Case Study 8 - Philly311 Project

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The Philly311 project gives citizens access to non-emergency city services and fast phone accessibility to all municipal information and services. The project improves the efficiency and transparency of the current city administration through increasing integrity, enhancing government accountability, and providing open data best practices within Philadelphia. The project designed a system that empowers Philadelphia citizens and allows the city administration to work with them on government-related matters that the public is most concerned. One aim of the Philly311 project was to connect every citizen in Philadelphia and ensure their issues were heard without any interferences – loud and clear. The citizens have the power to request the city into fulfilling a range of services that would have been impossible without the project implementation. For example, the citizens can request for road or other social amenity repairs regardless of their location in Philadelphia and get a feedback on when such issue will be fixed. Moreover, the project combined Philadelphia’s community engagement programs, service department work order systems, and knowledge base into a single customer portal. The integration enhances the city’s capacity to share insights and work closely with all the city departments. Also, the system’s connection to social media platform facilitates conversations between stakeholders and neighbours who want to interact, arrange events, and share their best practices to enhance their community.

The Philly311 project was so successful because it had full executive support from the city administration, the mayor and the city managing director were solely responsible for ensuring that the project received the necessary financial support till its completion. Despite the project suffering from the national financial crisis that affected its set budget, the city government searched for another low-cost solution to keep the project going – the city utilized already developed city technologies and services. Another reason for the success of the project was teamwork. The city government selected a team that worked collaboratively with the public since the start until the end of the project. The team consisted of representatives from the numerous city departments who assisted populate the project knowledge base with insights about the municipal and city services information. The team used more time to study, learn, and gather more information about the problem which enabled them to come up and establish a sounder solution. The technology used in the project played an important role. The project utilized a technology that was in pace with the current city demands and had the capacity to align the city for future corporate and technology developments. The city utilized web-based and cloud solutions that gave it capacity to use inbuilt system capabilities such as cloud platforms and app store to its advantages. Project planning is a major process that enables organizations establish sound set of technical and business needs essential for the project success (Naeem, Khanzada, Mubashir, & Sohail, 2018). Project planning enabled the city to choose and select features that were more vital for inclusion in the project.

Philadelphia used risk acceptance and reduction mitigation strategies it its Philly311 project. The city was caught up in the national financial crisis that affected the project’s budget. The city accepted the risk that occurred and decided to use other means of solving the city problems to reduce the risk. The city used low-cost solutions and utilized the employees that would have been fired due to budget reductions and internal transfers instead of hiring new employees. The risk mitigation strategies provided the city with a basis upon which it could make sound decision regarding the Philly311 project. Also, these strategies empowered the city with the necessary tools to adequately identify and handle potential risks. Risk mitigation strategies assists organizations in prepare for occurrences that may come in way of development and progress in future, (Shahzad & Safvi, 2010).

References

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