



### What Makes a Great E/CTRM? Part 2 - DIY

Let’s continue our adventure with Bob as he journeys to find that elusive, and highly sought after, C/ETRM system. For those who missed our first introductory onboarding article, you can find it [here](#). Enjoy!

A little-known secret about techy types is that they truly LOVE what they do. I know. Hard to believe. But, true. OK. Perhaps, you already suspected the truth of the matter. It may have even seemed obvious to you. But what I am saying is that they LOVE what they do. If you aren’t a techy type, you will probably not understand.

Not everyone experiences this depth of passion and devotion. It may be the artistic nature of software development. Perhaps, it is the sense of absolute control over something, which does exactly what it is instructed to do. And, if you are a non-techy type, you will probably not appreciate the gratification, which comes from observing your creation performing well its purpose for existence. There may be some religious implications here, related to God-like power, which unfortunately are beyond the purpose of this article. Not in scope, we techy types say.

Now, consider the outcome of putting a techy type programmer together with a problem requiring a solution. Sounds idyllic, I know. But you will soon discover that 1000 programmers would most certainly yield you at least 1001 solutions.

A similar experiment would be to provide 1000 artists each with a box of 64 crayon colors and ask them to replicate the Mona Lisa. Their results would all have some notion of the image of the Mona Lisa. But, the form would all be completely original for each artist. Perspective, technique, color choice, and artistic license all contribute to originality in art form. This is true for software developments, too.

Now, consider the software needs of commodity trading houses. What would they ask a programmer to do? Probably something like: Reduce my overhead costs; Make my business scalable; or, track my data and don’t lose one little bit (which is a pun in case you are a non-techy type and missed it). You can imagine how much artistic license a programmer would have with one of these imperatives. The color schemes! The brush strokes! And, what about the skill of the artist? Has he ever seen the Mona Lisa? In-person? Probably not. Most likely, he gets his mental picture from people who have seen it. Second or third hand.

Let’s now return to Bob and his adventure through software selection wonderland. One of his C/ETRM options may be to DIY, or to “do it yourself”. Certainly, others have done it. Perhaps, with varying degrees of success, or what was eventually proclaimed as success. Bob has never seen the outcome, in person, of another company’s DIY attempts at C/ETRM solutions. But he has heard a few horror stories, which worries Bob.

What would it take for Bob to have a chance to DIY? Could he do it on his own? Probably not. Bob got his computer technology degree long enough ago that what he was taught already died with the dinosaurs. Some asteroid with the word IoT embossed its leading edge. So, he is definitely going to need some help. Without question. Help from people who can put a few lines of code together in a meaningful way. These are the artists, Bob imagined. They are good at what they do. They can paint any picture Bob could possibly want, which is Bob's next problem: What should the painting look like? The artists won't know or understand. Frankly, Bob may not know or understand either. Has Bob ever seen the Mona Lisa? In-person?

What Bob needs most is someone who has seen the Mona Lisa...and in person, up close. Someone who knows the brush strokes and color pallet. That sort of person will be hard for Bob to find. For starters, this person should have travelled all the way to C/ETRM's equivalent of Paris, France. He should have lived there and studied at the feet of master artists, practising his art along the Seine. He should have some understanding of how such a masterpiece of art could have ever been created in the first place.

No doubt about it, Bob reasoned. This person MUST have some artistic skill himself. Probably a considerable amount of skill, too. No theoretical learning. Not just art appreciation courses. A truly gifted artist in his own right. And, he will need to have good communication skills. After all, he can't paint a Mona Lisa, in the C/ETRM sense, without a great deal of help from a team of skilled artisans. That's a tall order, too. Artists, like computer programmers, aren't paid to talk to people after all. They are paid to produce results.

Does such a person exist to suit Bob's needs? Can he find one? Can he find more than one? How about a committee of them? All working together in perfect harmony. Working in Parallel. Sounds delightful. Sounds like a paradise. Except for one thing: human nature. And, artists have a lot of human nature, don't they? The truth of the matter is people like to do things the way they like to do them where and when and how they want to do them. Bob knew this to be true. Committees really don't work out well.

Compromise is the best one can expect from committees. And, no one wants a compromised portrait of the Mona Lisa. Imagine what that would look like. A Picasso more likely than a DaVinci. Bob winced at that image.

So, no committees, Bob says. The key is finding that master artist. If Bob can find that person, he will have a chance at success. He can build a team of artists around this one master artist. But, how much will the master artist cost? How about his team? Does Bob have that sort of budget? How long will the team take to complete the project?

Time is one commodity over which no one has control. Bob's management has told him to "get 'er done", and soon. But, some things, like the Mona Lisa, can't be rushed. Adding artists and paying higher wages doesn't necessarily move the project forward faster, even with a "sky's the limit" budget. Who has that sort of budget anymore? A decade was required to send a man to the moon. Could NASA have halved the time by doubling its size? And, by spending twice as much? A hard case to make.

Will his management still want a Mona Lisa by the time Bob's team has finished their job? Hard to say. Bob's company's business is constantly evolving. And, so is its business needs for software. Bob will need to factor into his project the possibility of painting a moving target. Imagine attempting to paint a Mona Lisa on a canvas hanging on a pinata string swaying in a breeze.

Bob is concerned about going it alone for these reasons. Small scale DIY projects have fairly low risk. But, C/ETRM systems are enterprise systems, affecting all parts of a business operation. C/ETRM software must meet today's high standards for features and functions. Too many variables to factor in. Too many stakeholders. Too many people sticking too many noses in too many places. Too many changes in direction and priorities. Risk factors have a way of compounding in non-linear ways. And, this notion troubles Bob's DIY thoughts.

So, Bob turns his attention to his next best option: best-of-breeds solutions, which will be the topic of our next instalment.