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## 2008 in Review

by David Magson – Mitrais CEO

As our financial year corresponds with the calendar year it seems appropriate in this the first newsletter of 2009 to say a few things about the year just passed.

From four continents, we now have in total 115 customers, 48 of whom were new.

In Australia we undertook software development projects for 28 clients, of whom 15 were new. The total value of Australian software development sales was more than \$5M.

To support this growth we invested heavily in recruitment and training, adding more than 60 software engineers and running training courses for most of the year. We ended the year with more than 200 developers.

As we enter 2009 we are finding some of our clients cutting back as demand from their own customers slides – but we are also finding new customers who are taking advantage of a quieter period to invest in

new products or to upgrade old ones.

The value proposition which attracts new clients has changed – from not being able to find staff to Mitrais services being lower in cost – especially as we have held our prices in Australian \$.



David Magson - Mitrais CEO

So, we are cautiously optimistic that we will hold our own in 2009. Regardless, we recognize that our customers will expect continued improvement.

Finally, our condolences go out to any of the recipients of this newsletter who have been affected by the tragedy that is the Victorian bushfires. Sadly, that includes one of our directors who lost his cousin and his cousin's wife.

## New Australian software system paves the way for better marking and quality assurance at universities



Major universities around the world are expected to embrace an Australian-designed open source software system which will revolutionise the marking of exam papers.

Suitable for any kind of student assessment that can be converted into a PDF, the ReMarksPDF system will deliver new forms of feedback to students and advanced moderation and quality assurance to institutions.

The system is now under development by Mitrais on behalf of ReMarksPDF Pty Limited, a company set up by the University of New England (UNE).

Mitrais is undertaking the project to develop the system using the SCRUM Agile methodology. ReMarksPDF managing director and project

leader, Professor Stephen Colbran, said the catalyst for the development of the marking system was poor quality and slow feedback to students from markers.

“Among the reasons the project was accepted for a \$250,000 Australian Learning and Teaching Council (ALTC) Priority grant are the limited options available for feedback to students and poor or inadequate records on which electronic portfolios of student achievement might be based.”

The system is suitable for marking any type of student assessment. For example, a play can be marked by an electronic marking rubric which is stored on the system. Any student assessment that can be converted into PDF including media elements (video, audio, text etc) can be marked using the system.

ReMarksPDF will provide students with feedback including audio and emoticons, legible comments

and backed up copies of marked assignments as the basis of future student electronic portfolios.

The PDF markup editor is expected to be in prototype form at the end of December this year. Mitrais has already completed development of a version that adds similar functionality to Word 2007. This is available for evaluation.

Product architect Stephen Colbran is a Professor of Law and until recently was Acting Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic Planning and Renewal) at UNE in Armidale, NSW.

He explains that the new software will be available to members of a closed open source community,



Professor Stephen Colbran  
designer of ReMarks

## New Australian software system paves the way for better marking and quality assurance at universities (continues)



typically represented by some of the world's major universities. They will licence the right to access and use the latest versions of the software. They will also be able to make additions and variations to the software which, when approved, will be distributed via the ReMarks company website. They can also purchase support and training.

"Mitrais suggested the SCRUM Agile development methodology largely from our joint experience in developing the Word version. We found that iterative development suited our purposes and style of working. We researched the methodology extensively before committing ourselves to this path," he said.

ReMarks researched and evaluated having the software produced in Australia, India and Indonesia.

"We chose Mitrais after an extensive due diligence. We spoke to dozens of their Australian clients and tested their capability with the Word project. We also visited Mitrais in Bali to judge for ourselves, based on face-to-face meetings with their staff," Professor Colbran said.

## Mitrais to exhibit at HIMSS AsiaPac 09



The medical systems business of Mitrais will exhibit its two leading edge medical systems at HIMSS AsiaPac 09 to be held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia this week.

The event, organised by the Healthcare Information and Management Systems Society (HIMSS), promises to be a place for intensive knowledge exchange where the best minds gather, and will provide a platform for unlimited networking opportunities as regional leaders from healthcare, government and IT converge.

The exhibition will provide Mitrais with exposure to international visitors and great opportunities to promote Mitrais' Hospital Management Information System and the Occupational Health and Safety System.

HIMSS AsiaPac will be held between February 24-27.

## Companies outsourcing software development to preserve intellectual capital

A growing number of Australian companies which outsource software development no longer do so just to find suitably qualified or cheaper labor.



Those with market-leading information systems are outsourcing to ensure the best return on their intellectual capital according to Mike Page, vice president of software development for Bali company Mitrais.

He was commenting on the publication by Mitrais of "Guidelines for managing outsourcing" as well as of a white paper on the "Benefits of collecting project metrics" from software development projects.

With Mitrais providing outsourced development services to Australian companies for nearly nine years outsourcers are increasingly sophisticated in their management of the services provider, says Mr. Page. "They want to know more about how best to enjoy the cost advantages while managing a pool of appropriately skilled software engineers in an increasingly borderless world.

"Outsourcing is now more about keeping the technical visionaries who chart the next version of software motivated and leveraging their experience and skill to ensure their jobs are richer and more interesting," he said.

There is a growing number of small to medium and even some large enterprises in Australia whose future is predicated on developing and

delivering software applications that are recognised leaders in market sectors from finance to the management of large scale infrastructure in the public and private arenas.



Mike Page  
Mitrais VP Software Development

Mr. Page says a typical example of a small company that has outsourced the development of software products and ongoing technical support to Mitrais is Incom, a provider of risk management software systems to industry leaders in Australia and internationally.

At the bigger end of town are companies like Technology One and Mincom said Mr Page. A 20 year veteran of the software development sector in Australia before he took up his present position in 2007 he says if the economic motivation for outsourcing has changed from 'let's replace my

### Companies outsourcing software development to preserve intellectual capital (continues)

guys with your guys and save some money' so too have the management processes and practices which select and oversee external development resources. Australian management is increasingly more sophisticated in terms of its expectations of outsourced providers of software development services. It rightfully subjects potential outsourced service providers to detailed scrutiny about the skills they have, their project management processes and the reporting mechanisms.

"They are asking about the competencies of systems engineers, their communications skills and what sort of standards underpin project development and management. Growing attention is also being paid to the collection of project metrics as well as to post project reviews." Mitrais 'guidelines to managing outsourcing' can be downloaded from [here](#). 'Metrics and project post mortem analysis' can be downloaded from [here](#). Alternatively email [info@mitrais.com](mailto:info@mitrais.com) for copies to be sent to you.

### IT Industry veteran advises caution on outsourcing selection in light of SATYAM problems

IT industry veteran, David Merson, recommends Australian companies should satisfy themselves about the standards of corporate governance of the organisations from whom they commission outsourced IT services.

"Australian companies should not be dissuaded from seeking the staffing, operational and financial benefits of outsourcing but they should undertake due diligence to assure themselves of the governance and stability of their intended service providers," he said.

He was commenting on the scandal surrounding the more than \$1 billion overstatement of profit that has enveloped Indian company Satyam which provides outsourcing services to a number of major Australian companies like Qantas, Coles, NAB and Suncorp.

Mr. Merson helped found Mincom, which was arguably the biggest Australian software company

until its recent sale to US interests.

Under Mr. Merson's leadership, Mincom was a joint venture partner in the establishment of Mitrais. He is now an advisor to the board of Mitrais.

"As a joint venture we set strong standards of corporate governance which are maintained to this day under its Australian management team," Mr. Merson said.

"To establish and maintain excellent ongoing relationships with our clients, we don't simply rely on a near shore location, common time zone and the technical and project management skills of our staff," says Mitrais managing director David Magson.

"We encourage all our prospects to undertake due diligence and to assure themselves of the stability financial and operational of our company," he said.



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## Capturing the images of Bali



Like a tradition, Mitrais' photography competition held every year, tempts its employees to participate eagerly. As a result this year there are 376 beautiful photos in the competition. We use these photos in our advertising and other forms of marketing collateral. So, the ability of a photograph to quickly capture people's attention is an important criterion in the competition. Typically photos are of many of Bali's scenic locations or they feature Balinese people in traditional dress. More abstract images show the shapes and colours of nature. We also share the photos with people outside Mitrais who may download them, subject to some terms and conditions. We invite you to see this year's photos in our [Image Gallery](#).

## About Mitrais

Mitrais was established in 2000 to develop excellence in software development using Indonesia as a base of operations. Its objective is to be a leading near shore provider to Australian software developers and a major force in the Indonesia domestic market. Mitrais is a Microsoft Gold Certified developer, an Oracle Partner and has also certified products in SAP NetWeaver. In 2004 the company entered the health industry, developing a proprietary hospital management information system which it sells globally. In 2007 it absorbed Mincom Indoservices to extend its operations into the sale and support of mining software (in particular from Mincom) in Indonesia. With offices in Bali, Jakarta and Singapore, Mitrais has more than 80 clients and employs more than 300 staff. For further information visit [www.mitrais.com](http://www.mitrais.com)