



Microsoft Customer Solution

Case study

Reliable and Affordable Project Management Leads to Better Patient Care at Bayside Health

“This is a strategic investment that will allow us to improve our project management methodologies and provide a safer, smarter health environment.”

Mark Gravell

*Acting Director of Information Technology Services
Bayside Health*

Like most health institutions, Melbourne-based Bayside Health operates with finite resources. Comprising three major hospitals and ancillary health care facilities, it caters for tens of thousands of people every year in Australia’s second largest city. The Bayside Health IT team manages projects that range from a \$5 million picture archiving and communications system (PACS) to database management. Having previously struggled to keep track of its myriad IT-related tasks, the project management system now in place at Bayside Health utilises products from the Microsoft Office System to help make its budget go further by freeing IT staff for “real project management” – strategic activities that help staff collaborate and achieve more in shorter timeframes with the same resources or less. Bayside Health plans to create a more structured and integrated project management process that will translate to better patient care.



CUSTOMER PROFILE	BUSINESS SITUATION	SOLUTION	BENEFITS
Formed in June 2000, Bayside Health comprises three large healthcare facilities: The Alfred Hospital, Caulfield General Medical Centre and Sandringham & District Memorial Hospital. It serves the bayside communities of Melbourne and many patients further afield. Bayside Health treats more than 75,000 people a year on a budget of about \$420 million.	The project management information needed by Bayside Health staff was located in disparate systems and difficult to access. This created inefficiencies and errors that cost time and money. Bayside Health required a flexible enterprise project management system to enhance staff collaboration and improve productivity. It also had to be scalable and affordable.	Programs from the Microsoft Office System allowed Bayside Health to improve project management and give employees real visibility into their organisation. Using familiar tools, IT staff and management now has easy Web-based access to a central repository of information. They can prioritise projects, tasks and resources, cut waste and deliver projects faster.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Better health care for patients as a result of more effective internal operations. ▪ More reliable data. ▪ Improved communication. ▪ Cost savings from establishing process standards. ▪ Clear view of resource availability and automation of daily tracking processes. ▪ Central point for data.

“We have a whole range of people who use this system, not just IT types. It had to cater for all of them and it does so very well.”

Geoff Scott

Manager, Project Management Office
Bayside Health

Situation

Bayside Health is a large public sector organisation that has a busy, resource-stressed IT services department. It needed a project management system to ensure its various project tasks were being tracked and reported against projects in progress.

Project visibility and document management was poor and there was no central point for project staff to collaborate. Too many decisions were based on information that could be as much as a month out of date. This dearth of established project management standards and processes was causing inefficiencies and errors and in turn creating undue tension among staff. It was also costing time and money.

Project management of IT was all the more difficult at Bayside Health because as well as providing IT services for three major metropolitan hospitals and shared services support for three other health agencies, it is the lead agency for a shared services rollout to health sites throughout Victoria.

Bayside Health needed an enterprise-wide system that gave employees better control of project management processes so they could prioritise work and find new efficiencies. It wanted to automate the tracking of tasks, issues and resources and install a central repository of project and resource data that was available via the Web.

Such a system would provide clear evidence of where and how resources were deployed and ensure team member collaboration. The system had to have integrated tools that were flexible and easy to use so everyone could participate in projects and report on their progress.

“Our difficulty has been in managing the myriad requests for our IT resources in a fair and equitable manner,” says Acting Director of Information Technology Services Mark Gravell.

“We need to know, and be able to show others, that we are using our resources efficiently and not playing favourites. We also have to show that we are addressing the deliverables required by our organisation’s strategic plan and doing our bit to enhance the health services offered by our hospitals.

“The other criticism we face is that our time to deliver is ambiguous and sometimes excessive. But it’s the ambiguity that hurts the business most.”

And what vital business it is. Across its three hospitals, Bayside Health’s services include trauma, aged care, emergency, rehabilitation, infectious diseases, oncology, psychiatry and intensive care. The Alfred Hospital also has a distinguished history of medical training and research.

Solution

Initially, Bayside Health investigated various timesheet products, such as Replicon and Journeyx, that integrated with the Microsoft Project 2002 system. However, these tools met only one aspect of the health service’s requirements and neither was able to import or export enough information from Microsoft Project 2002 to be useful. They were not suitable for automated progress updates. The IT team also fashioned a range of manual solutions but information took too long to process and the output was unreliable.

Programs from the Microsoft Office System were chosen because they were affordable and integrated easily with those Bayside Health was already using, said Geoff Scott, Manager, Project Management Office, Bayside Health.

“I had constraints on how much I could spend so we couldn’t go for the big, expensive solutions from specialist enterprise project management providers such as Primavera and Welcom,” he said.

“We wanted to use the existing features of Microsoft Project 2002 and leverage the Microsoft Office model so our people could use tools familiar to them. We knew from previous experience that some of the solutions available were \$50,000 plus. But after talking to our partner, we found that we could get an integrated solution that didn’t come with a price issue. We’ve since been delighted with the level of functionality we’ve been able to bring into this solution.”

At September 2003, having implemented the software straight from the box and with the system about to go live, Bayside Health was planning to customise the look and feel of the platform. There were 35 users at that time, five of whom were project managers. Within 18 months more than 100 people will be using the project management system across many different IT-related projects.

“We have projects like our \$5 million picture archiving system and our \$500,000 community health integration project, but we also have the classic ‘rats and mice’ stuff such as small systems development,” says Gravell.

“This is pretty typical of health IT: you run the full range of projects and they all need management, otherwise it’s just mayhem. That’s why we have implemented a strong project management system that shows us all the projects we have on and where our resources are deployed. We have about 20 medium-sized projects on the go at any

time. We run, in various stages, five major projects in the millions of dollars and they cover the range of system development lifecycle, from requirement scoping to post-implementation review.”

Gravell and Scott explain that, like all Australian health institutions squeezed of dollars, Bayside Health is trying to maintain its current IT activity with less and less. They say their task as IT managers is to maximise their resources to achieve outcomes that are tangible.

Bayside Health will use its Microsoft project management system to track tasks and resources, manage documents, integrate its project management methodology, allocate issues to resource owners, link risks to tasks and institute Web-based collaboration for resource management.

“It’s all the stuff we do now without any automated system or process,” says Scott.

“We can’t do it well manually but with this system we can do things more professionally because all the links are automated and things don’t go missing.”

As part of its new solution Bayside Health is also implementing PRINCE2 – project management methodology that will be embedded with Microsoft Office Project 2003.

The partner on the Bayside Health implementation is OBS, an expert in enterprise portals and collaboration on the Microsoft platform and Australia’s first Microsoft Gold Partner. Having been introduced to OBS in June 2003 by HP, its managed services provider, Bayside Health began a mini project based on rolling out a proof of concept to about 30 people. By late September 2003 this ‘pilot’ was 85% completed, delivering anticipated results.

“We have a more extensive solution with Microsoft. It has given us the document management and shared portal that other solutions didn’t have. It’s exactly what we were after.”

Mark Gravell

*Acting Director of Information
Technology Services
Bayside Health*

Benefits

The new platform at Bayside Health ensures that project team members are fully aware of the status of each project in which they are involved, the tasks assigned to them and the risks and issues these tasks carry. Team members now have unprecedented project visibility as well as an audit trail of their involvement.

Gravell says that although real dollar savings will materialise, Bayside Health is not upgrading its project management technology simply as a cost saving exercise.

“The greatest benefit for us will be an improved framework in which to deliver our IT-related projects,” he says.

“Since it will relieve some of the workplace tension you could also say it’s a staff retention strategy. We can’t match the dollars paid in the private sector so we aspire to provide an enjoyable work environment characterised by quality work delivered on time, on budget and to scope.

“We want people to feel they are delivering real solutions in health care. That’s important to us. Many people choose to work in health because they have a sense of compassion and empathy for patients. Through IT assistance and delivery we can action those feelings.”

Easy to Use, Centralised Project Information

One of the crucial benefits for project managers at Bayside Health is that they will have a one-world view of their projects. It will be online, so people can update their tasks and monitor their time with ease. All the issues and documents that relate to a project are included so staff will know there is only one place to access relevant information.

“The functionality is there, it works and it’s easy to use,” says Scott.

“That was very important here. We have a whole range of people using this system, not just IT people. Within our department we have project managers, and business analysts with backgrounds in medicine, nursing and social work. It had to cater for all of them and it does so very well.”

Transparency Across a Wide Range of Projects

Everyone in the Bayside Health IT department will use the system, from the CIO to desktop support officers. Although they are involved in a wide variety of services they will each be able to account for their time across multiple projects.

“The complexity of IT solutions today means it’s difficult to always know where resources are going,” says Gravell.

“Do you need more of this or less of that? Have you underestimated or overestimated? This solution will give us transparency at the macro level to make sure all the stakeholders are aware of what we’re doing.”

“It will help us to do things right the first time with minimal waste of resources. So when we say someone will do something on a particular day, they will. What often happens now is that we can’t meet our commitment because people are not resourced managed. This platform will also allow us to repeat successful processes and approaches.”

One of the current technology projects at Bayside Health is connecting all the health agencies in Victoria via a wide area communications network (WAN). This includes a variety of Primary Care Partners (PCPs) – GPs, community health centres and local council services like Meals on Wheels.

“We have to meet with every PCP, do a site visit, understand its functions and map it back into the WAN,” says Scott.

“Since our new system lends itself so well to project management automation we’ll be



able to keep track of where we're up to with all the different partners."

Single Methodology

Previous project planning methods used at Bayside Health varied by project manager and created issues in project execution. There was always ambiguity about where a resource was to be allocated.

"This solution will provide structure for all the project managers so they can work together in a more co-operative environment," says Gravell.

Looking ahead, Gravell and Scott say that apart from the usual IT-related projects, Bayside Health faces a steady stream of non-IT projects, ranging from a relatively simple task like a ward rename or refurbishment to an entire new health service being established. Hospitals are perpetually involved in engineering works, especially older establishments, so Gravell envisages that this new project management system will roll out to include non-IT projects as well.

Administrative work will be minimised thanks to the automated functions of the system, leaving more time for what Gravell

calls "proactive project management". It will also mean that IT projects designed to support health care functions are delivered sooner so clinicians can take advantage of IT initiatives.

"Our hospitals also do a number of research projects and that created problems in the past," says Gravell. "People would put their hand up for funding, they'd get the nod, then we'd get the classic 'we need a PC, some software, consumables etc'. But we've never really had the methodology to follow through and help them achieve their outcomes. Those people will be a target audience for this new system.

"The major non-IT project we are looking at is the development of a short-stay centre of excellence at The Alfred Hospital. We want it to be world class. From an IT perspective we can play our small part in making it so. We can use technology to facilitate better delivery of health care services, so I suppose the logical extension of what we do as an IT team helps to provide better patient care."

Software and Services

Microsoft® Office Professional Edition 2003

Microsoft Office Outlook 2003

Microsoft Office Excel 2003

Microsoft Office PowerPoint 2003

Microsoft Office Project 2003

Microsoft Office Enterprise Project Management 2003

Microsoft Windows SharePoint Services

Hardware

One HP ProLiant ML370 G3 server

33 Compaq Evo workstations

2 Compaq Evo notebooks

Partners

OBS

www.obs.com.au

Hewlett Packard

www.hp.com.au

Software for the Agile Business

For More Information

For more information in Australia, call the Microsoft Information Centre on 13 20 58

To access information using the World Wide Web, go to:

www.microsoft.com/resources/casestudies

For more information about OBS products or services call 1300 733-627 or visit the Web site at: www.obs.com.au

For more information about HP products or services call 13 13 47 or visit the Web site at: www.hp.com.au

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