



Business challenge

Insperity business analysts needed a clearer understanding of business processes to ensure that all processes were optimized to support business efficiency and software performance.

Transformation

With IBM® Blueworks Live™ all stakeholders access a single accurate view of their business processes, allowing business analysts to provide a complete picture of exactly where process issues are and enhancements that need to be made to ensure greater efficiency and faster delivery of software.

Business benefits

Reduces

time-to-market for process changes

Provides

stakeholders with a single consolidated view of all processes

Enables

business analysts to perform process modelling throughout the software delivery lifecycle

Insperity

Insight from process modeling software speeds time-to-market for new applications

Insperity is a provider of human resources (HR) and business performance solutions headquartered in Houston, Texas. The company supports more than 100,000 businesses throughout the United States with its products and services, including human capital management, recruiting services, retirement services, employee benefits, payroll processing, government compliance, HR administration, employee training and development and more.

“We’re delivering more valuable software faster simply because we have a solid understanding of the business process.”

—Lance Elston, Business Analysis Manager, Insperity

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Overcoming a fragmented view of business processes

Gary Law and his colleague, Lance Elston, are Business Analysis Managers with Insperity, co-managing a group of 20 business analysts (BAs), each of whom serves as a liaison between Insperity's 17 line-of-business managers/product owners and the company's teams of application developers. It's the BAs' job to help ensure that the end-products from all development teams align with the product owners' business requirements.

Law and Elston recognized that their BAs, while well-versed in technology and Insperity's agile development

practices, needed a deeper understanding of business processes. As a result, they instituted a program called, Putting the Business Back in Business Analysis. "We're an agile group, so our BAs were meeting once or twice a week with business owners gathering their requirements. However, they didn't know exactly which business processes were executed on a daily basis, so the BAs did not have the insight they needed, which made it more difficult to build software," says Mr. Law.

According to Mr. Law, Insperity's informal workflow environment sometimes produced a fragmented grasp of business processes. "Our teams would often have a partial understanding of touch points and interfaces in their heads." Business

process modeling was often limited to drawings on dry-erase boards, and documentation was informal and ad hoc.

Building consensus with business process modeling

BAs needed better visibility and insight into processes across business units. Sometimes a business need can be addressed by tweaking a process rather than developing new software. When appropriate, this typically results in a much less expensive alternative. In an effort to address the situation, Insperity enlisted the support of IBM Blueworks Live, a business

process modeling software, to help identify where process changes may be the best solution.

"Without having the insight that comes from actually mapping a business process, we weren't able to consistently make that evaluation," says Elston. "We relied upon the product owner's understanding of the existing business processes."

"IBM Blueworks Live software provides the right structure and accountability for the BAs to leverage with their software developers, scrum masters and product owners," says Law. "Teams can build an accurate picture of what's happening today in those business processes, and clearly understand exactly where the

issues are and potential enhancements that need to be made. They're able to get more clarity about the reasons why a product owner wants a change."

The first step BAs are now encouraged to take when approached by a product owner is to review the as-is process using IBM Blueworks Live, which provides everyone involved with a single frame of reference. Only the BAs hold editor licenses in Blueworks Live, which gives them sole responsibility for creating process models, but it also positions product owners in an advisory role, so they may impart their knowledge of their business processes to the BA. Often the product owners gain insight into their own processes when participating in the business process modeling exercise.

"Blueworks helps from the standpoint of acquiring business process knowledge and it allows our BAs to map out their understanding of the business process before involving the product owner, who can later vet the BAs understanding," says Law. "It allows the team to very quickly reach a collective understanding, ask more poignant questions and identify "gotcha scenarios" that can really cause delays if discovered later in the software development process."

Accelerating application delivery

It all comes down to the why. Why is a product owner asking for a new software or a software change? And now, with a clear, deep and consolidated view of business requirements and business processes, all

stakeholders—the BA, the product owner and the developer—are better equipped and more quickly able to identify the issues at the root of any request.

"What we all want is to deliver the right solution the first time, with a greatly reduced time-to-market for the solution," says Elston. "We're delivering more valuable software faster simply because we have a solid understanding of the business process. When you're working in an agile environment focused on quick delivery, it is absolutely crucial to have some way to visualize business processes rather than spending extensive periods of time discussing them. Blueworks Live gives us that capability. We can quickly look at a requirement and identify exactly what part of the business process we're impacting."

The BAs are also now able to perform business process modeling at any stage of the software delivery lifecycle with minimal disruption. "The optimal time to do a business process model is at the onset of a project. It's not the only time, however. You may start your project without having your current business process mapped and discover some aspect of the process is not as clear to the team as you previously thought. Blueworks allows you to quickly and clearly map out that piece of the process before proceeding."

"The bottom line is that everybody—the BA, the product owner and the project team—is really getting an unprecedented and realistic view of their product and processes."

Solution components

- IBM® Blueworks Live

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Take the next step

To learn more about IBM's business process modeling software— IBM Blueworks Live— please contact your IBM marketing representative or IBM Business Partner, or visit the following website:

ibm.com/blueworkslive

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