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# **Practical Experiences with Distributed Mixed Projects**

**Albert Alderson**

# Introduction



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- **Distributed mixed projects offer a variety of opportunities and challenges**
- **Share experiences – My perceptions**
- **Offer some thoughts**

# Background



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- **17+ years with Software Sciences**
  - **Alvey, Esprit & RACE**
- **6 years IPSYS Software**
  - **Esprit & RACE**
- **6 years Staffordshire University**
  - **EPSRC projects**

# ATMOSPHERE



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- **ESPRIT II – 5 years – 650 years effort**
- **Harmonise the European IT industry**
- **IPSE kit of parts**
  - **IPSEs for different industries**

# ATMOSPHERE



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- **5 lead companies**
  - **Siemens, Bull, Nixdorf, Philips, GEC-Marconi**
- **2 Eureka projects**
- **Countless sub-contractors**

# ATMOSPHERE



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- **Organisation was chaotic**
- **In-fighting between the principles**
- **GEC removed**
- **Whole project died later**

# ATMOSPHERE



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- **Goals unrealistic**
  - **commercially and technically**
- **Will to harmonise doubtful**
- **IPR a root problem**
- **A disaster**

# ARISE



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- **RACE 3 years**
- **~10 partners**
  - **UK, Eire, Greece, Spain, Sweden, ...**
- **Specialist Management Partner**

# ARISE



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- **Telecomms IPSE**
- **Clear technical objectives**
- **Basic technology in place**
- **Partner autonomy**
- **Goodwill between partners**
- **2-3 day workshops 6 monthly**

# ARISE



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- **Papers aplenty**
- **Improved individual tools**
  - **Commercially beneficial**
- **No Telecomms ISPE**
- **Long lasting relationships**
  
- **A success?**

# BOOST



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- **RACE 3 years**
- **~12 partners**
  - **UK, Eire, Greece, Spain, France, Sweden, .. + major Telecomms org**
- **Specialist Management Partner**

# BOOST



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- **Telecomms IPSE**
- **Goals subverted by Telecomms org**
- **Technology enforced by RACE**
- **Four-monthly RACE workshops**

# BOOST



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- **Nothing worthwhile delivered**
- **End of partnerships**
- **Plagued by EU bureaucracy**
- **Some 'internal' projects funded**
  
- **A failure**

# MACS



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- **ESPRIT 3 years**
- **6 partners**
  - **UK, Italy, Spain, Germany, Greece**
- **Lead fell to small UK company**

# MACS



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- **Maintenance of AI systems**
- **Mix of AI and software eng.**
  
- **Interesting idea no real goals**
  
- **Lead knew nothing of AI**
- **AI specialists no interest in software**
- **Academics good at criticising**

# MACS



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- **A clash of technical cultures**
- **A clash of national cultures**
- **No tangible outcomes**
- **A disaster**

# COMPLEMENT



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- **ESPRIT 3 years**
- **~12 partners**
  - **UK, France, Germany, Spain**
- **Lead with a smaller partner**

# COMPLEMENT



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- **RTS methods review and dev**
- **Harmonisation again**
- **Objectives clear**
- **Base technology ransom bid**
- **Split into 3 national groups**

# COMPLEMENT



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- **A clash of national cultures**
- **A clash of commercial interests**
- **Worthy but unrealistic**
- **Excellent analyses never published**
  
- **A failure**

# ECLIPSE



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- **UK ALVEY 3 years**
- **6 partners**
  - **Software Sciences, CAP, LBMS**  
**Lancaster, Aberystwyth, Strathclyde**
- **Lead with largest partner**

# ECLIPSE



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- **To build an IPSE**
  - **Partners realistic – previous prototypes**
- **Manifesto – partner needs**
- **Technical base - lead partner**
- **Partner autonomy**
- **2-3 day workshops 3 monthly**
- **Planned demonstrators**

# ECLIPSE



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- **Eurofighter HOOD toolset**
- **base for metaCASE**
- **new version of SSADM**
- **useful tools and theory**
- **Prof-ships, PhDs, career boosts**
- **Papers, book**
- **long term friendships**

# Thoughts



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- **Acknowledge partner goals**
- **Deal with IPR**
- **Place management sensibly**
  
- **Realistic goals**
- **Partner autonomy in context**

# Thoughts



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- **Safe base technology**
  - **Build 4 systems**
  - **Product, Development**
  - **Test, Management**
- **Demonstrators**
- **Working meetings not reporting**
- **Take care of the social side**



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**I wish you all an**



**project**