Story Wall: A Concept for Lightweight Requirements Management

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**Motivation**

Requirements Management is the process by which requirements are maintained throughout the Software Development Lifecycle. Requirements define what the customer wants from a system. Requirements Management helps you deal with requirements changes (a fact of life and a leading cause of project failure). Tools have been developed to make Requirements Management easier – these are called Requirements Management Tools.

**Research**

**Research Findings**

- There are essential features for Requirements Management tools.
- Current Requirements Management tools do not always have these essential features or they are too expensive.
- Many Requirements Management tools are perceived as heavyweight.
- Most Requirements Management tools are not attractive to, or adaptable for, the needs of Agile Practitioners.

**Concept**

To provide a lightweight solution to some current issues found in Requirements Management tools, “Story Wall” was evolved.

**Future Work**

Implementation of this concept has started and is due to be released by mid 2008. The tool will be implemented using Ruby, AJAX and wikis.

This first release is to be reviewed by various software development practitioners, professors and undergraduates. It will be used on a student Global Software Development project (with US, Cambodian and Indian students).

Successful review will lead to a second development phase and release to a broader community. It will be targeted to Agile teams like the IBM Corporate Webmaster’s global team who helped to develop and validate these early ideas.

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**Key Features**

- Digital metaphor of wall of story cards and stories.
- Drag and drop functionality throughout the tool.
- Visual representation of sizing and prioritization of story cards:
  - The size of the card represents the estimate of the amount of work (sizing).
  - The order of the card represents its priority in the list of story cards (value).

**Example of Tools Surveyed:**

- AnalystPro
- Cradle
- DOORS
- ExtremePlanner
- inStep
- LeapSE
- OptimalTrace
- ProjectCards
- Rally
- RequisitePro
- RMTrak
- TopTeam
- Analyst
- TRUEreq
- Free
- RequisitePro
- wikis

**Example of Card:**

Example of story card in tool. All cards have a front and back. The digital story card will hold the same information (breakout on an actual story card) with the addition of keeping the history of the story and the discussions, phone conversations and other forms of communication that took place during the story cards.