

INTEGRATED MANAGEMENT CASE STUDY

RGIT MONTROSE Group

INTRODUCTION

RGIT Montrose Group redeveloped its quality system in 2002 to create a comprehensive management and operational system for the business. It not only meets the requirements of ISO9001:2000 but, more significantly, it has also enabled RGIT Montrose to simplify and consolidate its procedures by focussing on its key processes.

WHO WE ARE

RGIT Montrose Group is an international provider of training and consultancy services to companies operating in the Energy, Exploration, General Industrial and Defence / Civil Industries. We operate in areas where risk management, health and safety, competence development and training are of paramount importance and where the company's services are valued at a premium.

Our expertise is focussed on delivering training programmes in the fields of Health and Safety, Fire-Fighting, Emergency Management, Survival, Marine, Well services and Technician Training. Expert consultancy is provided in the areas of Competency and Total Training Management. Over 150 scheduled courses are currently offered to clients.

RGIT Montrose employs the latest and most innovative technology, developed over the last 20 years to ensure that individuals are fully trained and are, where relevant, able to respond to emergency situations.

WHY WE NEEDED AN IMS

We inherited separate sets of procedures and cultures from three organisations which had gone through two mergers in the last 3 years to create RGIT Montrose. Our primary aim was to consolidate the systems and to address compliance issues in a single, accessible and comprehensive management system which could be published on our Intranet. We also had to cater for the requirements of ISO9001:2000 at the same time as we underwent major building work and reorganisation for a new state of the art training facility.

The company's Quality Manager, Gordon Caird, also has overall responsibility for Health & Safety issues. Because of the type of training which RGIT Montrose provides, he recognised that it was imperative that he had "his own house in order" with regard to compliance with relevant legislation and best practice. The company's ambitious growth plans added further pressure to ensure that business practices were controlled and efficient.

Although the existing Intranet was felt to be nearing the end of its useful life and in need of a radical review, it nevertheless allowed all staff to access relevant procedures and forms needed for basic operations, albeit it in a relatively disjointed structure. Procedures were all in narrative format, and all forms were on the network but sometimes with duplicate versions as a consequence of the merger.

WHAT WE DID

Gordon Caird was already convinced of the benefits of flowcharting as a method of defining processes, and looked at a number of options before selecting Promanade software from Management & Operational Systems Limited (MandOS). He admits that there was a concern at the outset that this would be "just another software solution which might just sit on the shelf rather than providing real benefit to the business".

He had already identified ten key processes covering marketing, winning business and service delivery, but he had not yet visualised how they should best be structured to provide an intuitive "index" for users. So he based the system on the generic set of process definitions which

MandOS had already used as the basis for a number of other systems, and tailored it to his own requirements.

With some occasional on-site assistance and advice from MandOS over a period of some 4 months, process definitions were drafted and discussed with senior managers. One important outcome was the realisation that a process definition can consist of a very few number of tasks – vast amounts of detail are not required, so long as referenced documents can be accessed and users have the appropriate skills to do their jobs.

Gordon recognised that process management requires more than a collection of flowcharts, and the MandOS approach is specifically designed to cater for this. In the new system, each process has clearly defined objectives and key performance indicators and its resource requirements are specified. Now, internal auditors not only review a process's performance against its objectives but also ensure that the required resources are available and are being maintained. The influences on a process can also be identified, and this in itself has prompted the organisation to think more deeply about how the business and the individual processes are working.

A key factor in the selection process was the way in which the software allows Gordon to concentrate on defining the tasks within each process, identifying staff involvement in each task, the resource requirements and document usage. Process flowcharts are generated automatically in printed or electronic format, and draft process definitions can be published alongside authorised versions.

The published system uses a simple structure for both the Process Definitions and for the Document Register (which is in effect more of an Information Register since it contains external web site addresses and other sources of information which are used within the system).

The system also interfaces into the internal email system so that, for example, course booking can be taken by anyone and directed to the course bookings administrator.

THE BENEFITS

- It changes the focus away from departmental and functional performance and onto the objectives of the business and how they are met.
- It has enabled standardisation and a drive towards "best practice" for the merged organisation.
- It makes processes easy to define and simple to understand - it has done away with volumes of narrative (typically one simple chart replaces 7 pages of narrative).
- There is much less time spent maintaining the system, with resultant cost savings.
- The system provides an ideal basis for identifying potential improvements.
- The use of standard symbols (using the RACI approach common within the Oil and Gas sector) makes it easy to identify people's involvement in each task.
- Job Descriptions are created automatically from the process definitions.
- The system reports how all documents and information sources are accessed and used.
- It is an ideal method to meet (and exceed) the requirements of ISO9001:2000.
- It focuses on process understanding and management rather than (just) compliance.
- It is seen as an essential business tool rather than as an IT solution – it belongs to the company rather than to the IT Department.
- Users (and managers!) actually like it and use it.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:

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