

Detailed Lean Improvement Project Report

For the June 1, 2014, through December 31, 2014, reporting period

Agency name:

Puget Sound Partnership

Improvement project title:

Puget Sound Report Card

Date improvement project initiated:

The project was initiated in January 2014.

Summary:

The Puget Sound Partnership used a staff subcommittee to analyze the problems with the existing tool and to develop process and system improvements. Subsequently, performance managers from each of our Partner agencies were surveyed and interviewed to obtain their input on options and solutions. We expect that this will result in:

- Greater employee satisfaction with the new process
- Greater agency partner satisfaction with the new process
- Reduced cost in maintaining the tool
- Reduced time in gathering and processing information
- Better accountability to Washington State citizens

Details:

Description of the problem:

Description of the improvement:

Problem to be solved	Action Needed
PSP requires owners of Near Term Actions in the Action Agenda for Puget Sound to report the status of actions quarterly. The current reporting tool (DES-RPMS product) was cumbersome and required staff to enter each project manually.	Design a tool that functioned similar to a spreadsheet that could update entries as a group.
The current tool could not be modified without costly upgrades to the system performed only by a contractor.	Design a tool either on the current system or a different system that could be modified by PSP staff.
The current tool could only be accessed by state agency Partners. Over 50% of the actions in the Action Agenda are owned by federal, tribal and local government Partners	Obtain permission for outside entities to access the system or move the tool to a system that would allow any partner to access (e.g. Smartsheet; other cloud technology)
Use of the RPMS tool required frequent training of agency staff because of its complexity.	Develop a more user-friendly tool that mirrors a more traditional spreadsheet application.
The tool needed additional fields for different versions of the Action Agenda and changes to information required.	Create a tool that could be modified without expensive, time-consuming tasks.

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The current tool was accessible on the PSP website and data was transparent. However, staff and members of the public complained that they did not have access to all of the fields of data reported - just summary tables.	Create a tool that would both allow access to raw data and to summary tables.
The RPMS tool crashed nearly every quarter from intensive use on the last day of the quarter.	Find a host site that has less traffic or is less subject to peak data overload problems.
DES system is well supported by the host agency and leadership is committed to good customer service; however, there was only one technical staff with sufficient knowledge to provide service and that individual resigned.	Find an alternative tool or site that has greater breadth in customer support, requires less specific technical expertise to maintain and which is accessible to PSP IT and Performance Management staff.

Specific results achieved:

The tool has been moved from DES (RPMS) to the Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) PRISM database. Data were already stored and displayed through PRISM. The change moved all aspects of the tool to RCO.

There was an initial cost to move the product and implement changes to PRISM; however, long range maintenance and upgrade costs will be reduced since the new system can be modified by PSP staff without external contracting costs.

The new tool relies on a simple spreadsheet that is hosted on cloud technology. Fields are more understandable; partners can upload data in less time, require less training and are not as time-pressured. The spreadsheet can be accessed by other than state partners.

The product is comparable in design to the original. Corrections are simpler and can be performed by PSP staff without a contract to an external technician. The product does not crash, since it is less time sensitive. Data remains transparent and tool is more user friendly.

How we involved customers or stakeholders in this effort:

We did not use a traditional LEAN forum for this improvement. We relied on staff subgroups to identify problems and solutions. Input from stakeholders was obtained through traditional interviews with users conducted through the development contract at the beginning of the design process, and subsequently by PSP staff as prototypes were created and could be vetted with Partners/customers. Feedback from customers was used in the design and implementation of the revised tool.

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