



Subsea7 gets agile with Agility

Three years on, Ross McCartney, Group Quality Systems Manager talks to BusinessPort about Agility and the benefits it has brought to the Subsea7 organisation.

You started with Subsea 7 last March, where were you before?

Initially I started out on an apprenticeship scheme inspecting, repairing and maintaining various subsea equipment for the industry as an Electronics Technician, before I eventually moved into a Quality Assurance role in the mid-nineties.

To one extent or another I have always been involved in process management related activities, which has CASE STUDY www.businessport.net often taken me overseas to some diverse and often challenging environments. My career has always been within oil and gas, I have seen process management systems develop hugely over the years as it used to be quite an arduous task.

Were you aware of agility before Subsea 7?

Yes, I knew of the agility product via a colleague. I saw a demonstration of BusinessPort's Agility software and thought it was an excellent product. I thought to myself at the time how good it would be to use the product in a live environment, so I'm delighted to be working with it at Subsea 7.

Subsea 7 have just merged with Acergy, what does this mean for Subsea 7?

The merger has seen the organisation grow to form the world's largest seabed to surface engineering and construction organisation, almost doubling personnel and vessel resources to become the global leader in its field. In terms of the defining the way we work, Acergy already had an effective management system product in place hosted via a Lotus Notes based application.



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The decision to use the Microsoft platform coupled with the benefits of the Agility Business Management System software made the decision an easy one.



What do you recognise as being the main benefits of Agility?

The ability for the process owner to develop and maintain their content in a simple, effective and efficient manner is an important factor. If we didn't have Agility, it's likely that we would end up reverting to the days of having the Quality department 'leading them by the hand', with a more labour intensive approach to developing process maps. The level of variation in structure and formatting would also inevitably be quite high. Now we're spending more time measuring the turn-around time and less time having to chase documents through the system.

The fact that the product is fully auditable and traceable takes away any document or data integrity issues – it's fully transparent and we can see who did what and when they did it. This removes a lot of questions from clients and auditors off the table, because as soon as they see it, things are very clear to them.

What are the key selling points of Agility for an organisation such as Subsea7?

I like that the review process is all self-contained. The Process Designer tool is a huge benefit; people can sit, drag and drop cells, a process that would take the best part of a day now takes much less time.

Whilst these features of the software benefit those who are inputting the information, my main focus is more on the front end of the system, the user interface. The SharePoint add-in is a great asset to the product and gives us the option to create more web parts and fully integrate the way we work content and tasks into our daily workspace.

If we can get the information our people need, which defines and controls the way we work via the management system, without realising it, then we are on the right track. The fact that SharePoint has agility sitting behind it, driving it all is great. It's there, it's reliable and it's pushed right onto your desktop space.

Since the Discovery Exercise a few years ago, we have seen first-hand the benefits of using the agility System. The document feedback tool dovetails in neatly with the other corrective and preventative action tools in place - there is no waiting around for someone to get around to it - it is locked into the product and it doesn't vanish, there is no hiding away, it's very transparent.

I think, internally, the integrity of the system speaks for itself and is probably its biggest selling point.

When you are dealing with change management, in this size of organisation and on this scale, document change is no trivial matter, there is huge risk involved. When I came to Subsea 7 they needed someone who understood risk and quality and with the help of agility's Risk Management tool there are major benefits to be achieved, especially for a dynamic organisation that is constantly changing.

What's next for Subsea 7 in terms of continually improving the product?

We are always actively looking for better ways of doing things and trying to push the product to do even more, leading more to a tool which helps us identify the risks associated with the business and using agility to help define and control these risks.



The decision to move onto the new Agility product is a natural step for us. It's clear to see that BusinessPort and Subsea 7 are so aligned – more than traditional solution provider.

Group Quality Systems Manager

