

# MenuMate

## Back on track for MenuMate



*“We were pretty embedded in the whole process and it was all going well... then we actually lost our way”*

### THE ISSUE

MenuMate provides Point of Sale software for restaurants, bars and hotels. It develops its own software from New Zealand and sells it around the world with franchised offices in New Zealand, Australia, Thailand, Malaysia, the Phillipines, Singapore, through the UK and moving into the US market.

When Andrew McClurg, CEO of MenuMate, was approached to participate in Clarus' (Clarus was acquired by Assurity in December 2012) Scrum 2+2+2 programme (a Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment High Performance Working Initiative delivered by Canterbury Development Corporation), it was a time when the company hadn't invested a great deal in its development team.

“The training was a great way for us to invest in our development team without high cost and we went into it without any preconceived ideas of what we would get out of it” says Andrew. “Our development up to that point was going ok, but it was very reactionary. We just did what was needed, but we didn't know how long it would take or when things would be delivered.”

### KEY RESULTS

- + Having the training combined with coaching and mentoring was essential to imbed Scrum into the company
- + Able to plan development with much greater accuracy
- + Wider team engagement – greater productivity from not working in silos
- + Use Skype and Salesforce.com to manage developers working remotely
- + Moving from one-week to two-week sprints and shorter meetings improved team engagement
- + Management can now recognise the signs of Scrum going off track and realise the value of not letting this slide

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### THE SOLUTION

Clarus's Scrum 2+2+2 training programme is based on two days' training followed by two weeks' coaching and two weeks' mentoring. The entire four-man development team, plus Andrew and Brad McClurg, Menumate Support Manager, participated in the training.

“It was a really good two days” says Andrew. “It was engaging, relevant and it fitted our business, which makes a lot of difference as a manager. I sat back and everything that was raised I was thinking, ‘That is what we need’. I think the developers were initially a bit suspicious that this was just a silver bullet to clean up code but we got rid of that in the first half-day and it was full engagement from that point on.”

Andrew and his team came out of the training happy that they now had a process that they could effectively manage development on. They were able to communicate a defined development plan to stakeholders and set a clear path to achieving that with each sprint. The following weeks of coaching and mentoring embedded the training into the development team. “I have been involved in things like this for a long time,” says Andrew. “Training is one thing, but it is the execution that is the most difficult. Generally, everyone is really excited at the start and then after a couple of days you realise that you don't actually know anything about implementing this into your business so having the coaching and mentoring is essential.”

### THE RESULTS

One of the interesting factors in Menumate's story is that, after an initially successful start, its use of Scrum slowly became derailed. According to Andrew, it was all going well until one team member started working part-time around university which involved strange hours and working weekends. He started to work outside of the sprint process and, when another key developer also started working remotely, the sprints weren't so easy to manage and evolved to the point of almost running individual sprints for each developer: “We became very project-orientated and lost our way.” A casual conversation between Andrew and Brad made them realise things had slipped and the team had moved back into working in silos with limited traction and progress. Deadlines were being missed and productivity had dropped back. “We employed an extra tester and that was the catalyst to getting back into a team environment and allowed us to re-engage the remote team members. We now

run the stand-ups with Skype and those working remotely know that if they don't get out of bed to join in, then they are letting everyone else down.”

The Scrum Board is managed through a combination of a traditional Post-it note-based board combined with using Salesforce.com to track progress remotely. “It is also useful for me when I am out of the country” says Andrew “as it means that I can track progress as each team updates their work in Salesforce.com.

Menumate has also changed its sprint cycle from one week to two weeks and have become very efficient with the running of meetings. “All the developers still hate meetings” says Andrew, “so we have been working hard to keep the planning meeting to half-an-hour and the stand ups and review meetings as short as possible.”

*Clarus was acquired by Assurity in December 2012.*