you put into them. And I encourage you to spend a bit of time testing them out, perhaps using a few different scenarios to see what estimated return you can get from making an investment in a requirements driven quality solution.

METHENY: Thanks, Alice. So, Lisa, where can listeners go to find the Requirements Driven Quality Calculator to try for themselves?

BUCKLEY: The requirements driven ROI calculators may be found in a number of places on our ibm.com pages. We have also created a tiny URL to help folks find it quickly and easily, and the URL is tinyurl.com/rdqroi. Again, tinyurl.com/rdqroi.

And if our listeners like these particular calculators, you can also find other ROI calculators of interest for other Rational offerings. And you can find these calculators on Rational's ROI Webpage at www.ibm.com/software/rational/info/roicalculators.

METHENY: Lisa and Alice, thank you so much for sharing your time today to discuss this great opportunity for customers to estimate their potential return on investment from Rational Requirements Driven Quality Solutions. We really appreciate it.

BUCKLEY: Well, thank you Angelique. We enjoyed the conversation, and we really appreciate the opportunity today. Thanks.

METHENY: That was Rational Segment Managers Lisa Buckley and Alice Cockrum. And again, the URL for the Requirements Driven Quality ROI Calculators is tinyurl.com/rdqroi.

If you're interested in more podcasts like this one, check out the Rational Talks to You Podcast Page at www.ibm.com/rational/podcasts. This has been an IBM podcast. I'm Angelique Matheny. Thanks for listening. Keep tuning in as Rational Talks To You.

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