

# Case Study

## The McQuaig Institute



The McQuaig Institute®

*"We felt Electronic Learning Arts genuinely cared about our business and were very hands on in all aspects of our business. Constantly providing clear communication and feedback along the way, they remained personable and highly dedicated throughout the project."*

*Ian Cameron, Managing Director McQuaig Institute*

### The Company

Having operated for over 50 years, The McQuaig Institute is a successful company which offers a proven web-based talent assessment solution for pre-employment testing, job analysis, and leadership development.

### The Need for a Solution:

Recently, the McQuaig Institute saw a change in ownership and an opportunity to shift the business to a strategic, proactive growth model. In order to support that new model, a shift from a product centric solution to a customer centric solution was needed and a new strategy for product delivery and customer service.

Having identified their model, the reality that the existing software could not support the new initiatives grew. What was needed was a web based delivery system that could support and adapt to a broader spectrum of customer solutions and better support the customer experience.

### The Challenge

With the change in ownership, McQuaig was in need of an objective analysis of all aspects of their IT business and infrastructures. Wanting to not only offer a better customer experience but also a system that would align with their new growth strategies, they found themselves boxed in and limited to what they could enhance in a growth strategy under the old system.

The existing system was a closed system that did not allow for the development of new tools or solutions for their customers, nor could it support the new business model. The reporting demands were also extremely large and complicated as McQuaig offers the industry some of the most comprehensive and complete employment reporting.

### Why work with ELA?

When ELA first engaged with McQuaig, long before the word software was spoken, our primary objective was to apply our technical skills and awareness to learn and understand the existing business

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model and their IT infrastructure. ELA took a very "hands on" approach and spoke with everyone at McQuaig to learn about existing systems, understand their challenges and understand their new approach to a customer focused growth strategy. We researched what was required and identified any gaps or shortcomings between existing systems and the growth they hoped to achieve. We wanted to understand their needs.

ELA's approach was twofold and simple:

1. Conduct a thorough analysis of the existing systems to identify any roadblocks, where / what was being developed ongoing and any existing potential issues.

2. Remain aware and sensitive to the fact that key stakeholders at McQuaig were in no way software engineers. We presented our findings back to management in a non-complex manner in terms of objective analysis and feedback which could allow stakeholders at McQuaig's to make sound decisions on pivotal strategic technological decisions.

Not only was our analysis back to McQuaig appreciated, ELA became a trusted partner which enabled us to work alongside McQuaig to help them achieve their goals while constantly providing information and new findings back to management along all aspects of the project.

### The Solution

In helping improve and stabilize existing systems and maintenance, trim costs and ensure investment dollars being well spent in the IT arena, ELA was able to start to align IT systems and infrastructure with McQuaig's larger strategic goals.

Once ELA had established a clear understanding of McQuaig's new growth centric model, ELA engaged on a research initiative to identify possible solutions that might exist in the marketplace and propel McQuaig towards their goals. Earlier concepts that were considered too complex and difficult from earlier development reviews were re-examined and ELA's [\*\\*Hybrid Software Model\*](#) was also applied to help identify potential solutions. In doing so, a final well supported mixed agile model was presented to McQuaig which not only aligned with their new strategies, but also supported existing systems.

### The Experience of Working with ELA

ELA became the offsite IT department for McQuaig. During Electronic Learning Arts research phase, ELA learned about existing IT operation and offerings and was able to offer support and management of those solutions 24/7. ELA also found cost savings and opportunities on the existing system well beyond existing project scope which allowed McQuaig to better utilize their IT budget in providing better support to customers and build on McQuaig's model of a great customer experience.

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ELA was able to offer an agile model to support a diverse and changing development cycle needs during project development. In doing so, ELA was also able to match McQuaig's personnel's dynamics and insights to build a solution that could support their new and existing initiatives.

### **\*What is ELA's Hybrid Software Model:**

ELA uses a unique analytical process when matching a business strategy to software. We try to identify areas where we can use well documented and supported open source initiatives in the design and development of software and components whereby a unique hybrid solution can be engineered that can utilize already available solutions to reduce costs.