

Business Support Systems Project Overview

Description

The purpose of this project is to enhance certain processes related to the Company's financial, materials management and human resources application, Microsoft Great Plains. For 2003, the proposed enhancements include:

- Develop reporting capabilities required to analyze purchasing discount opportunities with frequently used suppliers.
- Streamline the Credit Card (VISA) processing workflow. Credit card statements are currently completed, approved and processed manually.
- Improvements to accounts receivable processes.
- Improve access to employee information by activating the Education and Training and Performance Management Results functions of the Company's human resources information system.

Costs

The estimated cost of this project is \$84,200.

Benefits

- Improved information regarding the frequency and volume of purchases from a given supplier will enable the Company to negotiate volume discounts. Improved purchasing information would also increase internal awareness of purchasing requirements and facilitate strategic coordination of purchases to achieve better pricing.
- Improvements in the Credit Card workflow process will enable employees to process their Corporate Credit Card statements on-line, reducing the requirement for manual intervention and keying of data by administrative staff.
- The current process of reviewing the Company's electronic records of outstanding receivables for project-related billings to identify specific receivables due from large customers such as the City of St. John's and the provincial government is inefficient and time-consuming. The proposed enhancements will improve project-billing processes so that outstanding receivables are more easily matched to customer accounts. These enhancements will improve the collection process.

- Activating the Education and Training and Performance Management Results functions of the Company's human resources information system will facilitate identification and analysis of training and development needs of employees. Easier access to this information will improve the process of managing employee training and development so that it meets the Company's requirements.
- The current problem with the human resources information system in relation to employee performance management is that performance indicator data for individual employees is now stored in an Excel spreadsheet that is not integrated with the employee data in the human resources information system. Integrating this data with the human resources information system will improve the efficiency of the process of reporting and analyzing this information.

Analysis

The implementation of the Microsoft Great Plains business application has established a solid technology foundation for the financial and human resources aspects of the Company. As with all large software implementation projects, opportunities to make process improvements within the scope of the application become more apparent once the system has been established in production.

As users gain confidence with business processes and related workflows, they identify changes that will increase efficiency and improve overall customer service. With a well-established product such as Microsoft Great Plains we fully expect that modest improvements will continue to present themselves and we will take advantage of the functionality of the application (where feasible) as it continues to evolve.