

The University of Auckland: The Best Possible Endorsement

Word of mouth is a powerful marketing tool. Project managers in charge of the XSOL roll-out at New Zealand's largest University experienced just how powerful this effect could be.

"We've got a real word of mouth thing going," says Alison Dyer, a Process Improvement Analyst at The University of Auckland. "Staff are hearing about XSOL from others who've used it and they're getting in touch with my team to get involved."

In a University environment which places a premium on autonomy and independence, the direct endorsement of XSOL users has proved invaluable - creating awareness and demand within the various faculties and departments of the University.

Alison is part of the University's Continuous Improvement Project which has placed an emphasis on staff input into process improvement. The roll-out of XSOL has been seen as a business support project, in which the Administration and IT groups work closely together.

"It's not an environment where we've been able to dictate to staff - *'you must use this approach'*", says Alison. "We've got staff buy-in based purely on the merits of using XSOL."

A practical challenge is the sheer size of the University. It is one of New Zealand's largest IT users, which has meant Alison and her team have only had the resources to address specific areas.

"Our ultimate goal is to have an XSOL-based best practice guide on the intranet that covers all the activities of the University," says Alison. We're not there yet, but are looking to make more and more processes visible and accessible over time - and ensuring there is consistency."

This consistency, or "process discipline" as Alison calls it, is seen as a critical success factor.

Because an information structure is built into the XSOL system, staff involved in 'discovering processes' are guided through a logical sequence when describing what they do in 'real-life'. The system captures the flow of activities, who is involved, and the interrelationships between systems & operations.

"This proves highly valuable when people see the visual or documented process presented in a way they can relate to and that makes business sense."

Alison says when processes are made visible through XSOL, users can see the differences between "what should happen" and "what is happening". "And," she says, "users are impressed."

"We've come a long way in the first year using XSOL, and are looking forward to keeping the momentum up."

Organisation

The University of Auckland is New Zealand's largest University with over 40,000 students.

Application

Business process definition.

Business benefits

- Easy to use and maintain
- Applies a consistent process logic among different users
- Captures role responsibilities as well as process flows
- Provides organisation-wide best practice guides