



How to Snatch Victory from Defeat

CASE STUDY – CMEI 1

Service:

Project Assurance using IT Independent Verification & Validation (IVV)

Client:

Global Publisher and Event Firm

Requirement:

Project Assurance on outsourced application development and integration project.

Situation:

The Client committed to a strategic initiative to create global common interest community websites across 50+ separate content sites. Each site would have multiple new features including content management, Customer Relationship Management (CRM) and event planning/scheduling capabilities. Direct back office tie-in to legacy systems for internal sales and service capacity would be implemented. The Client chose a commercial off-the-shelf software package and an implementation partner to both customize and integrate the system on a time and expenses basis. The project was to be completed in eight months and deployed on three continents simultaneously.

The software and outside services were budgeted at \$2 million. The implementation vendor commenced work in three cities on two continents. After the first phase of the project had failed, Semaphore was engaged to act as the Client's representative on the project to provide Project Assurance services. Semaphore was engaged to ensure the quality of work and enforce project budgets, minimize delivery timelines and maintain functionality.

Scope:

Staffing: 16 person weeks.

Deliverable: Successful completion of the project.

Discovery:

There were frequent changes of personnel across critical development categories including project managers, architects and senior developers. It was immediately apparent that the vendor did not employ proper documentation techniques, appropriate development processes or management supervision. Milestones were missed or completed short of designed requirement standards.

The project was not progressing as planned; it was a technological failure. The failure posed significant business harm to already announced Client enhancements. Halfway into the project time-line the vendor went bankrupt and threatened the value of the \$1.3 million then invested in the project as well as the Global Publisher's reputation.

Outcome:

1. Semaphore immediately redirected the project plan and altered the functional specifications to properly meet already defined business requirements.
2. The Project Assurance methodology established a documentation process for the Client and vendor. This process captured the work performed, allowing for maximum transfer of knowledge to the ever-changing roster of personnel assigned to the project.
3. The Project Assurance process became the "Institutional Memory" for the entire project, allowing order to be restored.



4. The estimated one-year delay in delivery was reduced to three months.
5. Semaphore's Project Assurance activity helped secure financial restitution for the Client as a result of the vendor's failure to perform.