Project Manager Case Studies

Case Study # 3: Two Enterprise Case Management Systems for the Houston Police Department

The City of Houston Police Department (HPD) published a RFP (Request for Proposal) in the Fall of 2014 that required proposals to implement two enterprise case management systems, one for the Chief's office and one for the IAD (Internal Affairs Division). Datamatix teamed up with Eccentex, a company in the Gartner fourth quadrant for case management systems in the pre-bid conference to prepare a proposal in response to the RFP.

Initially, Eccentex and Datamatix prepared the proposal over a period of three months, and submitted the proposal to the HPD selection committee. The Eccentex-Datamatix bid was selected in the top three finalists and the Eccentex-Datamatix team was invited to make a presentation in the latter part of 2014.

The Eccentex-Datamatix team presented a prototype system to the HPD selection committee including the detailed game plan for the proposed implementation. Eventually, the Eccentex-Datamatix team was awarded the project, which was kicked off early in the summer of 2015.

Taha Shipchandler was selected to be the project manager with a team of one solution architect, three developers, two QA testers and one documentation specialist. The implementation tools for the two enterprise case management systems were specified to be AppBase, a case management system framework product produced by Eccentex, the Microsoft stack of development tools and a SQL backend database.

Soon after project kickoff, detailed requirements gathering sessions were conducted daily over a period of two weeks. The meetings were recorded with the permission of the attendees, so that no details were missed. The Eccentex-Datamatix team replayed the recordings to create detailed requirements documents for each of the processes of the case management systems, which were as follows:

1. Intake
2. Preliminary processing
3. Adjudication
4. Communications
5. Archiving

Taha scheduled and lead the requirements gathering meetings, and verified the subsequent requirements documents prepared by the team. The requirements documents were finalized as the scope baseline and presented to the client subject matter experts (SMEs) for approval.

Taha scheduled week-long development sprints for the team for a period of three months following which Taha conducted daily code review sessions utilizing the Agile methodology for a period of three months with some breaks in between. The code review sessions were invaluable in eliminating syntax or semantic issues. Issues were thoroughly documented in the Jira system (produced by Altassian), and

each issue that was introduced in the code review session was further marked as complete or retained as active if it did not pass the SMEs approval.

New issues routinely surfaced as the development progressed and more modules were completed. The code review sessions continued until there were no more active issues remaining in Jira.

On Monday afternoons throughout most of the term of the project, an hour-long status update meeting was scheduled and lead by Taha with the client project manager. In this meeting the current risks were put on the table and risk response strategies were discussed. The activities for the current week and for the next week were presented and deliverables from the vendor and clients teams were clarified and accounted for. Risks that were no longer active were retired and new risks that surfaced as the project progressed were noted and addressed.

In this way the project was kept on track to a successful closure in the latter part of 2016. Detailed user and admin manuals were created by the vendor and offered to the clients' team. Thorough training sessions were conducted for the end-users and administrators. Contracts were scrutinized to list and approve all deliverables and audits were conducted on invoices and payments in comparison to the project milestones and budget.

The project was very well received by all the stakeholders as is demonstrated by the recommendation letter.