



CITY OF SEATTLE CASE STUDY





Introduction

In this Case Study, you will learn how we, a US Government Agency, purchased and installed MPMM® Enterprise to improve success in managing projects. You will read about our methodology requirements, why we chose MPMM, how the solution was customized and the benefits in using it.



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The City of Seattle

The "City of Seattle" is a USA Local Government which is comprised of 34 departments and municipal offices. We have around 11,000 employees and we support an estimated 600,000 customers.

While each department within the City is responsible for managing their own IT projects, our Chief Technology Officer (CTO) for the City-wide IT Department is also jointly responsible for ensuring their project success. This places a high amount of pressure on the CTO Office, as there can be dozens of projects running simultaneously, each with its own pressures and demands.

The Requirements

We know that failed projects waste taxpayer money and resources, and may also attract negative attention from the media, so we decided to implement a common suite of Project Management Methodologies across the organization. The methodology would be released to Project Managers, Project Office Managers and project team members across the city.

Although we required use of a PMBOK-compliant PM methodology for projects over a certain size or complexity, no specific methodology was mandated.

Our challenge was to adopt a methodology that was suitable to all types and sizes of projects, and would add value to our project teams. And it also had to include relevant project templates, as well as guidance in the form of processes and procedures.

Our Project Managers, Project Office Managers and IT Managers recognized the cost of not using a common methodology. Many didn't have the resources to create one from scratch, so they looked to us, the "IT Project Management Centre of Excellence" for help.



Finding the Right Solution

After an initial attempt to create our own methodology from scratch, we realized how complex and time consuming such an endeavour was. In addition to building the content, templates and examples, we needed a delivery mechanism that would be practical and easy to implement. So we decided to see if we could buy a product off-the-shelf instead.

Luckily one of the City Department Managers mentioned that one of her team had shown her a really nice methodology tool that she had used successfully on projects. After a quick demo by the Project Office Manager, we looked up the MPMM product on the web and quickly realized that it looked like a good fit.

We then searched the market for other methodology products that might be available to meet our needs. As a Government agency, we had a fairly modest budget; so many products were eliminated based on price. We were able to narrow the list of products down to six, initially based on the general fit with our requirements. And then we narrowed the list further, down to just three, based on price.

We then rated each solution as a "Good", "Medium" or "Poor" fit vs. the requirements listed in the following table:

Requirement	Description
Functionality	The ability of the solution to deliver all of the features and content that we needed. This included templates, forms and examples.
Usability	The level of usability of the solution. This included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How useful the system was • The overall ease of use of the system • How it compared against whatever was currently in use for various City Departments • Whether project teams would use the system if it was available.
Cost	The cost involved in purchasing, installing and maintaining the solution
Viability	The viability of the solution. This was measured by the: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Age of the company • Age of the product • Number of installed sites • Number of installed customers • Overall percentage of market share.
Maintenance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ease of changing content • The ease of implementing upgrades.



After comparing each solution against our requirements and a robust usability test with our customers, we decided that MPMM was the clear leader.

Here are the key factors that influenced our decision:

- ✓ **Value:** MPMM was by far, the best value. The quality and richness of the content equalled products which were priced over three times higher.
- ✓ **Acceptance:** MPMM was likely to be the easiest solution to implement into our existing culture because it was rated highly by our project teams. Because our Project Managers and teams liked it the best of all of the solutions we showed them, it was most likely to gain their acceptance and therefore be actually used when implemented.
- ✓ **Customizations:** MPMM was the easiest to customize. The simplicity of editing content, copying methodologies and the ability to add new content put MPMM in the lead.
- ✓ **Implementation:** MPMM was the easiest to implement and support. Being web-based, the content simply needed to be published to our website and that could be done through the click of a button in MPMM. We didn't have to implement or manage hundreds of customer installations.
- ✓ **Administration:** MPMM provided the best central administration. While it is easily available via the intranet to all City PMs, no desktop installation is needed.

As MPMM was the clear winner, we went ahead and purchased the Enterprise edition for our organization.

The Implementation

We then compared the MPMM Project Lifecycle to our existing processes and templates to identify the gaps and changes we needed to make. The Tutorial materials provided by MPMM do a great job of walking through this process.

We gained feedback from the Advisory Team regarding the customizations made. Here are some examples of the changes we made:

- We integrated our own templates;
- We customized the terminology used;
- We changed the timing of the steps;
- We merged some of the plans into one;
- We created new graphics to show new process flows; and
- We added new guidelines for project sizing.

After using the software to create our customized methodologies, we used the Enterprise edition feature which allows you to publish methodology content onto your intranet. In this way, we were able to quickly and easily allow our project managers and teams across the city, to gain immediate access. And because it was deployed on our intranet, security was greatly simplified since all content was available for use but we can centrally control how changes are made.

We have to say that the ability to publish to the web significantly reduces our implementation and maintenance costs while providing excellent accessibility for Project Managers and teams. It also gives us great control over the published content. This "Publish to Web" feature included is very easy to use – with no HTML needed.



Benefits

Since the beginning, there has been significant excitement from our project managers and teams about the adoption of this methodology. Here are some of the reasons why:

- ✓ It guides managers and teams in how to manage projects
- ✓ It saves them time because they don't have to create templates from scratch
- ✓ Because they follow best practices, they can improve their project success rates
- ✓ We can train Project Managers and teams directly from the methodology itself
- ✓ Teams can collaborate by using MPMM as the central place to share templates
- ✓ It improves communication because everyone uses the same terminology

"MPMM gives us an easy method for organizing content in a folder structure and posting that content to the web. We can change the content using Microsoft Word, so it's simple and intuitive to use. The Project Management content included is well written and really adds value to our organization."

Keith Ward

Director of Project Planning and Controls,
Seattle Public Utilities

"MPMM helps us use a common approach to managing projects, so that we achieve predictable results. It also helps us achieve higher project success rates. Our IT staff can become more efficient, because they make fewer mistakes. And the re-usable library of project management materials helps us grow our knowledge and best practices."

Lenny Roberts

IT Director, Fire Department

Summary

We highly recommend using MPMM® Enterprise for those wanting to improve their success in managing projects. It's simple and intuitive to use. It's affordable and quite simply the best tool we could find in the market. We're making it available to more than 30 departments across the city and so far, the feedback has been very positive. The product has exceeded our expectations and Method123 Ltd, the company behind the product, has supported our needs perfectly. They certainly get the thumbs up.

