Jidoka: Automation with a Human Touch, A Software Method to Gain Organisational Control

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The Journal of Software and Systems Modeling published paper offers organisations a path to escape the legacy trap.

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WorkingMouse, a Queensland-based software solutions company, has announced the peer-reviewed publication of its methodology, Jidoka: Automation with a Human Touch. Designed to enable reuse and automation, the methodology encourages Australian organisations to regain control of their systems by combining AI-assisted templating, interactive visual models, and automation pipelines.

Locally owned and operated, WorkingMouse has spent over 10 years developing and refining the Codebots platform, which underpins its approach. Together, the method and platform guide teams through building reusable components, modelling their systems, and leveraging AI for greater efficiency—while maintaining human oversight to ensure compliance with organisational standards.

Currently, major SaaS vendors lock organisations into expensive, foreign-owned technologies and convoluted licensing models. To break free from this cycle and reduce technical debt, organisations need solutions that prioritise control, flexibility, and sustainability.

By using templates and reusable models, teams can modernise faster, with fewer resources, and deliver higher-quality outcomes compared to traditional large-scale overhaul approaches. This means moving away from static documentation toward live, evolving models—maintained and understood by all stakeholders.

WorkingMouse brings together Australian-led teams, proven processes, and proprietary tools—delivering modernisation without vendor lock-in. The company has already applied Jidoka to state and federal government projects, as well as a range of enterprise clients.

"The power of Jidoka lies in its ability to empower teams and give organisations control over their own technology. This methodology isn't just about modernisation—it's about giving businesses the tools to achieve continuous improvement." — David Burkett, Director at WorkingMouse

In an era where enterprises and government agencies must innovate quickly and remain secure while constrained by legacy systems, WorkingMouse is modernising the world's outdated technologies using models to drive momentum.

Jidoka is built on two core values:

- Balance – Harmony between human and machine, innovation and compliance, work and rest.
- Empowerment – Enabling individual strengths and collective brilliance through mentorship and leadership.

The method is supported by 9 guiding principles. It promotes empowered software teams, organisation-wide modelling, early risk identification, and minimal disruption to business operations during modernisation. Its breadth-first approach has already helped organisations evolve their systems while maintaining control.

The Jidoka methodology will be presented at the Models Conference in Michigan later this year—marking a significant milestone in WorkingMouse's international presence.

WorkingMouse is also on track to achieve ISO 9001 accreditation for its model-driven quality management system and is embedding advanced analytics across its offerings. The company is preparing to take on larger-scale modernisation projects, including those involving legacy mainframe systems.

Meanwhile, the Codebots platform continues to expand with the launch of the Bot Marketplace, enabling organisations to share and reuse bots and templates at speed. Dedicated training pathways are also being rolled out to help teams fully leverage automation in software delivery.

Codebots enables the transformation of any system or component through reusable visual models and templates. This approach gives organisations greater control over their technology and supports continuous modernisation with minimal disruption.

WorkingMouse was founded by Dr Eban Escott following his PhD at The University of Queensland, where he researched model-driven software engineering. Frustrated by building the same systems repeatedly, Eban set out to transform how software is developed—by shifting from traditional coding to reusable, model-based methods. This vision led to the creation of WorkingMouse, which began as a small startup at UQ's ilab accelerator.

Today, WorkingMouse employs around 50 locally based team members who form cross-functional software teams. The company delivers modernisation projects for the Queensland State Government and the Department of Defence, and was recognised for "putting Queenslanders first" as a finalist in the Buy Queensland Supplier Awards. The team remains committed to sovereign capability and advancing local software development expertise.

In 2019, Codebots—WorkingMouse's platform arm—received a $250,000 Ignite Ideas Grant to accelerate platform growth. Later that year, the group secured a $1.4 million Series A investment to expand its research and development. Since 2020, the group has focused on deepening its government capability while continuing to invest in local R&D and model-driven innovation through its Codebots platform.
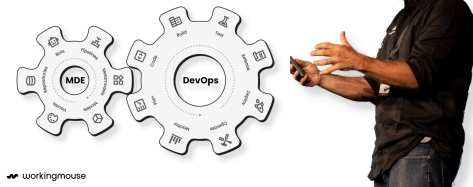
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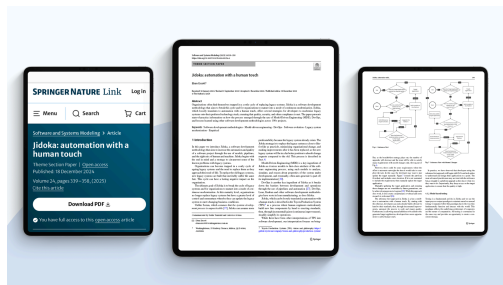
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Jidoka: Automation with a Human Touch —
visual of connected MDE and DevOps gears,
alongside Eban Escott in a WorkingMouse
shirt, highlighting the human-driven approach
to software automation.
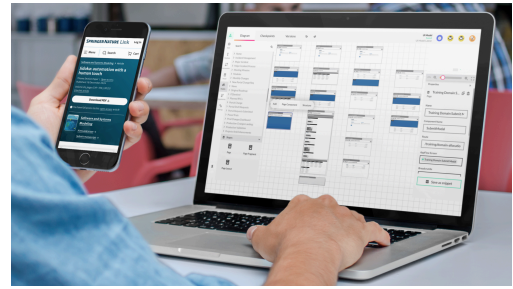
Person holding a phone displaying the
published Jidoka paper on Springer Nature
Link, while working on a model-driven UI
diagram on a laptop.

Three tablets displaying the Jidoka paper: the
article landing page on Springer Nature Link,
the paper's introduction and abstract, and a
diagram from the body of the publication.

Cover and inside spread of Software and
Systems Modeling featuring the published
Jidoka paper on model-driven development
and continuous legacy system modernisation.