CITY OF TACOMA

SAP® UEM HELPS TACOMA MEASURE AND IMPROVE THE USER EXPERIENCE

"SAP User Experience Management has definitely increased the efficiency of our employees, making good use of taxpayer dollars."

Bradd Busick, Manager, Project Management and Administration Office, City of Tacoma

QUICK FACTS

Company
- Name: City of Tacoma
- Location: Tacoma, Washington
- Industry: Public sector
- Products and services: Government and public services
- Budget: US$2.8 billion
- Employees: 3,543
- Web site: www.cityoftacoma.org
- Implementation partner: Knoa Software Inc. (New York)

Challenges and Opportunities
- Enhance users' experience with SAP® software
- Improve staff efficiency to make the best use of taxpayer resources
- Identify common user errors to target training needs

Objectives
Quickly install software to measure how well employees use SAP applications

SAP Solutions and Services
SAP User Experience Management application by Knoa

Implementation Highlights
- Rapid – 3 months
- On time and within budget

Why SAP
- Ease of operation
- Customizable dashboards
- Ability to easily extract data

Benefits
- Reduced error rates by more than 50% in the Public Works Department
- Increased user efficiency
- Improved governance and compliance with the Sarbanes-Oxley Act by enabling identification of conflicting roles and authorizations

Existing Environment
- SAP software for enterprise resource planning
- SAP Productivity Pak application

Third-Party Integration
- Database: Microsoft SQL Server
- Hardware: Sun
- Operating system: Sun Solaris

TACOMA POWER | TACOMA WATER | TACOMA RAIL
TACOMA PUBLIC UTILITIES

The City of Tacoma understands that the user experience can make or break an IT investment. It's also keenly aware that, with today's stretched budgets, city staff members have to work as efficiently as possible and make the best use of taxpayer resources. That's why Tacoma turned to the SAP® User Experience Management (SAP UEM) application by Knoa.

Tacoma implemented SAP UEM in only three months. It now relies on the SAP software to view how staff uses SAP applications across city departments. SAP UEM captures employee interactions with SAP software at the user interface level and generates real-time reports on employee performance and errors; the reports also include recommendations to remedy the issues.

> "Because SAP UEM helps us identify employees with the highest error rates, we can focus the training on their needs rather than take a broad-brush approach."
>
> **Bill Henry,** Public Works Supervisor, City of Tacoma

Tacoma's training team uses this information to target training more precisely.

That's a big step up from before. "We lacked visibility into the end-user experience," says Carol Mathewson, training and communications manager with the City of Tacoma. "We needed to determine the number of errors being generated across the city, by user and department, so we could respond with the required training. SAP UEM gives us in-depth data as to how our SAP software is being used. It is invaluable in researching error trends citywide, as well as in assisting individual staff members with training issues."

Tacoma has the results to prove it. "We reduced error rates across the city – by more than 50% in the Public Works Department alone," Mathewson says. "The software also helped us determine which users had conflicting roles and segregation-of-duties issues, improving governance and compliance with the Sarbanes-Oxley Act."

Tacoma now has less frustrated users, more satisfied managers, and well-served constituents. "Users were attempting to accomplish tasks in very roundabout ways – we have been able to identify their problems and help them streamline their practices," Mathewson says. "We received a lot of positive feedback from managers, who were anxious to remedy end-user errors within their respective departments. We are now better positioned to continue to deliver city services effectively in today's challenging times."

Measuring the User Experience: From Art to Science

Tacoma is the state of Washington's third-largest city, with 203,400 residents. Located at the foot of Mount Rainier along the shores of Commencement Bay, the natural deepwater port – the seventh-largest container port in the United States – is a center for international exports, the arts, and healthy and affordable living.

Tacoma uses SAP software for enterprise resource planning across its operations, in departments ranging from animal care and control through housing, human services, public safety, public works, and public utilities. "SAP software is part of the heartbeat of the city," says Bradd Busick, manager of the Project Management and Administration Office for the City of Tacoma. "It runs in our tax and license departments; it's how payroll is sent out; it's used for our water, power, and rail customers. We can't afford to have anything go wrong with the solution."

Like all good organizations, the City of Tacoma is focused on continuous improvement. It smartly identified the user experience as a key component of its improvement initiative. But Tacoma

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needed concrete data on what users were experiencing to determine what was happening whenever they expressed frustration or made errors.

"Previously, we would only have the end users' word about how effectively they were using the software," Mathewson says. "We were sent down many false trails because the users, often inadvertently, were not providing an accurate account of their issues. We were also somewhat blind to overall error trends. We wanted to reduce the amount of time it was taking us to analyze problems and develop specific solutions for end users. We also wanted to see where we had high error rates so we could make improvements."

Says Busick, "We needed a tool that could show us where we needed to train and, more importantly, who we needed to train."

Making an Easy Choice: SAP UEM Stands Apart

Tacoma's selection process was straightforward. "The major selection criteria were the SAP UEM application's ease of use and its customizable dashboards," Busick says. "We could see that this was a very powerful software tool and that it would enable us to quickly identify trends and problem areas."

Tacoma assembled a project team and implemented the software on time and within budget. Assistance was provided by Knoa Software Inc. "Knoa's staff was fantastic," says Cynthia Trainer, business analyst and lead trainer with the City of Tacoma. "The consultants were very efficient and kept everything on track for us. I was really happy to work with such a good team."

Tracking the User Experience: Exact Results Bring Targeted Training

Tacoma uses SAP UEM to assist users individually with any issues they have with SAP software. "I troubleshoot with specific users on a daily basis," Trainer says. "The software helps me identify issues right away; I can go into SAP UEM and see exactly what the user did."

SAP UEM captures user actions and actual workflow by employee, department, and cost center. "We keep a very low profile in the way we use the software," Mathewson says. "We use it strictly for training; it is never used as a disciplinary tool."

All user errors are displayed, allowing for a true evaluation of training needs. "What we found is that users and support staff often speak different languages," Busick says. "For example, users will tell us they are having trouble creating a purchase order, when in reality they are creating a purchase requisition – a very different document."

These insights enabled by SAP UEM let Tacoma target its remediation efforts. "The ability to report on common errors allows us to highlight areas of need and provide training tailored to those departments and transactions," says Mathewson. "We are creating online training courses that address areas with high error rates. This self-serve, online training – including work instructions and transaction simulations – has proven very successful."

Tacoma creates the training using the SAP Productivity Pak application. Content creators generate the training and documentation in a single step. All they need to do is run a transaction – SAP Productivity Pak automatically records and documents each action, along with the associated screens, and produces the training materials and practice simulations.

Says Busick, "It's like throwing a dart at a target, as opposed to throwing it in the air and hoping it will hit something. Our training is now specific, germane, and relevant. We are training exactly where and when it's needed. The result is less errors, better staff performance, and better use of SAP software across city departments. SAP User Experience Management has definitely increased the efficiency of our employees, making good use of taxpayer dollars."

Realizing Measurable Gains: 50% Reduction in Errors

Tacoma's Public Works Department is a believer. SAP UEM reports indicated that certain employees were experiencing a high volume of errors while entering their time via the employee self-service functionality. "Because SAP UEM helps us identify employees with

the highest error rates, we can focus the training on their needs rather than take a broad-brush approach," says Bill Henry, supervisor with the City of Tacoma's Public Works Department.

This takes the guesswork out of training and saves time. "Rather than trying to guess at what users did to cause an error, we can see, step-by-step, exactly how they used the software," Trainer says. "SAP UEM has saved the training team hours of troubleshooting and problem-solving work on numerous occasions."

Upgrading to Newest SAP ERP Application: SAP UEM Paves the Way

The City of Tacoma next plans to make extensive use of SAP UEM during an upgrade to the newest version of the SAP ERP application. The software will help the public sector organization minimize cost and disruption and speed user adoption. "With SAP UEM as one of the arrows in our quiver, we are really confident as we move toward the upgrade," Busick says. "SAP UEM will show us how effectively users are working with the upgraded software."

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The training team uses SAP UEM to generate monthly reports for business managers that detail error rates by transaction and cost center; the reports also include trend remarks and action items for each department. The training group produces quarterly reports for executives that highlight error trends citywide. Another quarterly report goes to the internal auditor for review and corrective action. The SAP UEM customized dashboards ensure that each report is tailored to the recipient's needs.

It's all part of IT's mission to get the best return on Tacoma's investment and provide value to every department. "IT is a shared service; the various departments contribute to our budget," Busick says. "SAP UEM helps us improve the user experience for each department so its employees work smarter and faster. This gives each cost center a tangible return on its investment. And as a city, we are getting a lot more value from SAP software because our end users are getting more value from the software."

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