

System Selection & Implementation - Board of Architects & Engineers

Background

With the passing of the Professional Engineers Act (Qld) 2002 and Architects Act (Qld) 2002 in January 2003, the Department of Public Works advised the Board of Architects and the Board of Professional Engineers that their current Registration Systems could neither support, nor be enhanced effectively to support, the new functional and data collection requirements of these Acts.

451 Consulting were engaged by the Department to define, manage and resource the Registration Systems Project to acquire a replacement Registration System solution. The solution needed to incorporate online, web-enabled registration, renewal and payment functions, and be integrated with the respective Board financial accounting, office automation and web facilities. An additional complexity was the Department's requirement to have the whole solution managed and hosted externally, maximising the portability of each of the Boards should their "host department" (i.e. administrative support structure) change in the future.

Process

Initially, the Department considered a traditional "build or buy" path, defining detailed business and technical requirements and then going to open tender for a solution. 451 Consulting advised the Department to consider a faster approach, with less cost and risk: a "managed services" arrangement, whereby a single solution provider would deliver the tailored, integrated Registration System, and then host that system and the Boards' web sites on an ongoing basis.

This approach would deliver the targeted business outcomes within the planned timeframes and, more importantly, within the strict project, capital and operational expenditure parameters set by the Department.

451 Consulting defined the overall project approach, segmenting the project into five (5) phases:

1. Project Establishment, including developing the Project Plan (work breakdown, resourcing and cost estimates) and documenting high-level Business Requirements;
2. Project Buy-in and Diagnosis, including confirmation of the Project Plan and Business Requirements with key stakeholders (particularly the respective Boards), assessment and documentation of current business processes for Phase 4 BPR and investigation of potential registration and hosting solutions;
3. Solution Determination and Acquisition, including specification and assessment of a Request for Offer, including provision of a Best and Final Offer (BAFO) process;
4. Solution Implementation – environment establishment, application enhancement, testing, data take-up and commissioning; and
5. Post Implementation Review, including 451 Consulting's unique Value Extraction Program.





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The project team consisted of the Registrars for the two Boards, departmental ICT and Legal & Contractual staff and 451 Consultants. 451 managed the project, and provided specialist analytical resources and quality assurance.

The key to minimising project costs was using a balanced, efficient and equitable procurement process, together with testing draft Business Requirements and budget expectations with industry, as early as possible in the project. Because this was not a normal Government software procurement process, much new ground needed to be broken to document and agree the procurement strategy.

From a long list of potential suppliers: similar national and state bodies involved in the registration or licensing of professionals, seven (7) candidate suppliers were shortlisted. These organisations and their technology partners were approached to provide commentary on the Business Requirements, including indicative pricing.

Outcomes

Phases 1 and 2 of the project were completed, on time and on budget. More importantly, the level of project expenditure for phases 1 and 2 was minimised, conserving the majority of the available capital funds for solution acquisition and implementation. Another important consideration was the impact of ongoing operational expenses for the solution, which were to be funded by the Board. By using a managed services arrangement, with a single supplier for the complete solution, the funding burden on the Board was minimised, reducing pressure on registration fee increases across the State's 7,000 registered professional Engineers and Architects.

Six (6) candidate suppliers chose to respond with comments and indicative pricing. This enabled the Project Team to assess the viability of the overall approach, and ensured expected capital and operational costs were within budget. Following a further shortlisting process, a selection of the candidate suppliers were invited to respond to an RFO.

Testimonial

"451 Consulting were able to quickly elevate the project from a technical software specification to the cost-effective acquisition of a complete business solution. Their identification of the real business benefits, management of the business risks and pragmatic, yet equitable acquisition, has given the Boards and the Department confidence that a cost-effective, fully functional solution will result."

[Tony Woodward, Director of Finance and Information Technology, Department of Public Works](#)