

Alignment & Recovery

Wired Consulting and Healthy Outcomes

What was the scope?

Several key milestones had been missed and the project was running late – possibly too late. With a “drop dead” project end date less than 3 months away, the project sponsor had become increasingly concerned about the vendor’s ability to deliver the leading edge technology.

The sponsor would have to commit in the next weeks to a significant media campaign promoting the new customer service innovation and was unable to do so until he had enough comfort the project would deliver.

The project sponsor feeling that he was too close to the project required an objective independent review of the project health and an assessment of the likelihood that the project would be delivered as planned.

What was the challenge?

Drop dead project end date. The “drop dead” project end date was necessary to ensure the organisation remained ahead of its industry competitors in customer service capability. Although the vendor continually reassured the sponsor that they would meet the end date, the missed milestones were a concern.

Leading edge technology – was it really possible? This was the first time this type of technology had been used in this type of application and within this industry.

Should we stop this project? It would be better to kill the project immediately if it was not possible to achieve the drop dead date than to sink more money into the project, and a related marketing campaign. It would also become increasingly difficult to justify the situation to the steering committee and Project Board.

How did Wired add value to the client?

The right skills to undertake the review. Wired have project risk management expertise with industry and “big 4” consulting backgrounds.

A project health check methodology . A methodology was applied ensuring an efficient and effective review.

Independence & credibility. An independent review by a project risk expert is tailored to provide the appropriate level of assurance and governance required by steering committees and Board of Directors for significant spend projects in relation to a project health review.

What was the end result?

A review was conducted over a period of three days. The methodology ensured that the key stakeholders were interviewed and the appropriate depth of review was conducted in relation to project documentation and progress completed validated against stated. The review identified:

- The development code was very new and there were very few programmers in the market place.
- The technology vendor solution relied on one key developer to deliver the technology solution. This person was working long hours and had hit a hurdle and was losing confidence that a solution was possible within the timeframes. He felt unsupported and was at risk of burn out having threatened to leave the project just two weeks earlier.
- The start up technology house had limited funds to complete the work and although the customer had negotiated a fixed price, would have to inject additional funds into this business to enable it complete this work.
- Even if additional resources were recruited to meet the next delivery milestone it would not be possible to recover the project within the timeframe as there was no capacity to further compress project tasks.
- The sponsor presented the health check review findings to the steering committee recommending to “kill” the project. The organisation avoided committing significant further funds to the project.
- The sponsor was able to retain good quality relationships with all parties – leaving the doors open for future work with the technology vendor.

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