



ECLEVA's Agile approach creates complex finance tool in simple rapid-burst steps

Overview

In 2015, start-up asset-finance company 3E Advantage wanted to build a market-leading asset finance platform, but it wanted to build it piece by piece, to a tight budget, keeping control over design all the way with a progressive delivery. ECLEVA responded with a protracted Agile implementation. Every few months, a rapid, two-week sprint implementation delivered a new capability, which was then integrated into the growing platform. With tight control over the timing and cost of each new build, 3E Advantage created a complex, multi-stakeholder system that enhances client services and reduced workloads by 50 percent while keeping them within budget.

The Need

Start-up businesses often need complex IT tools to bring their competitive advantage into the marketplace. And yet, as start-ups, it's too costly, time-consuming and impractical to create a new IT suite from scratch. What they need is a partner that can turn urgent, competing and interlocking IT needs, into a series of simple, logical, implementation steps.

This was the scenario facing asset-finance company, 3E Advantage when it began operations in 2015. 3E Advantage helps arrange financing for a variety of assets, including 100% software solutions, office equipment, such as printers and computers and much more. According to Founder-Director, Craig Birchall, the company acts as a middle-man, bringing lender and equipment suppliers together to create a finance package that precisely meets clients' needs.

CASE STUDY

"We wanted a solution that grew with our business," he says. "Ultimately it had to handle almost everything we do: generating quotes for new clients, bringing new equipment partners on board, and providing transparency to the lending institutions. But we needed to build this platform gradually – as the business grew."

Crucially, Craig wanted IT that delivered a competitive edge in terms of operations: "There are plenty of finance solutions in the IT marketplace. What we wanted was to build a system around the customer relationship that saves us time, makes our life easier, and helps us do business more efficiently with all our commercial partners."

The Solution

ECLEVA's preference for Agile implementations made it an ideal partner for 3E Advantage. The Agile methodology sees small teams of IT programmers delivering modules in time-boxed bursts, called 'sprints.' Adopting this approach would enable 3E Advantage to carefully define each capability. It would also ensure each new capability delivered the anticipated cost-benefit outcome.

"Our approach was to deliver self-contained capabilities very rapidly, in a succession of two-week sprints," says Patrick Northcott, Chief Executive Officer, ECLEVA. "This means the customer stays in full control of what we call 'budget to value': for a specific budget, the client gets a defined capability."

In a succession of two- or three-week sprints – and over a period of 18 months – ECLEVA created a complete lending-management system. Each capability delivered a standalone capability, which was then integrated into the existing platform. This enabled 3E Advantage to create essential tools first, then add modules piece-by-piece as the business expanded.

"The Agile methodology really worked for me," says Craig. "We executed the development at the pace we wanted, and we keep everything under control. For the first time ever, it seemed, an IT project came in ahead of schedule, and within budget."

The solution is based on Microsoft Dynamics 365 CRM Online. The first sprint delivered an online document repository and a partner on-boarding tool. This helps employees to manage the process of bringing new equipment suppliers into the 3E Advantage service offering, so the company can offer a range of equipment to potential clients.

The second series of sprints created a sales pipeline-management system, including a quote calculator and loan-book management tools. This provides a rapid source of competitive advantage to 3E Advantage, as it enables the company to manage its loan book much more efficiently than comparable asset-finance companies.

Next, ECLEVA created a highly complex contract-management tool that enables clients to select from different payment models, and then integrated it with the popular business-accounting package, Xero.

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**-Patrick Northcott, CEO,
ECLEVA**



CASE STUDY

Lastly, ECLEVA built a lifecycle-management system with a PowerBI analytics portal that provides transparency on contracts and expedites partner-to-client communications.

"The quality of the team work on the project was absolutely phenomenal," says Craig. "The ECLEVA team was very reactive and always available – I can't speak highly enough about them. The overall project management is the thing that keeps me coming back."

Result

By breaking down a complex, long-term systems need into small, achievable steps, ECLEVA helped keep an ambitious start-up company in control and on track, able to deliver top-grade customer services to a fast-growing client base. With the unique lending-management tool designed by ECLEVA, 3E Advantage grew by 238% in its second year, and 76% in its third.

"With the right tools, the right processes and the right people, we can deliver the same amount of work with half the team previously required," says Craig. "The feedback we get from our partners is excellent."

ECLEVA's CEO says the carefully calibrated sprints helped 3E Advantage to create a solution that was genuinely scalable. "By adding functionality incrementally, we made the best use of the customer's IT budget, creating new capabilities only when it was clear that it would create a rapid return for the business," says Patrick. "This is another ECLEVA metric which we call 'time-to-value' and it's a superb project-management tool for keeping IT focussed on business essentials."

Craig adds that he is always happy to acclaim ECLEVA as the solution partner that helped 3E Advantage achieve its goals. He reports that his company's future is bright and that ECLEVA is already lined up to deliver on the next phase of business objectives.

"ECLEVA's employees understand our business and technology in equal measure," he says. "They want to work with you for a better result. Solution development is all about people – ECLEVA's people are fantastic."

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Learn more about how ECLEVA helps financial services companies save costs and operate more efficiently. Contact us at info@ecleva.com or call us on 02 9467 9300.