

Travel Systems – Build or Buy?

Ronan Hughes

CTO

directski.com
THE WINTER HOLIDAY COMPANY

SKI
BEAT

b2bski

SkiMcNeill.com
The Ski Specialist





Our Background

- 2000 - Directski.com IRL – Dublin & Belfast
- 2002 - Directski.com UK – London & Manchester
- 2006 - Acquired Skimcneill.com (NI) in 2006
- 2007 - B2C White Labels (easyJet, Opodo, Ebookers, STA)
- 2008 - B2B Market in UK
- 2010 - Skibeat.co.uk – Luxury Catered Chalets
- 2011 - Chichester , Dublin, Belfast and Landry (France)
- 2011 - Currently launching In Europe.....





Business Strategy

- Europe's Best Online Ski Holiday Company
- Growth of B2B and B2B2C channels into Europe
- Acquisitions
- Accelerated Growth for B2C Channels
- Focus and investment on B2B and B2B2C channels
- Aggressive Growth and Accelerated Scale
- Through use of:-
 - 'Lean' efficient Business Processes for Scale & support Growth (PROCESS)
 - Scalable , robust and modular technology (IT)
 - Suitable Competencies (PEOPLE)

directski.com
THE WINTER HOLIDAY COMPANY

SKI
BEAT

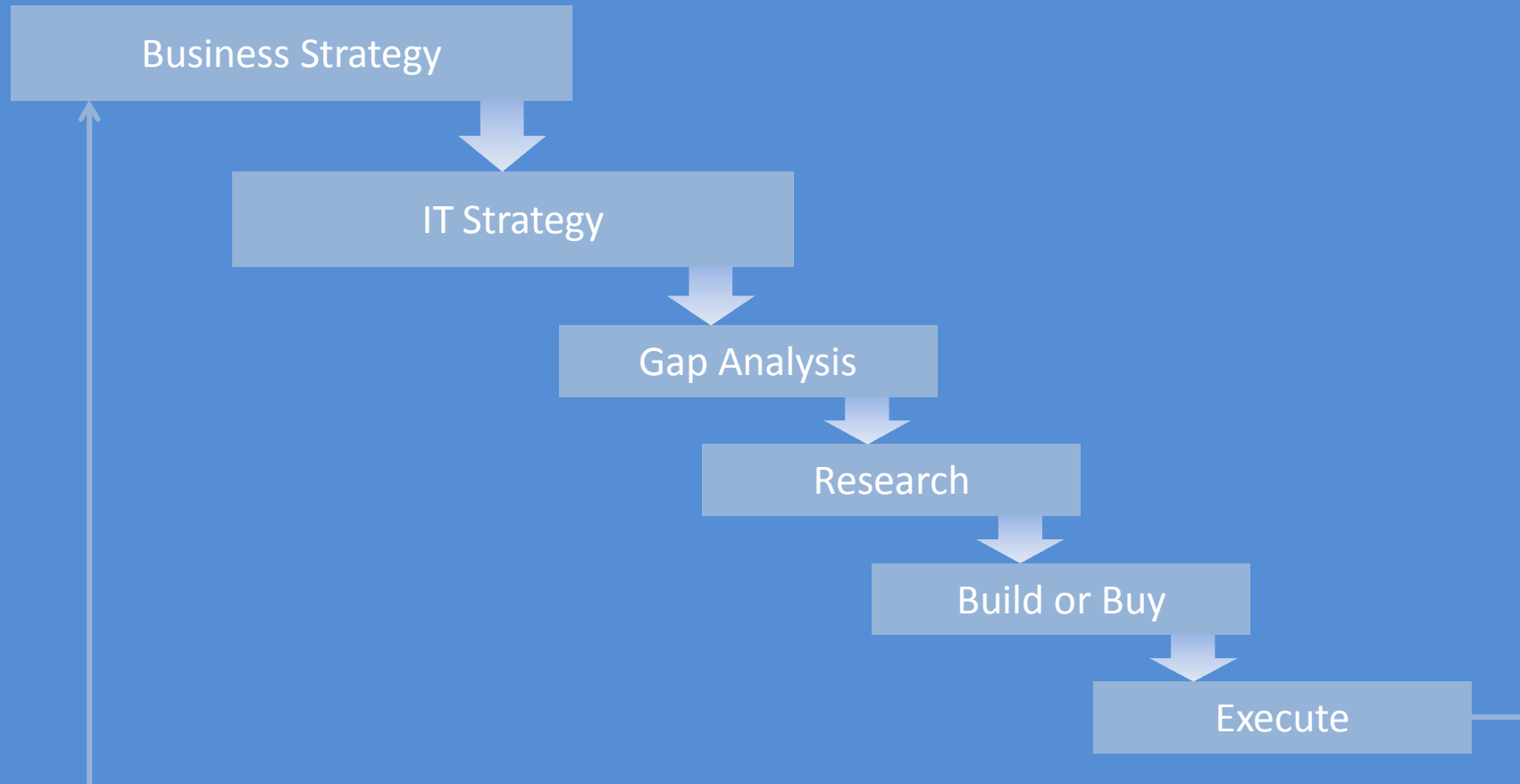
b2bski

SkiMcNeill.com
The Ski Specialist





Suitable IT Support of Business Strategy ??



directski.com
THE WINTER HOLIDAY COMPANY

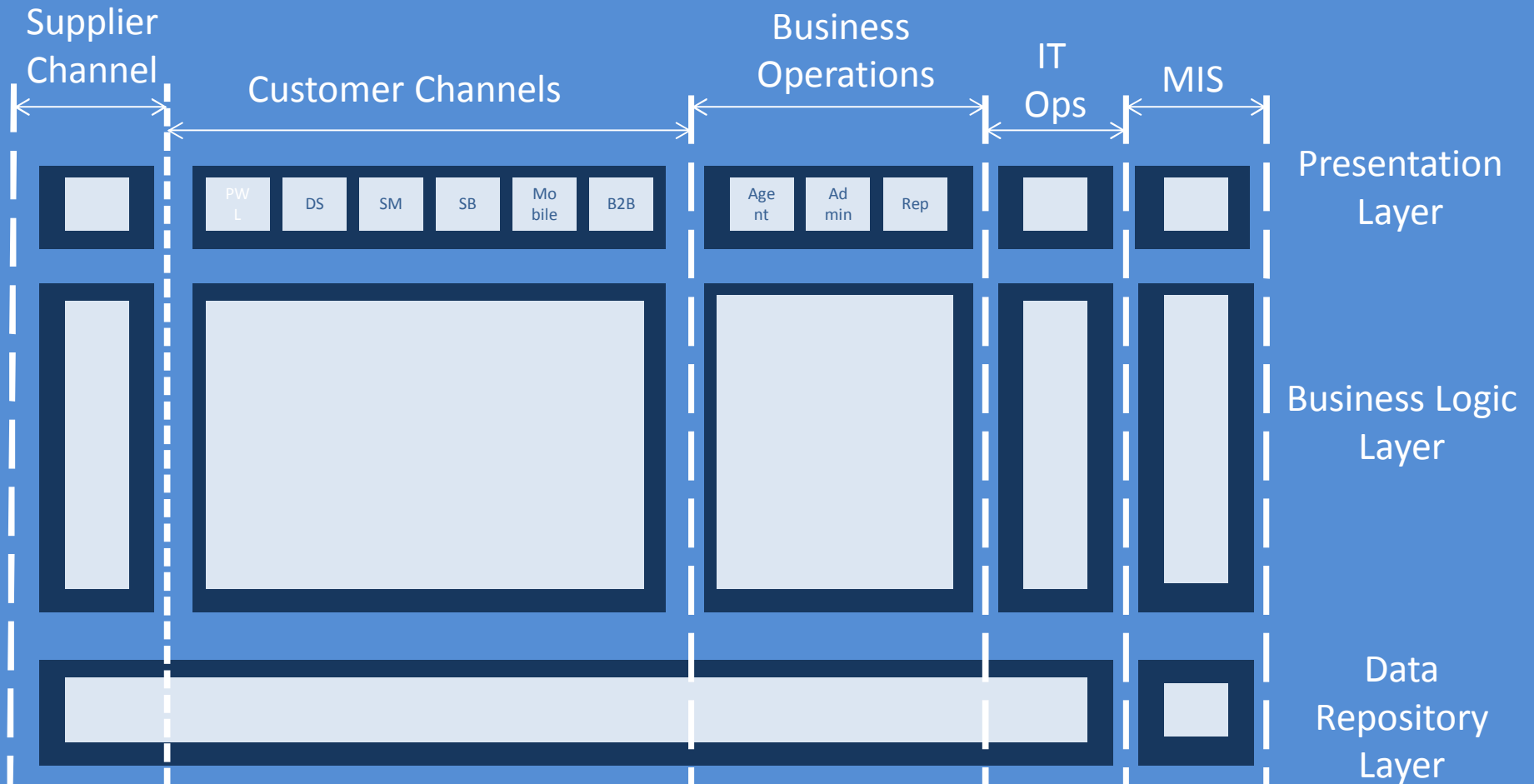
SKI
BEAT

b2bski

SkiMcNeill.com
The Ski Specialist



What we have got.....



directski.com
THE WINTER HOLIDAY COMPANY

SKI
BEAT

b2bski

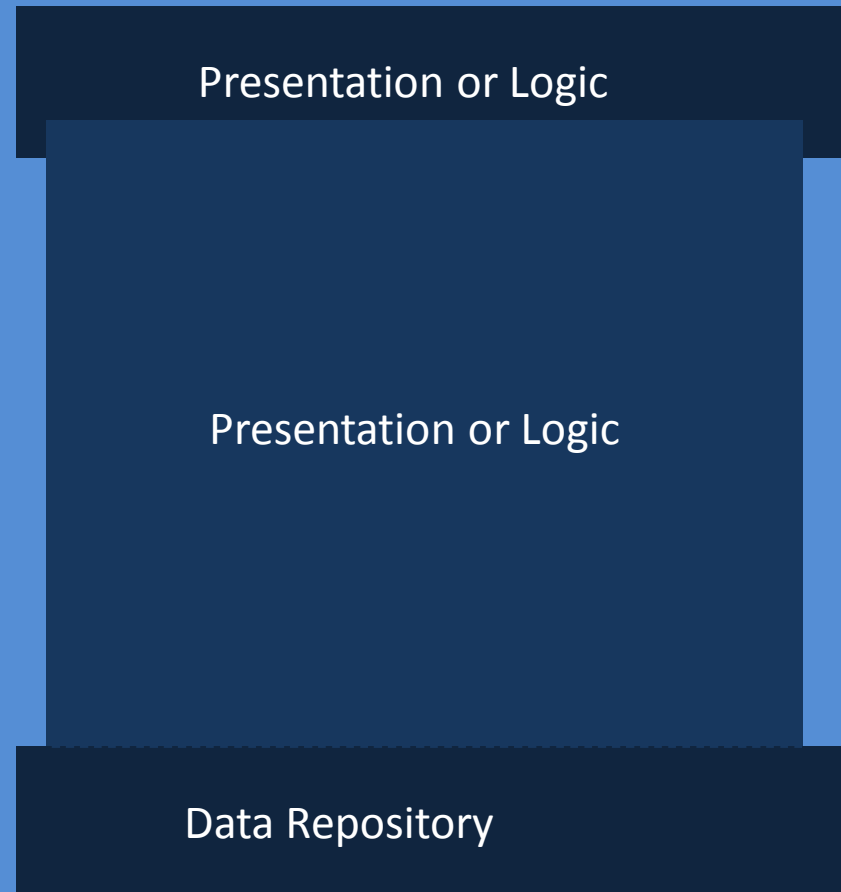
SkiMcNeill.com
The Ski Specialist



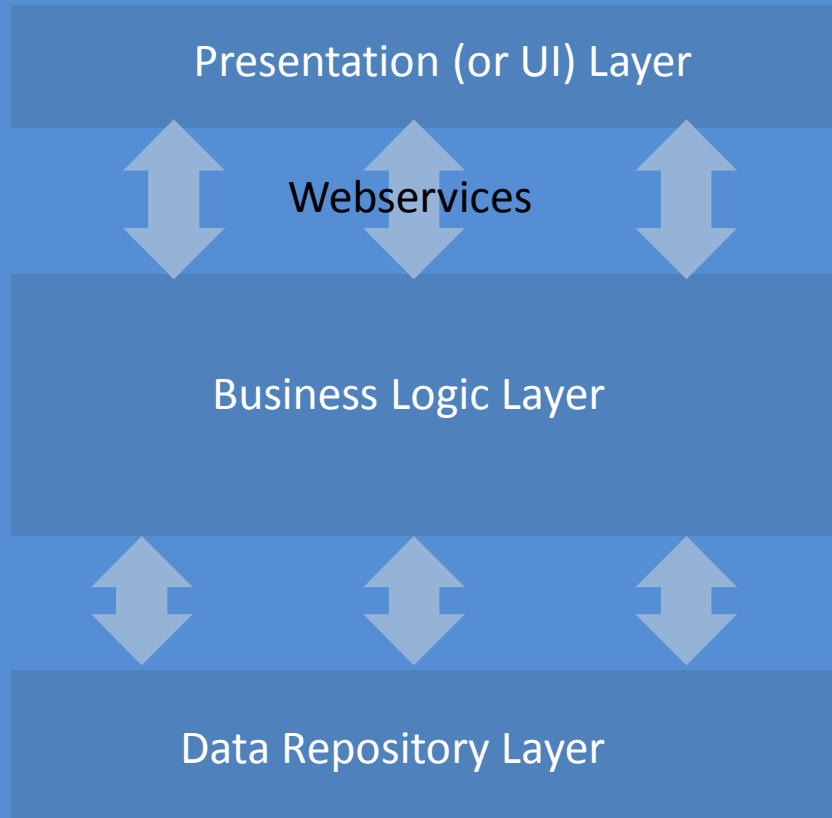


Currently.....

- Best Practice & best utilisation of technology at the time
- System not decoupled or modular – hard to separate out
- Excellent Foundation in Database Structure & Data Capture
- Excellent Intellectual Capital (IP) captured and built up over 10 seasons in the system
- Bespoke System & superb support for Winter Ski Holidays (functional fit)



What do we want



Benefits

Easily Maintainable

Supportable

Flexible

Scalable

Modular

Easy Migration

directski.com
THE WINTER HOLIDAY COMPANY

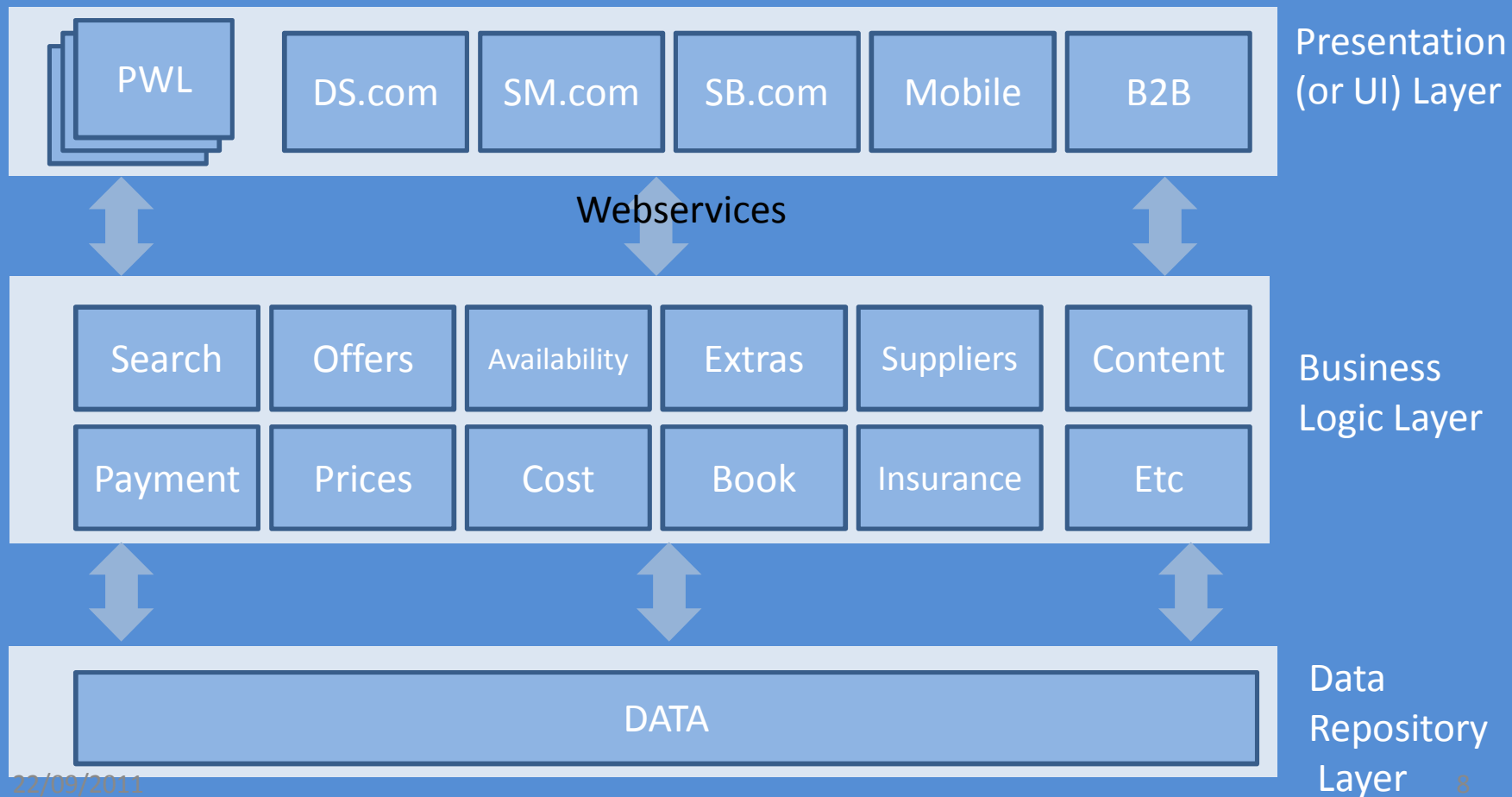
SKI
BEAT

b2bski

SkiMcNeill.com
The Ski Specialist



Nirvana!



22/09/2011

directski.com
THE WINTER HOLIDAY COMPANY

SKI
BEAT

b2bski

SkiMcNeill.com
The Ski Specialist





Research

- Researched Travel Technologies and Platforms primarily in UK and Germany
- Winter Ski Market fit??
- Analyse current system in detail
- ROI for different scenarios – versus Cost
- Timeline
- Resources – Competencies –what have we got?

directski.com
THE WINTER HOLIDAY COMPANY

SKI
BEAT

b2bski

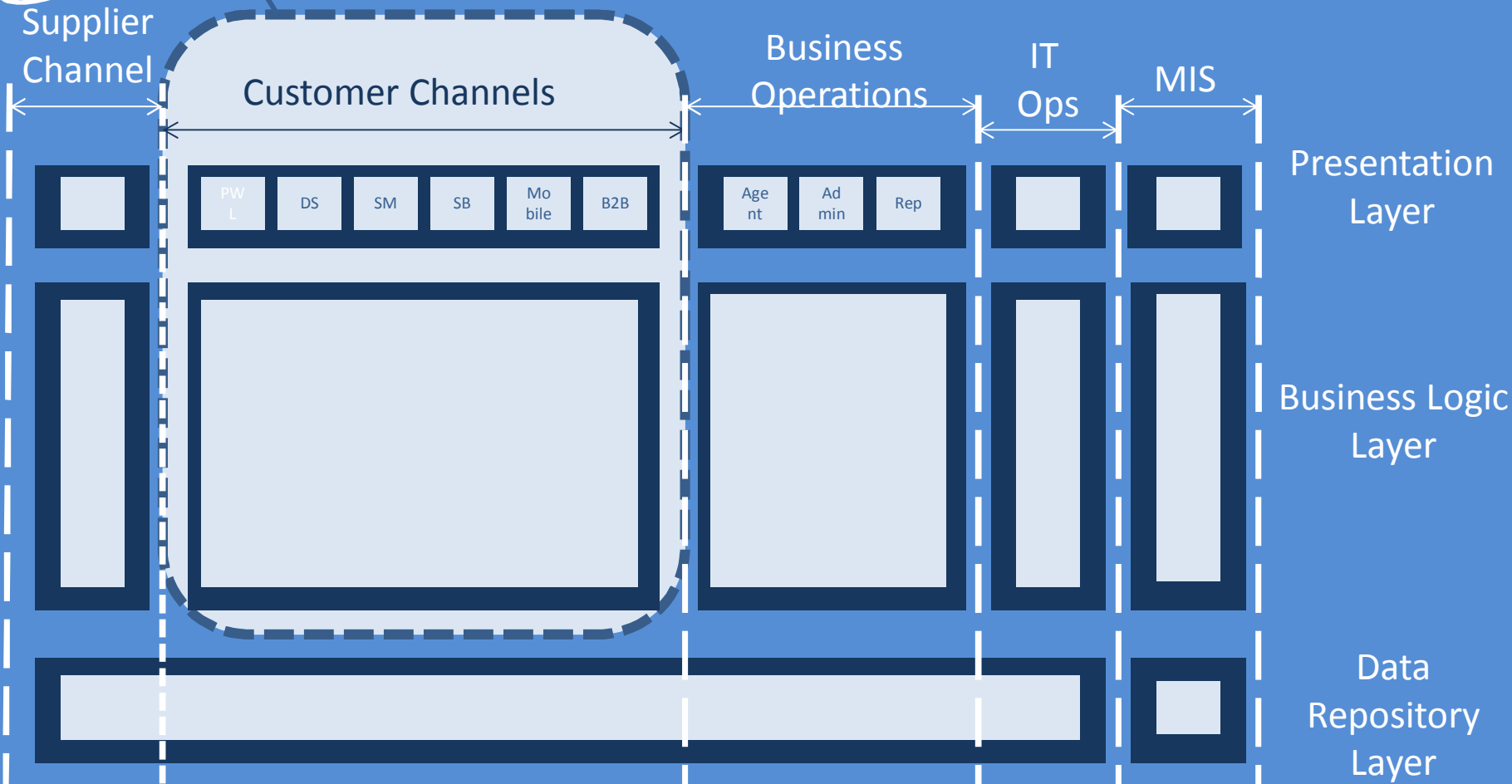
SkiMcNeill.com
The Ski Specialist





PRIORITY !!

Prioritisation & ROI

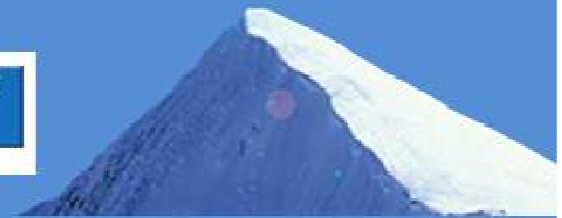




Decision Time!

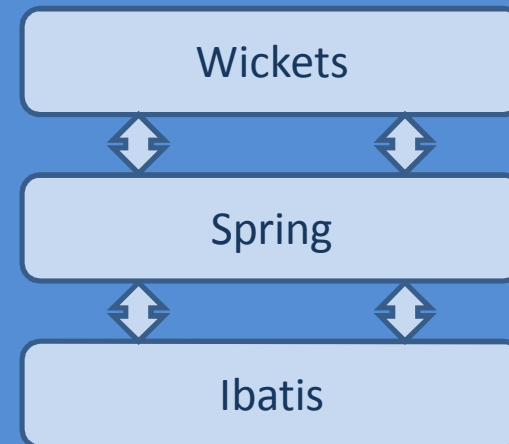
- Not replacing the whole system in Big Bang.....needs to go at 'business pace'
- Excellent Operations (Back Office), Call Centre and Rep systems – all custom built
- MIS system recently implemented - heavy investment (Data Warehouse & Business Intelligence concepts)
- Want to keep current Database as much as possible
- Competent IT personnel – tripled team size
- We are seasonal – 'football season' concept – i.e. ski season roughly 26 weeks – time outside can be used to good effect
- So.....

directski.com
THE WINTER HOLIDAY COMPANY



Build – Nirvana Project!

- Use of Open Source Products Approach where possible.
- Java Based Architecture
 - Apache Wickets – clear separation of presentation from logic
 - Spring (MVC – Model View Controller)
 - iBatis (Connectivity with DB)
 - (Contact me for more information if required)





Lessons Learnt

- Resources – competencies – give yourself time to recruit, ramp up & learning time – team size tripled – ‘pizza size’!
- Partner company – external developers?
- Harder than Buy!
- Other Day to Day responsibilities
- Set Expectations with all – need to be realistic!
- Communication, communication, communication
- Listen to your instincts!

directski.com
THE WINTER HOLIDAY COMPANY

SKI
BEAT

b2bski

SkiMcNeill.com
The Ski Specialist





In a nutshell

- All IT Work must be clearly aligned to your Business Strategy
- Understand your current systems and limitations
- Break it up into functional areas and rate each before making a decision.
- Know your business – (For us Ski) – continually question your assumptions, why, why, why, why, why
- Talk to Tech and Product suppliers
- Talk to your team
- Technology – what's coming down the track
- Exit strategy for everything you do – impact on business

directski.com
THE WINTER HOLIDAY COMPANY

SKI
BEAT

b2bski

SkiMcNeill.com
The Ski Specialist





Thank You!

