

Success Story of Project Completed for the Government

21 January 2005

Project Owner: Audit Commission

Project Name (in English): Project Accounting and Management System

Project Name (in Chinese): 項目會計及管理系統

Project Description:

The Audit Commission (AUD) of the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region developed in-house a standalone microcomputer-based Job Accounting System (JAS) in April 1988, using dBase III Relational Database Management System, to assist management in monitoring the progress of audit jobs. The JAS underwent enhancements throughout the years, including upgrading the software to DOS-based FoxPro. The application was designed to computerize the budgeting, recording and reporting of the time spent by audit staff of different ranks on various audit jobs. It had been aware that an effective project monitoring system along the lines of the JAS was an essential tool for a modern audit organization. However, the JAS did not fully address senior management's needs for short and easily accessible summaries of key data

The objective of the Project Accounting and Management System (PAMS) is to redevelop the JAS that can efficiently and effectively support the Commission's management of staff resources spent on audit jobs.

Means of Service Acquisition: ITPSA

Contractor Name: Arcotect Limited

Subcontractor Name: N/A

Project Commenced on: 1 Sept 2003

Project Completed on: 30 Sept 2004

AUD had selected Arcotect Limited through the Information Technology Professional Services Arrangement (ITPSA) to conduct the Systems Analysis & Design, System Development and Implementation for the PAMS. The project contained three major tasks, namely, System Analysis and Development (SA&D), Implementation of Program of Work, and Implementation of Monthly Processes.

Apart from transforming the previous features of JAS into more user friendly functions, Arcotect also proposed additional elements to PAMS:

a. Flexible functionality

PAMS was designed to incorporate flexible mechanisms such as approval chain, actual man-hour input process, dynamic rank creation and the flexibility for organizational re-structure so that the business operations will not be crippled when facing the dynamic business scenarios and evolving business environment.

b. Quality information

PAMS was designed to maintain the essential information like calendar, work items, data access control, on-loan information, budgeted hours validation, etc which were unavailable / could not be handled properly previously.

c. Timely reports

PAMS was designed to generate the different types of reports instantly to cater for the interests of different levels of staff.

d. Accessible centralized database

PAMS was designed to deploy through a centralized database which serves as the glue for the staff of the Audit Commission to improve collaboration. The information can be shared among all the staff.

e. Adapt to the future computerized process

PAMS was designed to include functions/features that enable users to transit from the previous manual process to the new computerized process. For instance, emails are sent by PAMS automatically to remind users to complete the data entry before monthly deadline.

The major challenges of this project were:

Complexity of maintenance functions

Sophisticated maintenance functions were required for maintaining system flexibility in modifying organizational structure and staff posting information, retrieving job information by various criteria and producing management reports. The flexible yet sophisticated approval chain increased the complexity of the programming logic.

Matrix calculations in management reports

Various distributions of work items, user group, calendar days and hours were set as factors for calculation in the management reports.

Our major competitive advantages are:

- 1) Arcotect possesses wide range of expertise and experience in: e-Solution and Workflow
- 2) Arcotect is experienced in implementation in compliance with Interoperability Framework (IF)
- 3) Arcotect possesses integration experience with Departmental Portal
- 4) Arcotect is able to work closely with users and understand the auditor's professional domain knowledge by friendly discussion.
- 5) Arcotect has working experiences and project references in both category A and B services¹ of ITPSA. The design adopts a user friendly graphical user interface (buttons/icons & navigation bar as conventional Windows interface).
- 6) Arcotect has adopted Prototyping method in all projects to minimize the discrepancy from user expectation.
- 7) Arcotect has provided a comprehensive briefing and skill transfer sessions to users for future maintenance.
- 8) Arcotect does not use sub-contractor and has deployed a dedicated project team for the implementation.

¹ Category A - General system development life cycle services typically including departmental information technology plan, feasibility and technical study, system analysis and design, system implementation and system integration, system maintenance and support.
Category B - Web publishing services.