

Increasing a Defense Contractor's Ability to Win Extensions and Expansions

Business Development in Washington DC

"Sometimes you get a call for an immediate customer presentation so you have to be prepared to maximize your resources. Unfortunately, getting current information on project results from the business units and project managers was like difficult at best"



Situation

The customer is a large organization with multiple groups and divisions. A large part of their business relies on existing contract (program) extensions and expansions. The customer often suffered from a lack of updated, accurate program status information when offered the opportunity for a critical customer meeting.

The Program status information was collected manually through emailed word documents, spread sheets and PowerPoint's. Those documents circulated through the company via email, etc. so it was difficult to know which document was the most current and had the correct information.

The business development users had to manually assemble information for their customer visits as well as creating actionable information, staging internal briefings, or holding strategic planning sessions.

Meeting information with a single Congressional/Armed forces contact was not always being shared causing subsequent meeting opportunities to be wasted by covering the issues already reviewed.

Opportunities to "go to the hill" for impromptu meetings were not as effective as they could be since information across multiple Programs was too time consuming to assemble in a short period of time, and no one could predict what information was needed to answer questions that might be asked by a Congressional/Armed Forces Contact.

Program managers, who possessed the most current program information were scattered across many divisions and business units. Because of the complexity of assembling the information, only once a year did the field program manager's submit information in a WORD document which then had to be manually assembled into a formal report.

Customer Concerns

The customer knew that there were several risk factors:

- Dissipation of scarce budget resources if the benefits were not captured
- Loss of user confidence if the information was incorrect or difficult to retrieve

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Many Defense contractors' rely on winning contract extensions and expansions as a large part of their business. When you're a Defense contractor with over 50 divisions, trying to win business with Congress and the various departments of the armed forces, you need key information available at a moment's notice.

The customer is a leading Aerospace and Defense contractor with multiple divisions and customers world-wide.



- Dissemination of wrong information would adversely affect user business decisions

The customer searched but could not find a reasonably priced or effective solution. In addition they knew that they required someone with extensive A&D business knowledge to quickly understand the issues and terminology to get to a fast solution with low risk.

They knew that the logic and technology required was far beyond the ability of a power user to accomplish. And, because the solution developed would entail a large, diverse deployment they wanted to limit the introduction of tools that would require new training.

Solution

The customer brought in AccessIG, Inc., a Microsoft Certified Partner, as a member of the team to help mitigate the risks and to accelerate the capturing of the benefits. Because AccessIG had extensive business experience in A&D the customer did not have to script each step. AccessIG personnel could easily discuss business situations and inform the customer of potential upstream and downstream unintended consequences. And, based on their extensive experience, they brought valuable “best practices” experience that they customer could draw upon.

As a result, the customer gained faster benefits at a lower cost due to:

- the acceleration of the process improvements and prototyping phase
- the acceleration of the identification of the cost/benefit
- the acceleration of the identification of avoidable risk

AccessIG recommended using Microsoft technologies for their information solution. AccessIG used their extensive A&D experience and vocabulary to work with the customer and in only a few sessions had a working prototype using SharePoint, that the customer could exercise which minimized the effort resources they had to supply. In addition, the customer could imagine what was possible because they could see it and try it using their own data. In addition, this

methodology helped AccessIG draw the “tribal knowledge” out of the business users so it could be formalized as business rules within the new business processes.

The customer quickly imagined what they needed and AccessIG was able to quickly formulate the information models for gathering and sharing the critical information the business development people needed. From this model, AccessIG developed a web-based, database solution that could be reported, filtered, and analyzed by everyday users based on Microsoft technologies. This solution mimicked the look and feel of the WORD document that the field program managers were used to filling out for submission so the training was minimal and the application seemed familiar to the users. A SharePoint site was implemented for collaboration and publishing of documents.

Benefits

Information now arrives at the Business Development office as complete as possible and more up to date

Processes are much more automated are not nearly as people dependent

Gathering and completing the information has been pushed down from business development office to the business units

Information is exchanged between the parties through hyperlinks that are secured behind the company firewall.

Using SharePoint in combination with document version control users no longer have to worry if the document/information they are working on is the latest copy

The business development office now has more time to devote to proactive activities; i.e., looking better in the eyes of the customer

The business development office can now make better decisions and apply more effective resources when visiting their customers.

For more information about Microsoft products or services, go to: www.microsoft.com

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