

## Project Manager Case Studies

### Case Study #1: Translator Project at Powell Industries

Powell Industries is a Houston top 100 company that fabricates electrical power panels, circuit breakers, transformers, insulators, electric bus equipment, electric power control systems and several other items related to electric power generation and distribution.

Powell industries issued a RFP (Request for Proposal) to provide a turnkey software solution for their “Translator” system. This objective of this system was to translate the output from the AutoCAD system into parameters to be used in the design processes of their fabrication units.

Datamatix teamed with CSNA, Inc. to implement this project. Taha Shipchandler facilitated the teaming arrangement with a detailed MOU (Memorandum of Understanding) between Datamatix and CSNA for a period of one year for the first phase of the Translator project.

A kickoff meeting was conducted by the project manager Taha Shipchandler, with the CTO (Chief Technology Officer) from Datamatix, the project manager from Powell, other stakeholders from Powell and developers, QA and documenter from the Datamatix team. The Datamatix team had eight members with Taha leading the team as the project manager.

The system was to be created utilizing the Microsoft stack of development tools with a SQL database backend.

After the kickoff meeting, Taha scheduled requirements gathering sessions with the client team. Two to three meetings were held every week for a span of two months. From these requirements, after conferring with the CTO and team members, Taha created the scope, schedule, and cost baselines. These were presented to the sponsor for approval.

Quality assurance was woven into the activities from the very start of the project. The developers used industry standard checklists before checking in their code. A third-party expert reviewer was hired to verify the code and the architecture periodically. Release management was conducted as per industry standards, with detailed release notes at every milestone. Taha maintained a project web site which was used to publish the top ten risks, outstanding deliverables from the Datamatix team and the clients team, activities scheduled for the current week, activities scheduled for the next week, the project documents, and the project Gantt chart. The issues were documented on the project web site, and were introduced to the key client subject matter experts (SMEs) in daily 2-hour code review sessions systematically. Issues that had been addressed and signed off by the SMEs were marked as done as new issues were added to the list. The development team was scheduled to work in weekly sprints, and were instructed to handle the fresh issues as a priority.

Although the project scope was detailed enough, there were change requests made by the client SMEs and some were introduced as value added feedback by the Datamatix team. Each change request was thoroughly documented by Taha, with the scope, schedule, and cost implications all included. Change requests were put on the table for approval by the sponsor in scheduled meetings. Integrated change



control was then carried out to determine the effects of the change requests on the scope, schedule, and cost baselines. The effects of the change requests on risk, quality and procurement was also

addressed. The stakeholders were informed of the approved change requests, and the project team accepted the changes to the scope and schedule to implement the change requests.

The project costs, schedule, scope, quality, and communications were monitored on a continuous basis, with some time devoted each week to updating the baseline values of all the knowledge areas based on the status of the project.

The project period was one year; however, an additional six months were utilized to implement the entire project inclusive of the change requests. The project closing activities were conducted in the last six weeks of the project. All the deliverables were presented to the client team. The product was installed on the Powell servers. Training sessions were conducted for end-users and admin users to pass on the knowledge of operating the Translator application. Detailed admin and user manuals were created and handed off to the Powell team. Contracts were verified for all the deliverables and associated payments and final signoff was done.

The project was a huge success as is evident from the reference letter Datamatix received at the end of the project.