Database design in agile project

Heli Helskyaho
Miracle Finland Oy
Finland

Introduction

Designing a database is still extremely important, even in agile projects.
In this presentation Heli will describe the problems and difficulties in database design and try to give some advice and important points on database design especially if the project is agile and the final goal might be known only in the end of the project.

Why to design?

The importance on database design is getting higher on agile project. It is not just designing but also finding the right questions to ask and having a tool (ER model) to use when talking to end users. If nobody sees the whole picture a camel might turn out to be an elephant, meaning that what you will finally get might be something different than you wanted. That's why you must think before doing.

What is database design?

Database design consist of requirement analysis, conceptual design, logical design, physical design and depending who you ask it might also include transaction design. Database design is all about the DATA. How to save the data and how to retrieve it. The goal must always be data integrity and data quality. When designing the database you must always think very far ahead. Even though the interface might change in 5-10 years the database still remains. So you must predict the usage of a database to the future and you can defenetely not do it without designing and understanding the relational theory.

Why is database design different than before?

The world is getting faster and faster everyday and also IT projects must be faster. So we do not have time to analyse everything well before starting to design and finally implement. The system process is often very agile and people demand fast results. The system does not need to be completed when going to production and it will be build in increments. When designing the database one needs to know the full picture: what is this database for. Now it is not possible. That makes database design harder and more difficult and the only way to survive is to design the database even better than before.

Contact address:

Heli Helskyaho

Miracle Finland Oy
Saarnaajantie 22 A
00660 Helsinki

Phone: +358(0)503838152
Fax:
Email   heli@miracleoy.fi
Internet: www.miracleoy.fi, http://helifromfinland.blogspot.com/