Workshop Notes:
From Start-up to SaaS Conglomerate: Life Cycles of Software Products, IW-LCSP 2013

Tuomas Mäkilä and Krzysztof Wnuk

University of Turku, 20014 Turku, Finland
tuomas.makila@utu.fi

University of Lund, P.O. Box 118, 221 00 Lund, Sweden
krzysztof.wnuk@cs.lth.se

Abstract. The first international workshop *From Start-up to SaaS Conglomerate: Life Cycles of Software Products, IW-LCSP 2013* was held in June 11th 2013 at Potsdam, Germany. In the workshop five papers were presented with topics varying from product management in ecosystems and challenges in empirical requirements engineering research to start-up methods, incubators and accelerators. In these workshop notes the key findings of the presentations and lessons learned from workshop discussions are presented.

Keywords: start-ups, ecosystems, requirement engineering, game development

1   Introduction

From Start-up to SaaS Conglomerate: Life Cycles of Software Products International Workshop (IW-LCSP 2013) was held in June 11th 2013 at Potsdam, Germany. The workshop was hosted by the 4th International Conference on Software Business (IC-SOB 2013).

A rationale behind the workshop was to provide a forum for researchers to present novel approaches and case studies, which they needed peer feedback on. The focus of the workshop was on emerging topics on the interface of the software engineering and business. These topics included software product lifecycles, especially building economically sustainable software, and software start-ups. Special interest of the workshop was to discuss the research approaches and how the results of the empirical research would benefit the software industry. Out of eight submissions, five papers were presented in the workshop.

2   Presentations

As mentioned, the workshop had five presentations. Timeframe for each presentation was 15–20 minutes followed by about 10 minutes discussion. After all presentations

an discussion session was held, where the presenters and the audience could exchange thoughts on the workshop topics. The workshop and the followed discussion session were facilitated by *Krzysztof Wnuk* and *Tuomas Mäkilä*. The key points for each presentation are analyzed in this section.

Software Ecosystems: From Software Product Management to Software Platform Management (2013) was presented by Slinger Jansen. Jansen introduced an addition to the existing Software Product Management model (SPM), where the effects the related of ecosystems is taken into consideration during the product development lifecycle. The model was developed based on the interviews of Dutch product managers. The paper triggered an interesting discussion regarding the interplay between software product management and ecosystems, and regarding the possible extensions in the software product management body of knowledge.

Lean Product Development in Early Stage Startups (2013) was presented by Jens Björk and Jens Ljungblad. The presenters had participated an experiment where a team of students developed several start-up ideas in parallel. The main principle was that the team would focus on the most prominent idea and would prepare to change the idea under development based on the feedback. A model for executing this kind of parallel approach was also presented. The model was based on the lean start-up methodology but was enhanced with the parallel business development aspects. The paper ignited discussion about how many possible solutions can a software start-up afford within limited resources.

Requirements Engineering as a Surrogate for Business Case Analysis in a Mobile Applications Startup Context (2013) was presented by Krzysztof Wnuk. He went through a case study where an incubator was held for technically oriented mobile applications developers. A model for gathering user requirements and taking business aspects of the applications using both business analysis and requirements engineering principles was presented. Wnuk argued that the requirements engineering approach had basically the same goal as the business analysis approach, but would be easily adopted by technology people because of previously familiar terms and vocabulary.

Game Development Accelerator – Initial Design and Research Approach (2013) was presented by Tuomas Mäkilä. Mäkilä showed a plan for a research design, where a game development accelerator will be iteratively developed by actually running the accelerator and analyzing the results using scientific techniques. The accelerator would be based on the lean start-up methodology, which has to be adapted to suite the needs of the first time commercial game developers. Workshop participant lively discussed the differences of game development and traditional software development, and its implications on applying game development accelerator in practice.

Research on "Non-Issues" – Difficulties of Empirical Research on the Requirements Engineering & Management Process at the Client's Site (2013) presented by Rüdiger Weißbach. He briefly introduced a research setting where the relevance of the requirements engineering for the business functions of companies was investigated. However, the main contribution of the presentation was to analyze the reasons behind the low interest to participate the research interviews. Image of irrelevant research topic and lack of interest usually lead to the denial of the interview request,

while own research background and hands-on experience on the research topic lead to participation. The presentation created discussion about re-using classical business pitch techniques when getting industry involved.

3   Lessons Learned

The discussion between and after the presentations was lively. Especially the presenters and professors *Pasi Tyrväinen*, *Tiziana Margaria* and *Jan Bosch* participated actively to the ending discussion session. In this section lessons learned are summarized from the discussions and from the workshop presentations in general.

The challenge of successful vertical integration while extending software product management by software ecosystem concepts was extensively discussed during the ending session of the workshop. Furthermore, many of the presentations discussed about requirements engineering in a one way or another. Also, the lean start-up methodology, mentioned in several presentations, is based on understanding the core requirements and needs of the start-up's target customers. It can be said that one common factor of the presentations was *to find ways to understand external actors* like users and ecosystem partners *better during the product development life cycle*.

Another common factor between presentations was close relationship to the software industry. The presented research endeavors were inspired by software industry needs, were done near or with software industry and, hopefully, are relevant to software industry.

In general, the workshop was successful and the presentations were solid. During the discussion it became apparent that more research is needed on the organization of software start-ups and on the application of the requirements engineering techniques in modern software development and business context.

Workshop Papers

Jansen, S., Peeters, S., Brinkkemper, S.: Software Ecosystems: From Software Product Management to Software Platform Management. Proceedings of IW-LSCP 2013. CEUR-WS.org (2013)

Björk, J., Ljungblad, J., Bosch, J..: Lean Product Development in Early Stage Startups. Proceedings of IW-LSCP 2013. CEUR-WS.org (2013)

Callele, D., Boyer, A., Brown, K., Wnuk, K., Penzestadler, B.: Requirements Engineering as a Surrogate for Business Case Analysis in a Mobile Applications Startup Context. Proceedings of IW-LSCP 2013. CEUR-WS.org (2013)

Järvi, A., Mäkilä, T., Hyrynsalmi, S.: Game Development Accelerator – Initial Design and Research Approach. Proceedings of IW-LSCP 2013. CEUR-WS.org (2013)

Weißbach, R.: Research on "Non-Issues" – Difficulties of Empirical Research on the Requirements Engineering & Management Process at the Client's Site. Some Notes from an Explorative Study. Proceedings of IW-LSCP 2013. CEUR-WS.org (2013)