Project Management for SaaS implementations

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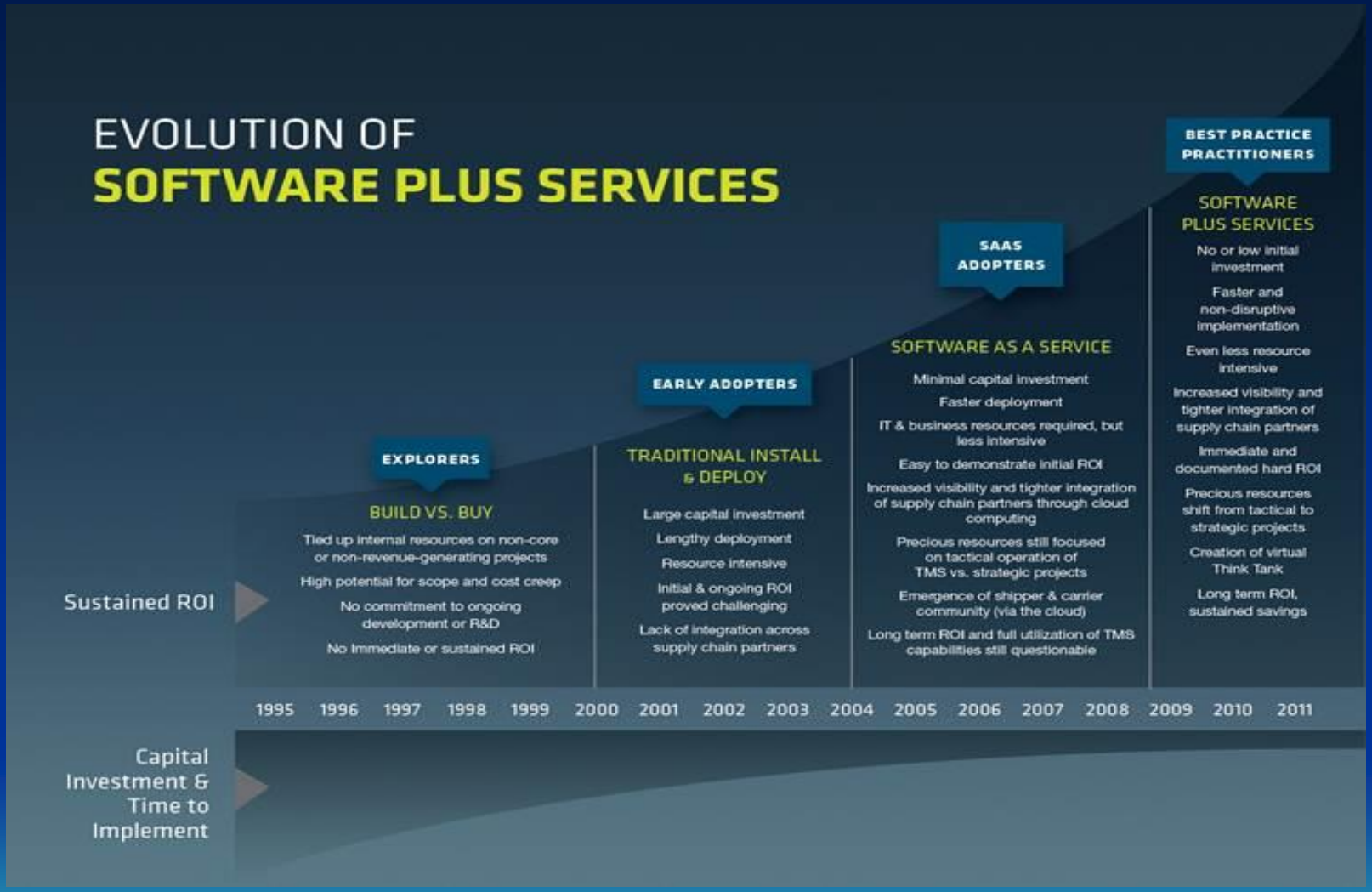
Presentation Agenda

- What is SaaS?
- SaaS lead processing and SaaS.
- Project Management in a SaaS world – A Case Study.
- Question & Answer / Open Discussion.

SaaS Basics

- What is SaaS?
  - "On-demand software.
  - Delivery model in which software and data are hosted centrally and accessed by an Internet web browser.
  - Provides applications as a supplement to an organization's information architecture.
  - Can be both internally used (SOA) or externally focused (SaaS).
  - Can be simple processing/transactional.
  - Can also be used in a expert system or decision support systems role.

SaaS Basics



Source; http://logisticsviewpoints.com/wp-content/uploads/Software-Plus-Services1.jpg

SaaS vs. PaaS vs. IaaS

Source; http://webapps.stackexchange.com/questions/301/what-is-cloud-vs-SaaS-vs-asp

SaaS Basics

- How does it differ from "The Cloud"?
  - The Cloud delivers computing resources as a utility.
  - SaaS delivers an application as a utility.
  - A SaaS application can be delivered in a range of models from the vendor's own datacenter, to a third-party, a "hosting" vendor, or a true cloud computing environment.
  - Just because an application is hosted in *The Cloud* DOES NOT necessarily make it SaaS application.
  - SaaS is the renamed (and improved) Application Service Provider (ASP) model:
    - Multi-tenancy.
    - Rapid time to deployment/value.
    - Faster innovation cycles.
    - Infinite scalability.
    - Reduced cost structure.

SaaS Basics

- How does it differ from Expert Systems/Decision Support Systems (ES/DSS)?
  - It doesn't. Preferred way to implement ES/DSS.
  - A ping-post (or RESTful query) can be implemented to achieve ES/DSS automated decision-making.
  - SaaS overcomes all of the previous issues with ES/DSS:
    - Difficultly in building/maintaining.
    - Finding the right experts.
    - Investment cost vs. marginal cost.
    - Easy integration.

SaaS Basics

- Why embrace SaaS?
  - Marginal cost vs. fixed cost.
  - Access to unique expertise (ES/DSS) at a bargain.
  - Flexibility.
  - Scalability.
  - Customizable.
  - It's so "easy to implement".

This, of course, impact Project Management and Project Managers.

Lead Generation Basics

- What is Lead Generation?
  - Identification of prospects and then marketing to them.
  - Long history in the offline world
  - Today, internet lead generation drive digital marketing.
- Lead Generation methods:
  - Email campaigns
  - Banner ads.
  - Pop ups.
  - Suggestions.
  - TV and other media also play in the online world.

Lead Generation Basics

Affiliate/ Affiliate Network

Capture Web Site

Lead Aggregator

Lead Arbitrager

Advertiser

Sales Funnel

SaaS Vendor #1

SaaS Vendor #2

SaaS Vendor #3

The lead

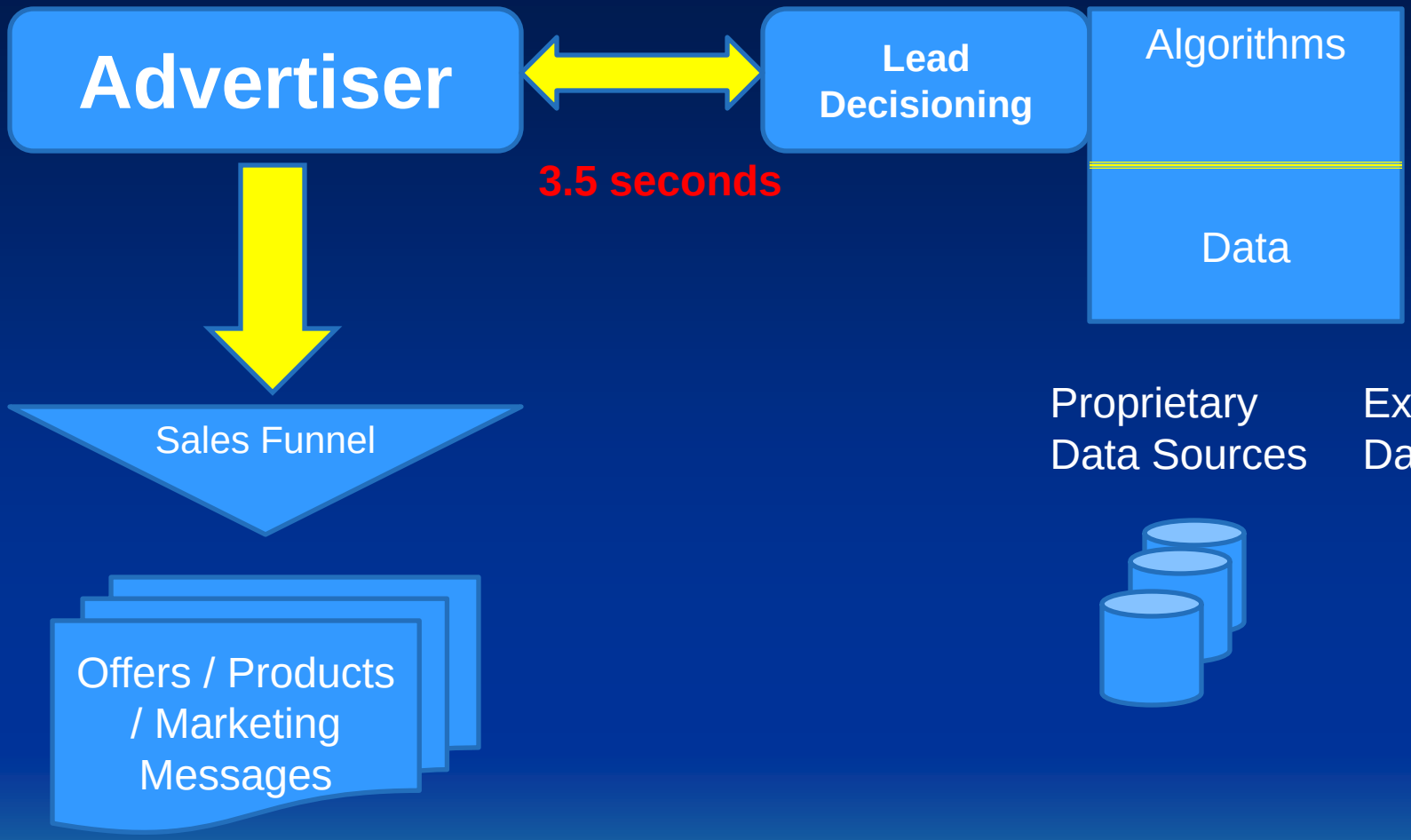
Lead Decisioning Systems and SaaS

- CASE STUDY
  - Lead Decisioning is an online lead validation and scoring company.
  - At the lead level, Lead Decisioning offers:
    - Lead Validation.
    - Lead Verification.
    - Lead Scoring/Propensity To Convert.
    - Demographics.
    - Fraud.
  - Large marketplace – over $200mm, and growing
    - Other key players are Targus, Ebureau, and the USPS.
    - Mixture of online and batch products and processes.

Lead Generation Basics

- Market Drivers:
  - Declining prices drives adoption.
  - More services for less.
  - Lead Quality is becoming important.
  - Technology is a success factor, especially around SLA's and scalability.

Lead Decisioning Systems and SaaS



Project Management in a SaaS World

- At Planning/Requirements Stage:
  - Too much customization.
  - Security concerns.
  - Service Level Agreements.
  - Business continuity/recovery strategy.
  - SaaS vendor goes out of business.

Project Management in a SaaS World

- At Build Stage:
  - Integration/interoperability.
  - Additional scripts/processes to be included.
  - “Black box” calls and functions.

Project Management in a SaaS World

- At Testing stage:
  - Lack of test case.
  - Lack of testing tools.
  - Need for synthetic transactions.
  - Need to test the entire lead chain.

Project Management in a SaaS World

- At deployment stage:
  - Configuration management.
  - Roll-backs.
  - “Smoke testing”/dry runs.
  - Conversion challenges.

Conclusions and Final Thoughts

- SaaS is not going away.
- Deployments are increasing.

It makes too much sense!

- We cannot yet ensure Quality Assurance for SaaS applications and projects.
- We do not yet know how to adequately test SaaS applications.
- Best Practices are not yet determined.
- But we must learn and adapt.

Question & Answer // Open Discussion