

Computer Sciences Corporation

Computer Sciences Corporation Saves Time and Money with a Centralized EPM Solution

Computer Sciences Corporation, a leading IT services provider, wanted to reduce its overhead costs in managing the large outsourcing engagements increasingly critical to its business. CSC faced difficulty in keeping pace with stakeholder demands for resource visibility and control. CSC turned to Microsoft® Office Project Server 2007 to complement its best practice processes with a central repository for tracking resources and project status. With Office Project Server 2007 reporting capabilities, key stakeholders gain immediate and up-to-date visibility and control. Integration with Microsoft Windows® SharePoint® Services also helps employees collaborate more efficiently. Overall, CSC anticipates that the solution will save at least 30 percent on updating efforts for general team members, 50 percent for project managers, and more than 60 percent for project management office staff.

Situation

"Project managers have the information at their fingertips to approve. The program office then can analyze the information without having to do any data entry. So you're saving time for everybody."

Ryan Jackson
Program Control Senior Manager
Computer Sciences Corporation

Computer Sciences Corporation (CSC) is one of the world's largest providers of IT services, ranking number 141 in the Fortune 500 list of top U.S. corporations. It employs 78,000 people in 80 countries worldwide and had U.S.\$14.6 billion in revenues for fiscal year 2006. With corporate headquarters in El Segundo, California, CSC develops innovative yet practical solutions for large corporations and government agencies, with some of its biggest customers located in the United States and Europe.

A growing part of CSC business is the outsourcing and management of IT operations for its clients. The trend of IT outsourcing has been gaining momentum and creates huge opportunities for CSC. Realizing these opportunities is not easy because the IT outsourcing industry has become more competitive and clients demand services at not only low cost but high quality. According to Ryan Jackson, Program Control Senior Manager, Transition Management Organization at CSC, "Our premise has always been: faster, better, cheaper...But every company now is seeing increasing pressures to cut costs without sacrificing quality."

Not surprisingly, successful project management is critical to the company's success in delivering the high-quality and low-cost services demanded by clients. Achieving success requires best practice methodologies and tools to support those methodologies. Internally, CSC has already established processes that are mature and proven in the marketplace. Supporting these processes is an array of tools, including Microsoft® Office Project Professional 2003 as well as third-party and internally developed applications. While CSC processes have evolved with the marketplace, CSC tools have been challenged to keep pace, particularly with the scale of CSC projects and the resulting resource management demands.

The scale and complexity of the company's outsourcing engagements is significant and still evolving. Each engagement is typically split into three phases: transition, transformation, and run-maintain. The first two phases depend heavily on effective project management. In the "transition" phase, CSC takes over the operations and staffing of a client's IT department; projects may entail 75-100 work packages that collectively roll up into 3,500 task line items. In the "transformation" phase, the complexity and scale is even greater. Jackson says, "A transformation typically would be broken up into 20 to 30 big projects, such as migrating a help desk, or moving a data center from one location across the world to another. Each of these big projects can contain as many as 25,000 task items."

Given the scale and complexity of its projects, gaining visibility and control over resources is critical. Frequently throughout an outsourcing engagement, CSC customers, account managers, and executives want to track project progress. Providing these updates with the current tools at CSC is a highly manual process, which requires substantial time among task managers and project managers to collaborate and share information. In

many cases, multiple entries of the same data are made. Making this task even more difficult is that the CSC work force is geographically dispersed. The result is that CSC incurs significant overhead cost in its desire to provide visibility and insight required by key stakeholders.

Jackson knew CSC excelled with best practice management processes. But as he sought to deliver on its outsourcing strategy, he wondered if there were solutions to deal with mounting costs of implementing those processes.

Solution

"The Microsoft Office EPM Solution will help CSC execute its global programs and projects by consolidating and streamlining the many moving parts across our organization ."

Ryan Jackson
Program Control Senior Manager
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Jackson believed that he could reduce overhead costs with a collaborative, centralized, and scalable project management solution. In addition, a major issue for CSC was implementing a solution whose familiarity and interoperability would lead to fast and broad adoption throughout the organization.

Given these requirements, CSC chose to implement Microsoft Office Project Server 2007. Office Project Server 2007 works with Microsoft Office Project Professional 2007 and Office Project Portfolio Server 2007 to make up the newest version of the Microsoft Office Enterprise Project Management (EPM) Solution. In addition, CSC would gain access to the collaborative capabilities provided by the integration of Microsoft Windows® SharePoint® Services with Project Server 2007.

In mid-October 2006, CSC began a pilot program to deploy the Microsoft Office EPM Solution for both the transition and transformation phase of an IT outsourcing engagement. The pilot program will span 150 users. About 40 project managers will have Office Project Professional 2007 on their workstations while other employees will use the Microsoft Office Project Web Access client.

All of the project management data—the plans, budgets, timelines, status indicators, and other information—resides at the server level. Project managers who require scheduling capabilities and other features use Project Professional 2007. Other CSC task owners use Office Project Web Access to provide updates, initiate proposals for new projects, and run reports on current project items. All of the data entered by project managers and general team members is saved directly to the server. The EPM Solution also links all users to Windows SharePoint Services, which provides centralized access, storage, and sharing of project-related issues, risks, and documents. So far, the deployment is on track. Supporting the Microsoft Office EPM Solution are Microsoft SQL Server™ 2000 and the Windows Server® 2003 R2 Enterprise Edition operating system. All of these applications are running on HP ProLiant 385 and 360 servers. Finally, the Microsoft Office EPM Solution is integrated with existing CSC applications, eliminating any possible disruptions in existing time entry and reporting systems.

Following the pilot, Jackson has ambitious plans to scale up the Microsoft Office EPM Solution to help manage a vast number of IT projects at CSC spanning thousands of users. "My intention is that we will be rolling this out for all of our transition, transformation, and account program management offices. Many of our managed accounts will be able to use Project Server 2007 to help manage the vast number of IT projects within that account." He adds, "I have more than 20 programs that can't wait to take advantage of this technology."

Benefits

The Microsoft Office EPM Solution integrates tightly with CSC best practice processes for project management. Together, they represent the management system for CSC outsourcing engagements. The EPM Solution will help CSC improve the efficiency of its project management through online collaboration and centralized resource management. The result will be immediate and greater visibility over resource allocation as well as savings in time and money from the elimination of redundancies and manual processes for task updates and information sharing.

Centralized Data Repository Saving 100 Hours a Month

Project management is about increasing efficiency. Without good tools, however, project management processes can be inefficient. For example, to update a project plan, a project manager may be forced to manually pass around a spreadsheet, organize numerous team meetings, or make telephone calls to locate individual employees. Even after receiving updates from team members, the project manager still has to retype the updates into the plan before passing it along to the Program Control Officer, who would enter the data into the master plan. The redundancies from this inefficient process hamper productivity and can affect already tight project timelines.

With the 2007 release of the Microsoft Office EPM Solution, these inefficiencies are eliminated because data is centrally captured and automatically updated for all stakeholders. When employees using Project Web Access update their tasks, the data is instantly available for the project manager and the Program Control Officer, both of whom are using Project Professional 2007. "Project managers have the information at their fingertips to approve," Jackson says. "The program office then can analyze the information without having to do any data entry. So you're saving time for everybody. It may be only an hour or two per session, but you're still saving time."

Such savings adds up. Jackson estimates that general team members will save 20 hours a month, project managers 50 hours a month, project management office leads 60 hours a month, and project management office staff 100 hours a month. "When you're looking at salaries, that is where you come up with some big savings," Jackson says.

With outsourcing deals as complicated and far-reaching as those at CSC, a centralized repository provides CSC a measurable advantage. "Instead of having data scattered everywhere, Project Server 2007 will allow us, even as we're executing a vast global deal, to manage all of the information that's exchanged—right at our fingertips."

Immediate Resource Visibility and Control

Previously, CSC incurred significant time and cost in updating key stakeholders due to manual processes for gathering data. With project data updated automatically and stored in one place, the Microsoft Office EPM Solution helps CSC provide its executives and clients immediate and up-to-date visibility on the utilization and allocation of project resources. CSC also is able to use the Reporting Data Services and Cube Building Service in Project Server 2007 to build custom dashboards and scorecards for this purpose. As Jackson says, "It's important that we have full control of all of our activities and can track our progress in a timely manner. We can then communicate that information not only to our account teams and our executive management, but more importantly, to our clients who are paying for our engagements."

Improved Collaboration

Through the integration of the Microsoft Office EPM Solution with Windows SharePoint Services, CSC gains a powerful and centralized tool to help its team members collaborate. Previously, CSC project team members had to search for documents across multiple sources, including Lotus Notes repositories and existing intranet portals. The time spent locating data and IT resources to support this activity was substantial.

With Windows SharePoint Services, CSC can easily access and manage project information in one place. "A lot of documentation gets produced for our projects, and SharePoint sites make it possible for us to have our logical technical models and physical technical models, for example, in one place. So our people—whether they're managing the plans or working on the actual tasks—have the ability to collaborate, through the same

place where they're managing the rest of the project information." By streamlining the collaboration process, the EPM Solution helps team members work together more closely and execute faster on project timelines.

Efficiency Gains in Managing Technology

Moving to a server-based EPM tool will make it easier for CSC to manage its software resources. For example, Jackson says, "Because all our data is in one place, our backup environment is no longer spread out in different repositories and on different machines. We have the ability to have one secure off-site backup environment."

Finally, moving to a server-based solution enables CSC to provide the right tool for the right role. An individual team member is able to use a browser-based tool like Project Web Access while a project manager can take advantage of the powerful capabilities of Project Professional 2007. The end result is that each team member is empowered to actively contribute and IT faces a lesser commitment in resources to support the installed user base.

Improved Quality in Service Delivery

Jackson ultimately believes that the new software will help the company better take advantage of the value it gets from its unique combination of people, processes, and technology. He says, "Successfully managing fast-paced, complex programs requires a highly effective management system, which includes best practice processes and tools. The Microsoft Office EPM Solution will help CSC execute its global programs and projects by consolidating and streamlining the many moving parts across our organization."