INCIS Project

The INCIS (Integrated National Crime Information System) Project in New Zealand was a major government initiative taken in the mid-1990s.The project aimed to replace reliance on an old mainframe[1] (paper-based processes), with modernized electronic databases to store criminal information in a comprehensive manner to support the New Zealand Police and justice systems. Its expected benefits included improving data sharing, case management, and criminal record-keeping ultimately enhancing the efficiency of the New Zealand justice systems.

The estimated total cost of the project is NZD$110,000,000. However, as the project progressed, the budget swelled dramatically, eventually exceeding by NZ$10,000,000. The escalating costs played a crucial role in the project's extreme failure. The project was initially estimated to be completed in 2007, but was eventually terminated in 1999[2] and its full implementation did not occur.

The INCIS Project involved extensive resources both financial and human. The project team had hundreds of dedicated employees from a variety of agencies and IBM was the primary contractor[1] for developing the system. The government allocated significant funds for the project's finance, but the disputes between the government and IBM led to increased project complexity and cost overruns.

Reasons for failure-

- Legal and financial disputes
- Poor project management and planning
- Budget overruns
- Hardware and software scope

In my opinion, scope creep was the primary factor leading to the project's failure. The initial project scope expanded significantly over time, encompassing more features and functionalities than originally planned. This expansion led to increased complexity, frequent changes to project objectives, significant delays, and substantial cost overruns. Additionally, the difference of opinions between the police and IBM also led to frequently changing requirements and goals. Ineffectual management and control of the project's scope were the key contributors to the challenges faced.

CADE (Customer Account Data Engine)

The Customer Account Data engine (CADE) refers to two tax processing systems utilized by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) for the submission of U.S. income tax returns. CADE's main aim was to replace the existing Individual Master File (IMF)[3] and modernize the agency's (IRS) obsolete and inefficient data management systems.

The project's potential merits included to expedite the processing of tax returns, to offer enhanced security (logging information accessed by IRS staff) and sophisticated processing methods, and to give the IRS internal access to data and reports.

The expected cost of the CADE project was US$500 million[4]. The CADE project was initiated in 2000 by the IRS. The original CADE was expected to be fully functional by 2012[5], but was terminated in 2009 and was intended to be replaced by CADE 2.

Reasons for failure-

- User resistance to adoption
- Technical difficulties (data migration)
- Poor communication
- Extended Timeline

From my perspective, the leading cause of failure of the CADE Project was technical difficulty. The project encountered technical difficulties during system development and data migration, which led to budget overruns and delays. The ambitious goals of the project made it challenging to adapt to evolving technology and tax regulations.

TAURUS (Transfer and Automated Registration of Uncertified Stock)

TAURUS was a program designed to shift the process of settling transactions for London Stock Exchange shares from the traditional exchange of paper share certificates to an automated system. The primary goal of TAURUS was to expedite settlement procedures, lower associated costs, enhance convenience, and diminish settlement-related risks.

The expected benefits of the program include automation of stock transactions, reduced manual and paper work, transparency and accountability, enhanced security, etc.

The original budget of the TAURUS program was $6 billion, but it eventually reached an estimate of $800 million by the time the project was abandoned (2007). The project started in the 1980s and was planned to unfold in 18 months. But the design stage which was scheduled for 2 months, lasted 2 years which led to the collapse of TAURUS. Ultimately, the project was abandoned in the year 2007.

A dedicated project team along with external consultants with expertise in stock transfer and financial software systems were engaged in the development of the program.

Reasons for failure[6]-

- Underestimation of complexity, inadequate design (due to changing requirements)
- Cost overruns
- Differing interests of stakeholders
- Lack of effective governance (poor decision-making)

In my view, inadequate design and scope creep led to the failure of the project. The design phase was constantly changed by the securities which made everything more complex. They used the state of art technology on 20-year-old hardware which was logically incorrect. The design was unable to meet the gathered requirements of the program.

References

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