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"Thanks for your excellent work on a very sensitive assignment"

CHRIS EDWARDS DEPUTY DIRECTOR MISD

BENEFITS

- **Defined the business requirements for a Finance System**
- **Highlighted the gaps in the current system**
- **Identified areas of inefficiency**

The University of Cambridge

The Cambridge University Finance System had been in use at the University for over 10 years; it was coming to the end of its life and needed to change to keep up with the ever changing business of the University.

The Management Information Services Division (MISD) of the University provides business information services that underpin the critical management processes used across the University in research, teaching and administration.

MISD works strategically to plan and deliver the Information Services requirements for the University and is creating the future strategy for the Finance system.

Itica

Itica was engaged to deliver the first element in the Finance System Strategy, the business requirements.

The objective of the assignment was to: "Review the current capabilities of the systems, identifying where improvements are/are not needed, and review of any new business requirements or those requirements that are not being met".

Itica planned the approach, breaking the assignment into three phases:

- Planning
- Execution
- Reporting

Each phase was successfully completed.

The University of Cambridge is one of the world's oldest universities and leading academic centres, and is a self-governed community of scholars. Cambridge comprises 31 Colleges and over 150 departments, faculties, schools and other institutions. The University was formed in 1209 and is regularly ranked as the number one University in the world.

The University has research departments and teaching faculties in most academic disciplines, and has income approaching £1bn per annum. The University is continuing to grow and has made substantial investments in specialist new research facilities on various sites in Cambridge.

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The Assignment

There were three stages to the assignment, planning, execution and reporting. The planning was critical as the University is highly de-centralised with many different types of users of the Finance system. It was therefore important to ensure that the business requirements were gathered from a representative group of users. The users to be interviewed were agreed and a template questionnaire was constructed and approved.

Once the plan was complete, execution of the plan commenced and a total of 48 users and 26 stakeholders were interviewed. The interviews were documented and provided to each user and stakeholder for approval.

Reporting commenced at the conclusion of the interviews by consolidating and summarising the information provided by the users and stakeholders. An audit trail was maintained so that requirements in the final documentation could be traced back to the original source.

The Outputs

There were three reports that formed the core of the outputs from the assignment:

1. University of Cambridge Finance System Requirements – this details the generic business requirements that the University has for a Finance system and provided the basis for the assessment of alternative systems.

2. Current University of Cambridge Finance System – this describes the process of gathering the business requirements and assesses how closely the current system meets those requirements. It also details how each of the individual Terms of reference within the scope were met.

3. Final Report – this provides the summary and conclusions from the assignment and covers issues that were identified, but that were out of scope of the Terms of Reference.

In addition to the formal reports, a presentation of the findings was compiled and presented to the steering group, an interim report was produced and management updates were provided regularly.

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