Alert Testimonial

To Whom It May Concern,

Elders are an Australian 'agribusiness' corporation that have businesses in a number of vertical industries including Insurance, Banking, Livestock, Wool, Real Estate, Rural Merchandise and more. The Elders business is geographically spread supplying services and products from over 400 Australian branches, agencies and overseas offices.

Supporting this business is a group of IT specialists and managers located at the Adelaide Head Office. The IT application and support teams form a large part of the Elders IT group and are responsible for ensuring that Elders business objectives are supported by progressive and effective business systems.

As is the case with all businesses the Elders business and the internal customers demand quality products and services, timely delivery and adherence to budgets from the IT teams.

In order to assist the IT teams meet these challenges Elders implemented Alert to manage the operational and business management requirements of the IT application support and delivery teams.

The IT application and support teams provide a full range of services including, in-house and third party application development and support, consulting, training, implementation, project management, reporting, data warehouse and more.

As those involved in the IT industry know there are many challenges that face IT teams that have these responsibilities including, competing demands, deadlines, real-time performance and uptime issues, third party software and hardware issues, skill and competency issues, people issues, ongoing business process improvement, change management and others.

When evaluating IT business management systems Elders found that Alert was an obvious choice, due to Alert being designed specifically to manage the challenges faced by IT product and service businesses.

Since implementation Alert has been instrumental in assisting Elders to improve control and visibility over the products and services that the IT application and support teams deliver and in meeting and exceeding customer expectations and demands.

Recently the Elders executive approved a number of large projects for upgrades to existing business systems. It soon became obvious that these projects would require a high level of project planning and tracking.

Elders were looking for a simple and practical approach to improve management of it's IT projects, including these new projects. Elders didn't want the administration of managing projects to become a burden and result in reduced productivity. The solution therefore had to be simple while at the same time allow Elders to perform project planning, tracking and reporting at the detail level.

Communication of assigned project tasks to the team members was also important. Elder's preference was for each team member to have visibility of their assigned tasks in a weekly time planner type view across multiple projects without having to use a project planning tool. It was important that 'Planned' time usage and 'Actual' time usage, as well as project task information, across all projects was available in the one screen for all team members.

The Project Managers needed tools to empower them to take control over their projects. They also have the difficult task of having to manage not only multiple concurrent projects being worked on by their teams but also ongoing and ad-hoc support services.

After discussion with the Alert team Elders decided that the best solution would be to implement Alerts Project Planning, Tracking and Reporting facilities.

The integration of Alert with Microsoft Project meant that Elders team were able to leverage off, and extend their existing knowledge, of this project tool. The Alert team provided some additional training in the use of Microsoft Project and in the use of Alert's Project Management facilities and in a short time Elders Project Managers obtained a high level of proficiency.

The Elders IT application and support Team Members were provided with some basic training and immediately the IT teams commenced using Alerts project planning, tracking and reporting facilities.

The benefits that Elders are realising from implementing Alerts project planning facilities are:-

- a central, managed and controlled repository of project plans
- centrally managed resource pool, resources and calendars
- consistency of project configuration and reporting across all projects
- project plans and schedules constantly being updated with actuals for variance comparisons
- more accurate and more frequent projections of project schedules and costs
- meaningful conversations with project sponsors based on facts
- early warnings to potential overruns and missed deadlines
- visibility, tracking and analysis across all projects
- resource based performance monitoring

In summary

The Alert team have provided not only the tools but also the training and assistance to achieve the desired results for Elders recent project planning and tracking initiatives.

The Alert team are responsive and are prepared to listen and assist with Elders particular issues. They have always demonstrated a high level of knowledge and understanding of the business processes and issues that are integral to the business of IT product and service delivery.

Elders look forward to continuing the partnership with the Alert team.

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