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*Quality results through
focused teamwork*

WISDM Corporation

Service Examples

Developing the requirements for computer applications:

Finding a way to succeed

A worldwide oilrig manufacturer paid three large consulting firms \$6.5 million to define and build requirements for materials handling software. All three failed. WISDM assembled a group of company employees, and, using the facilitated team method, helped them develop requirements for a unique system in just six months. They have sold the system several times to recover development costs.

An award-winning solution

When WISDM started working with an Australian water and sewer utility to define the requirements for a customer services system, the project was 18 months behind schedule. Facilitators helped an employee team document requirements using the WISDM Requirements Process. A new manager then used the team's work to revamp the project (reducing the development team from 125 to 25 people) and complete the software. The new product won the Australian Software of the Year Award and is now sold internationally.

Achieving simplicity

WISDM facilitators worked with a team of employees at a natural gas exploration and pipeline company to re-define their pricing process, reducing a 30,000-line computer application to 3,000 lines. Working with WISDM, employees also developed the model for a "real-time" pipeline with automated devices to measure gas volume and quality. It allowed the company to eliminate costly and time-consuming manual gas sampling and bill clients as often as daily.

Working at all levels

When a major U.S. automaker needed a system for dealers to order cars and trucks, it called on WISDM. Facilitators brought together dealers with staff from manufacturing and materials management divisions. The result was a computerized ordering system that lets customers pick such options as colors, engines, interiors, and accessories. Dealers also use the system to order cars for their lots. The automaker uses the system's database to decide what materials to order and how to schedule builds.

Streamlining through teamwork

A company thought it would take a year to define 17,500 business rules for comparing incoming transactions (inquiries and maintenance) with data in a terra-byte database, then using the transactions to combine, update, and purge data. A WISDM consultant recognized that many of the business rules could be defined in an improved data dictionary, and many were redundant. WISDM facilitated a team of managers and software developers to pare the rules to 350, and then helped employees compose, document, and review the rules in 15 days.

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Developing and improving business processes:

Breaking down boundaries

A European bank launched an initiative to improve all product processes that touched customers, and WISDM was hired to define the requirements for an improved funds transfer process. It assembled a cross-functional team of operations, product, and technology representatives from around the world. Under the direction of WISDM consultants, the team took just 10 days to develop the requirements.

Making collaboration work

WISDM facilitated a team of employees at a major U.S. automaker to combine seven different engineering release processes used throughout its divisions into one corporate standard. Using its Requirements Process, WISDM helped representatives from all divisions agree to combine best practices from each distinct process. The same company had worked with large consulting firms to develop a conceptual model of materials handling, but all attempts failed. A WISDM consultant led executives from corporate management, materials handling and inventory to create the conceptual model in fewer than two days.

Documenting management

With help from WISDM, a large mainframe computer company for the first time defined requirements for configuration management of its operating systems. The company had no records of the specific system configurations created and sent to customers. Under the direction of WISDM consultants, a team of developers, quality managers, and technical writers developed a process to place each customer's operating system under configuration management and version control, and fully documented each configuration before release.

Teaming companies and vendors

A bank planning to buy software to support an improved stock trading process brought in WISDM to facilitate teamwork between its employees and the software vendor. Facilitators teamed employees from the bank's trading floor and operations divisions with the vendor's developers. Together, they created requirements for customizing the software in three days.

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Developing requirements for products and services:

Matching needs with markets

WISDM helped a team of employees at a mainframe computer company to define the market requirements for its massively parallel operating system. These requirements identified what future activities (Internet and intranet) would require high volume and speed transactions and the operating system functions that would support these transactions.

Helping gain an edge

WISDM facilitator guided a team of employees at an insurance company to define a new flexible benefits product line. Based on the clarity and completeness of the requirements, the company was able to develop and introduce the product line to the marketplace 18 months ahead of its competitors.

Developing models for new business units

Building a winning model

The WISDM method works for developing business models, too. A facilitated team of employees at a U.S. Department of Energy laboratory developed a model for an Environmental Molecular Energy Research facility. The result: A proposal that won the award of this facility. Now in operation, the molecular research facility is one of only three of its kind in the world.

A spin-off to success

A natural gas company wanted to leverage its knowledge to develop a futures trading subsidiary. Financial, operational, and technical people under the direction of a WISDM consultant developed a blueprint of the new business. The model defined the subsidiary's customers, business processes, and information flows and guided creation of an organization structure. It allowed the company to hire staff, document procedures, and install infrastructure ahead of schedule.

Off to the right start

A global bank used WISDM facilitators to help employees define requirements for a new line of business that would allow customers to outsource their accounts receivable process to the bank. The team developed product, operational delivery and information systems requirements and acceptance criteria. It also managed the formal inspection and review of the specifications by both bank staff and the development vendor.

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Managing complexity

A team of employees from six U.S. Department of Energy laboratories used the WISDM method to develop a model of the Atmospheric Radiation Program, which designs, builds, installs, and operates meteorological data-gathering stations around the world. They developed a model for the overall program, and then for each of its components: instrumentation, measurements, operations, and data management. The team also wrote requirements for the computing center and software to process, store, and disseminate the data to meteorological scientists, who use it to build mathematical models for weather prediction.

Matching technology to problems

With WISDM's help, employees from the U.S. Department of Energy developed a private, not-for-profit company that matches hazardous waste clean-up technologies to clean-up problems and promotes the development of new waste remediation technologies. This team, under the direction of WISDM consultants, developed a strategic plan, enterprise model, and detailed business processes for key components of the operation.

Developing models of how existing business units could improve

Helping set standards

WISDM helped an insurance company standardize the operations of 26 separate HMO operations scattered around the United States. Medical staff and business people from each of the HMOs came together to develop a model under the direction of WISDM consultants. Their model defined which functions could be performed uniformly and which had to be customized for different regions. It also defined a standard process that told each HMO how to provide corporate executives with the knowledge they needed to effectively manage the complete operations.

Integrating across functions

The WISDM method facilitated re-engineering of the manufacturing process for a mainframe computer company, including the information systems that support manufacturing. The model completely integrated financial, strategic planning, resource management, quality inspection, and component assembly functions.