

Chapter 11

Project Management, Complexity and Creativity

Herbert Thomas

University of Canterbury, New Zealand

Jessica Hollis

University of Canterbury, New Zealand

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This case involves the implementation of an automated capture solution, aimed at replacing a manual lecture capture service at the University of Canterbury in New Zealand. The implementation of such a solution, within a very short timeframe and subject to a constrained budget, was necessitated by a significant change in lecturer-student interaction brought about by a devastating earthquake and associated after-shocks. In consequence, recently adopted project management methodology at the institution had to be amended in order to incorporate software selection processes under way at another institution. The university project management approach (based on Prince 2 project management philosophy) includes an exhaustive comparison of software packages, based on detailed “Request for Information” and “Request for Proposal” procedures. Severe time constraints forced the project team to omit these procedures by tapping into the same process at another university undergoing the same exercise. This was the only way in which the project could be completed within the proposed timeframe. Currently, the automated capture solution is being prepared for handover from the project manager to the institution in December 2012, as planned.

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ORGANIZATION BACKGROUND

When the Canterbury College—the precursor of the University of Canterbury (UC)—was established in 1873, it was only the second university in New Zealand. The College was designed to mimic the Oxbridge model, with one notable exception. The College admitted women from the outset and the first woman in the Commonwealth to win Honours was a graduate of the College. For the first 100 years, the University was situated in the centre of Christchurch, occupying the premises currently housing the Arts Centre. Owing to an expanding student role, the University had relocated to its current site in the suburb of Ilam by the end of 1975. Subsequently, in January 2007, the Christchurch College of Education merged with the University and became the University's sixth College/School. In addition, the University operates five major field stations at Kaikoura, Mt John (University Observatory), Cass, Westport and Harihari. Six halls of residence provide board for 2,000 of the 12, 000 registered students. Each year about 3,000 students graduate, 650 of them with higher degrees. Although the majority of students at the University are drawn from the South Island of New Zealand, significantly, roughly 10% of the students attracted to the University annually are international students (University of Canterbury, 2012).

At present, the University is one of eight universities in New Zealand. It offers a comprehensive programme of studies in more than 50 disciplines (University of Canterbury, 2012). These disciplines are attached to: the College of Education; the College of Engineering; the College of Science; the College of Arts; the College of Business and Economics; and the School of Law. The School of Law is lead by the Dean and Head of School, while each of the Colleges is lead by a Pro Vice Chancellor. The Senior Management Team of the University comprises:

- The Vice Chancellor
- The Deputy Vice Chancellor
- The Pro Vice Chancellors for each of the Colleges
- The Assistant Vice Chancellor Academic
- The Assistant Vice Chancellor Research
- The Assistant Vice Chancellor Maori
- The Registrar
- The Director Finance
- The Director Human Resources
- The Director Learning Resources

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