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B2C Custom .NET Software Development for Business Intelligence Provider

ABOUT THE CLIENT

A leading provider of business information and services, the client combines a deep knowledge of the industries they serve with proven expertise in multidimensional data analysis and business process management.

BUSINESS CHALLENGE

The client envisioned a new customer-facing (B2C) application that would expand their offerings and promote pursuit of new market opportunities. The client wanted to utilize Agile development methodology, for which they had received prior training from ProKarma, to reduce implementation and schedule risk.

THE PROKARMA TOTAL SOLUTION

ProKarma implemented a complete Microsoft .NET software solution with fixed-bid Agile development teams. ProKarma also provided program management consulting and ongoing coaching in Agile methodology for the client's leadership and technical staff.

APPROACH

To begin the Agile process, ProKarma revised the Business Requirements Document to include functional omissions and transformed the document into a living Product Backlog. Following each two-week sprint, the team demonstrated working software to the client. ProKarma streamlined the change request process by focusing on change value and prioritizing the more valuable items during each sprint. Using VersionOne, ProKarma worked with the client's staff to manage the Product Backlog, providing the client with visibility into the development process. This transparency allowed both parties to focus on project delivery instead of contract paperwork.

Applying industry-standard best practices in distributed Agile development, ProKarma collaborated with client development teams to shape and deliver the final working product. ProKarma met the 16-week fixed-bid project timeline and in-scope deliverables, leading the client to twice extend the engagement based on the high value received. The last extension included on-the-job coaching in Agile methodology for offshore teams.

TECHNOLOGY

Partnering with the client's technical and business staff, ProKarma's team designed and implemented an application for the call center, product configuration, and reporting. The application included the following web-based modules:

- The CSR module allowed customer service representatives (CSR) to serve in-coming consumer requests. The application includes enrollment and search functionalities, a member dashboard outlining the member's last call and last order details, and the ability to view and update a member's demographic and payment information.
- The Admin module allowed users to configure credit products, commissions and discounts, approve or disapprove products, and define billing characteristics.

The backend database was a SQL Server 2008 running in 2005 compatibility mode. ProKarma created a custom datamart using MS SQL Server 2008 Reporting Services for the reporting requirement; the application feeds data to the server for reporting. ProKarma implemented custom business rules for product configuration and automation tests.

EXPERTISE

ProKarma used a hybrid engagement and delivery model, managing multishore teams and deploying onsite staff to ensure efficiency and reduce costs and time-to-market. ProKarma's team included onsite Scrum Masters, technical leads, developers, quality assurance personnel, and two user experience experts who identified challenges, reviewed existing applications, and designed new user interfaces for the client.

IMPLEMENTATION

ProKarma successfully addressed a number of key issues that revealed themselves during implementation.

- The client's subject-matter experts were in geographically dispersed teams, making gathering and refining of requirements more of a challenge. ProKarma implemented a global communication model for debriefing and review sessions.

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- The client initially chose to integrate with the Chase Paymentech gateway, but later switched to the Litle gateway. ProKarma refactored their initial configuration and reconfigured their integration code to incorporate Litle, realigned the team, and delivered Litle integration within the confines of the fixed-bid statement of work.

- ProKarma leveraged the Microsoft .NET framework with extensions to address gaps between desired and current functionality. ProKarma's onshore and offshore teams had to learn the framework, identify the gaps, and develop new code to address the gaps. ProKarma was able to accomplish this task quickly through joint analysis with the client's developers and subject-matter experts by using a global communication model for design and review sessions.

- The new system required integration with a subsidiary's system. ProKarma had to identify integration points and then develop and implement a system for integration. The subsidiary's system also needed to be updated with product configurations, individual SKUs, assembled packaged product offerings, and prices for new B2C products. ProKarma became an extension of the client's delivery team, participating in analysis, design, development and implementation of the new solution.

SUPPORT

ProKarma continues to provide development and testing services for the client's applications and provides cross-training, Agile methodology coaching, and documentation for developers, business staff, and analysts.

ABOUT PROKARMA

ProKarma delivers integrated technology and business process outsourcing solutions for over 150 global leaders in a wide range of industries and markets. ProKarma is co-headquartered in Portland, Oregon and Omaha, Nebraska, with sales and delivery centers in the United States, India, Argentina and Peru. ProKarma was selected as a Global Services 100 Provider for 2012 and ranked as the fastest growing IT services company in America by Inc. 500.