CASE STUDY: Improved Business Processes Drive Measurable Outcomes for Defense Manufacturer

Overview

An aerospace and defense manufacturer was challenged to meet aggressive improvement goals, including:

- Doubling overall profits within 5 years, and improving 1% annually thereafter
- Reducing working capital to 45 days, and improving 5 days per year thereafter
- Driving to a solid balance sheet with flexibility for organic growth or acquisition investment as needs and opportunities arise

As a long-term partner to this client, Corterra Solutions was engaged to complete a rapid assessment of the existing technology infrastructure and develop a 24-month plan for improvement.

To meet aggressive business improvement objectives, several issues had to be addressed. First, the company captured critical operational data manually and inconsistently. Second, data was often stored on local systems, making historical data difficult to find and difficult to use effectively. Third, the client lacked visibility to manage critical program deliverables and budgets. Certain departments were continuously in a reactive mode, addressing issues of the day with limited insight into planned priorities. Finally, key day-to-day processes were manual, labor intensive, and managed in software programs that left open the possibility of costly configuration errors.

Solution

To help drive towards achieving their performance goals, Corterra completed the rapid configuration and deployment of a Microsoft-based enterprise system in a matter of months. This solution focused on driving improvements across four key areas:

1. **Improving the accuracy and accessibility of critical program data.** Corterra configured Microsoft Dynamics CRM to meet the client's specific needs, allowing all critical program data to be captured, centrally stored, and linked within SharePoint. This improved the timeliness and accuracy of performance data, reduced time spent consolidating data for delivery, and provided immediate access to all program data across the organization.

2. **Improving visibility into key measures of performance.** The tailored Microsoft Dynamics CRM application consolidated critical program, delivery, and cost data into real-time on-demand performance dashboards. With visualized budget and delivery performance metrics readily available, critical issues for leadership attention and support could be identified immediately, while pinpointing trends that could impact future program performance. Teams could be measured and incented on activities that drive program performance, while driving increased accountability throughout the organization.

3. **Prioritization of critical activities.** Within the Microsoft solution, critical actions and milestones are managed with all functions having visibility into resources and priorities. As a result, attention is focused on the most critical actions of a program at any given time, while ensuring resources are applied to priority current and future needs.

4. **Management of core business processes.** The system's integrated process management capabilities reduced process failures while improving accountability for competing actions in a timely manner. Material planning accuracy also is significantly improved.

Outcomes

By partnering with Corterra on their accelerated system deployment, the manufacturer was able to consolidate virtually all operational data within a single solution. Corterra's hands-on approach to service and support helped the client rapidly learn and embrace the new technology solution. While technology is only one piece of the company's overall solution, the speed and flexibility of the new system directly supports ongoing efforts to reach their aggressive improvement targets.