

When there isn't time to build from scratch - A tale of repurposing a legacy government platform to scale at speed!

Kirsten Hurley & Rob Whittaker



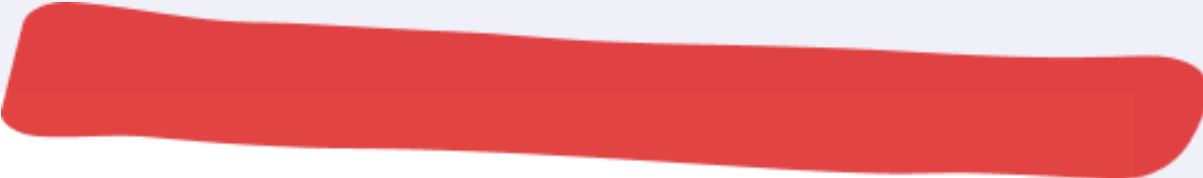


Today's Talk

- Making the decision to stick (not twist!)
- The value of good habits in lieu of a solid plan
- What to do when the goal posts keep on moving
- Managing risk
- Addressing technical debt



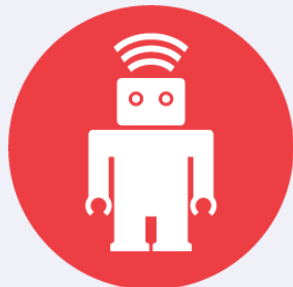
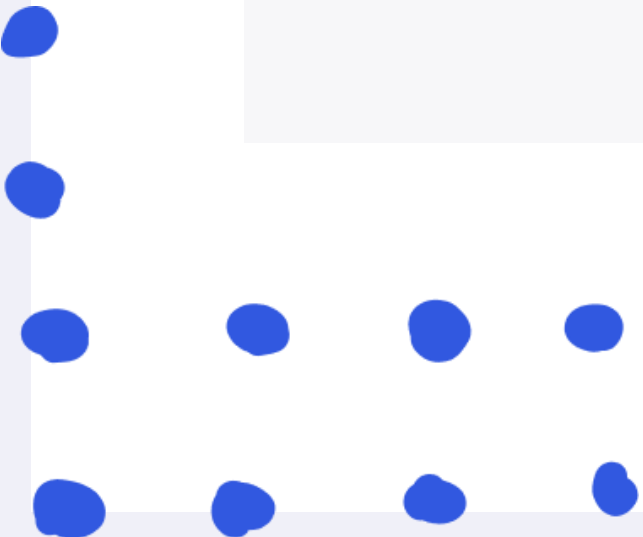
What is thoughtbot famous for?



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Thoughtbot is a software development and design consultancy that is well-known for its expertise in Ruby on Rails web development, as well as its strong focus on agile methodologies and test-driven development. They have also created several popular open-source tools for developers, such as Bourbon, Neat, and Refills. In addition, thoughtbot has a reputation for its commitment to creating high-quality, user-focused software products and its emphasis on continuous learning and improvement within its own team and the broader software development community.



Who are we?



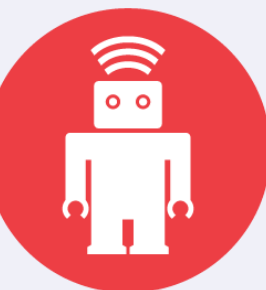
Kirsten Hurley
Managing Director



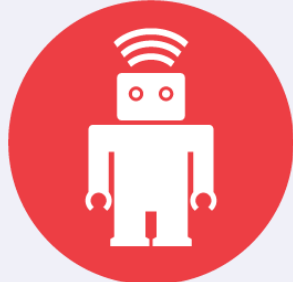
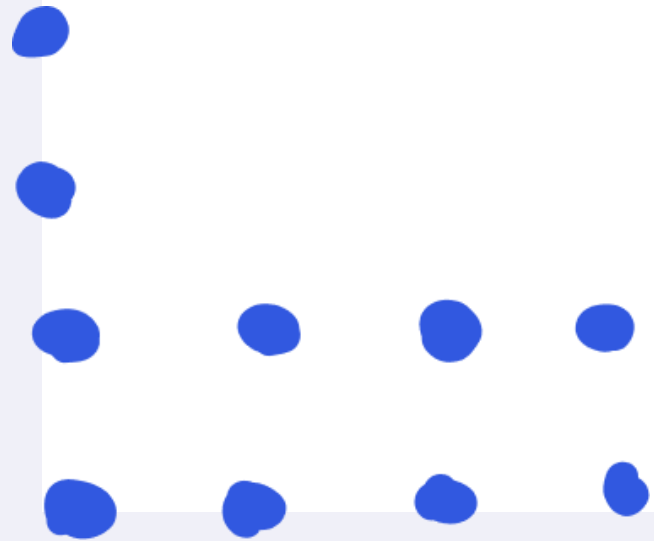
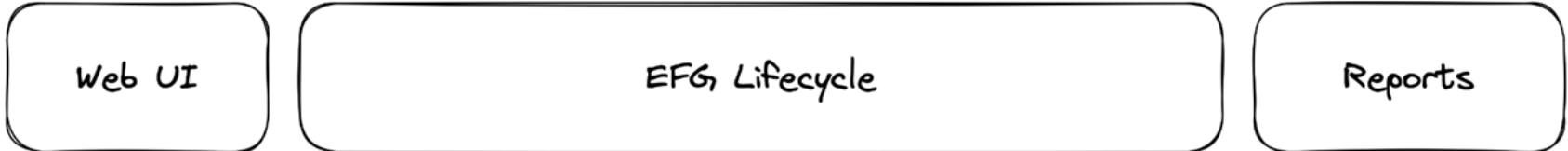
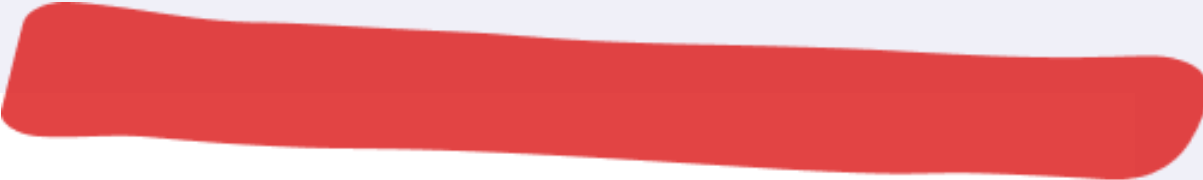
Rob Whittaker
Director of Software Development



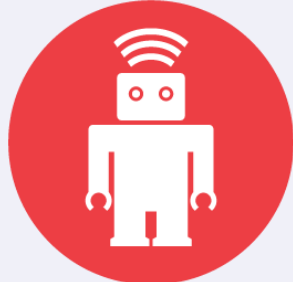
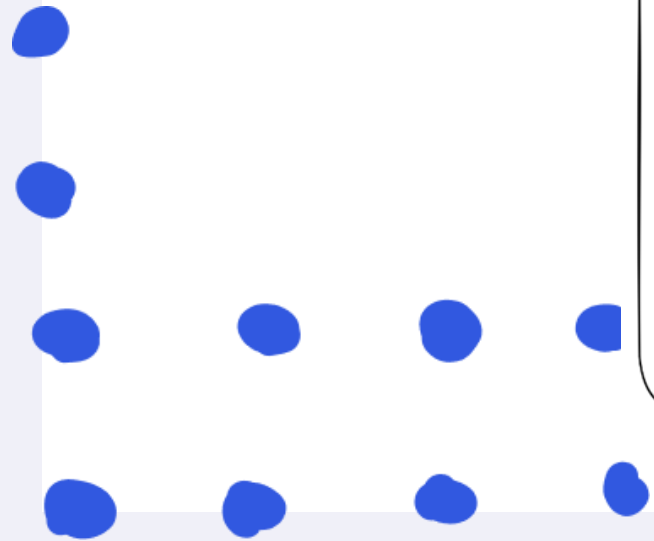
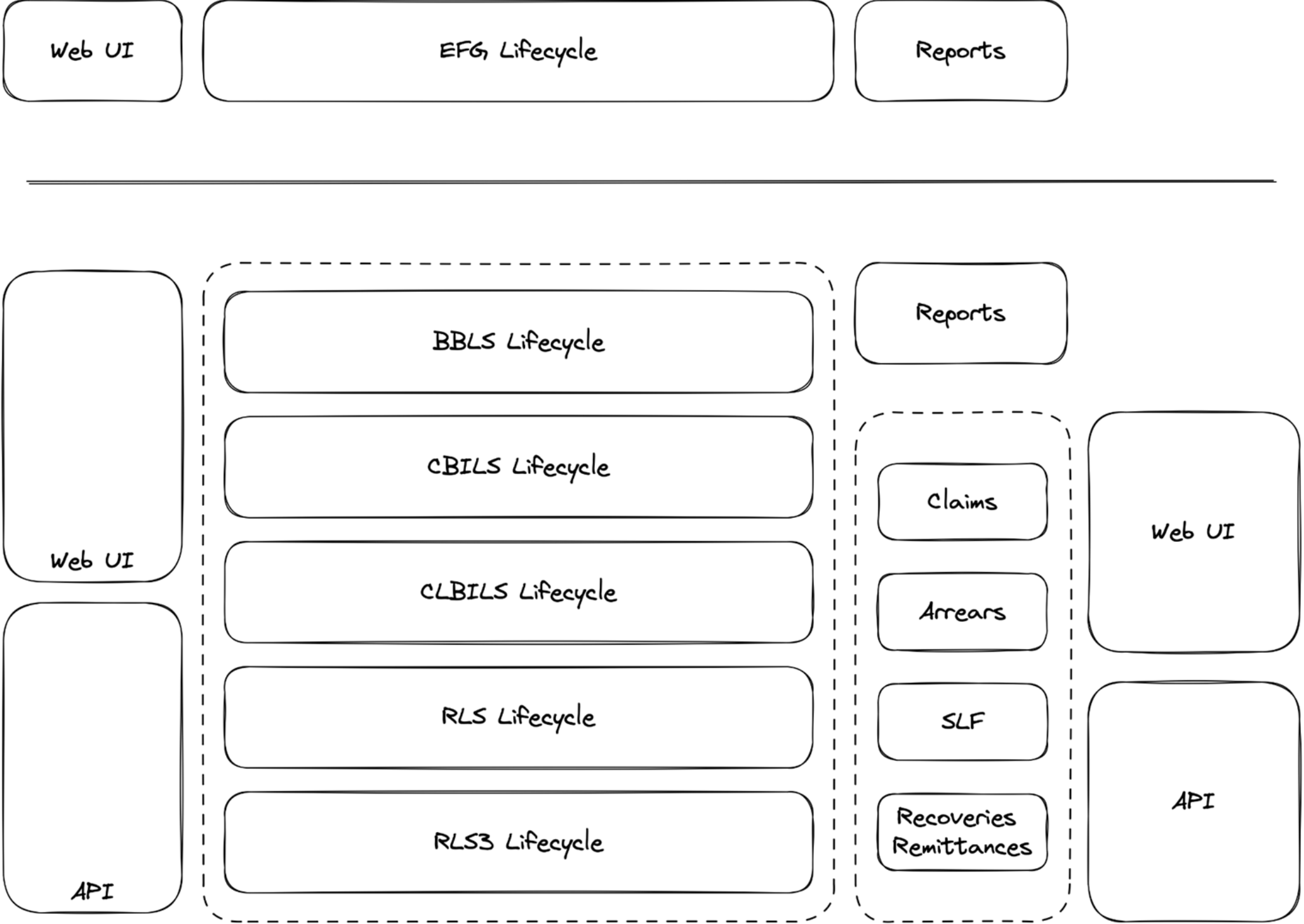
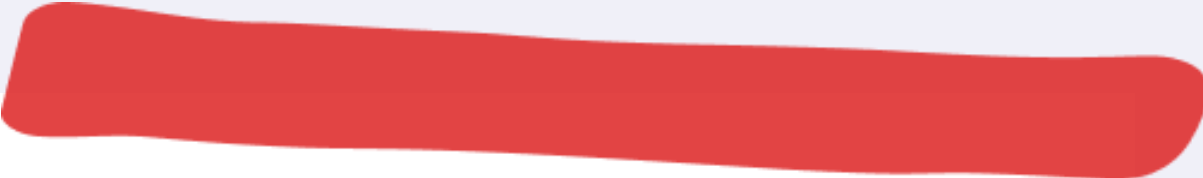
Who are we talking about?



Where we were... March 2020



What we delivered... May 2023





Making the
decision to stick
(not twist!)

- Solid knowledge of existing codebase
- Confidence to add to it
- Workflow required was similar enough
- Scaling the system was possible



The value of
good habits
in lieu of a
solid plan

<https://thoughtbot.com/playbook>



- Version Control
- Style Guide
- Pair Programming
- Test-Driven Development
- Acceptance Tests
- Refactoring
- Code Reviews
- Continuous Integration



What to do
when the
goal posts
keep moving

- Review backlog
- Make space for reviewing priorities
- Scale the team only when you know what they need to do

NEW





Managing risk

- Stakeholder communication
- Regular reporting mechanisms based on essential metrics
- Weekly retros
- Cross-supplier communication - clear responsibilities





Addressing technical debt

- Keep on coming back to it, to make conscious decisions
- Review the risks associated (they will change!)
- Build in time to deal with it
- Review team structure to cope with it as the platform grows



How did it all turn out?



Enterprise Financial Guarantee:

Has supported the provision of over £3.3bn of finance to more than 35,000* smaller businesses in the UK.

Covid-19 Loan Guarantee Schemes:

Unlocked credit for businesses at scale and speed and resulted in £78bn in guaranteed loan facilities, reaching just over a quarter of SMEs in the UK.

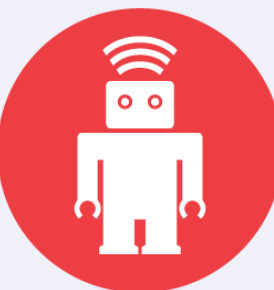
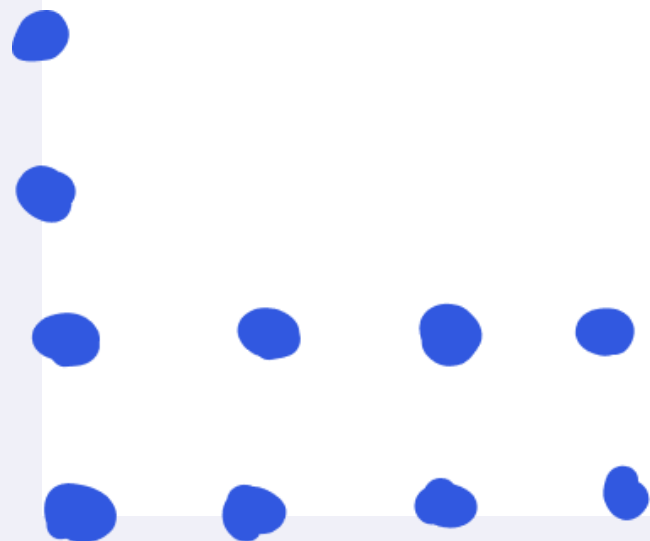
Bounce Back Loan Scheme:

Issued 270,000 loans in the first week, and close to 800,000 in the first month (March 2020).

Recovery Loan Scheme:

Has offered smaller UK businesses £4.5bn of lending through more than 20,600 facilities.

Source: [British-business-bank.co.uk](https://www.british-business-bank.co.uk)





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Questions?