December 2001 Quality Assurance Bulletin

December Issue:

Contents

Balanced Score Cards

It is now ten years since the Harvard Business Review first published the concept of the Balanced Scorecard (BSC) and its popularity as the favourite performance measurement tool appears to continue. A measure of the BSC success can be seen from some 50% of US listed companies who are now using the technique. The BSC provides a framework of four perspectives on the business (financial, customer, learning & growth and internal business processes).

- Financial: to succeed financially, how should we appear to our stakeholders?
- Customer: to achieve our vision, how should we appear to our customers?
- Learning and growth: to achieve our vision, how will we sustain our ability to change and improve?
- Internal business processes: to satisfy our shareholders and customers what business processes must we excel at?

To quantify and integrate these perspectives for the organisation a BSC is used.

Although successful BSC have not always achieved the required results. For example, the APQC (American Productivity & Quality Centre) in launching a recent benchmarking project – see http://www.apqc.org/proposal/6532/ – said:

"When properly implemented, the Balanced Scorecard can help steer an organisation and its employees toward profitability and growth. However, discussions with those using the scorecard process suggest that realising its full potential, often proves elusive."

See http://www.bscol.com for more information

Safety Checks on Freelanders

Reports are being received of a recall for the Land Rover Freelander; approximately 72,000 vehicles could be involved. Some of the safety issues surrounding the model appear to be; handbrake failing to engage correctly, seat back mechanism failing to latch and engine harness chafing. Although Land Rover suggested only a handful of complaints prompted the recall and there has been no accidents, it has decided to act with due care. Possibly a reminder to all Quality Professionals of the importance of preventive action (e.g. trials, risk analysis, process capability studies, etc). It may also be timely to review the recall procedures.

December 2001 Quality Assurance Bulletin

Institute of Quality Assurance Diploma in Quality

The start date for the new Diploma in Quality is September 2002 with the first examinations in January 2003. This exciting new course will enable students (with no previous academic qualifications) to meet the academic requirements for membership of the Institute of Quality Assurance. The Diploma course is a major step forward for the IQA with significant changes to the syllabus. It is a great opportunity for employers as well. For a very small training cost outlay (price of the course and examination) they will receive back a highly motivated and skilled quality professional. For more information visit www.iqa.org

Integrated Management Systems

Typically an Integrated Management System can comprise; quality, health & safety, environment, security, human resources (investors in people) and technical or customer support. There are international and national standards associated with each of these.

- **Integrated Management Systems** - See http://www.qmt.co.uk/lecturenotes/ims.pdf
- **Security** - BS 7799 the security standard covering issues such as people, building, software, etc is likely to be turned into ISO 17799 within the next 6 months.
- **Health & Safety** - the International Register of Certificated Auditors (IRCA) has recently launched their Criteria for Occupational Health & Safety Management Systems Auditor. See http://www.irca.org

Many organisations have several systems in place. Integration of these systems can lead to a decrease in costs, and improved efficiency and effectiveness. British Standards has published a series of books to help businesses review the issues surrounding integration. This series includes "IMS: The Framework" and "IMS: Implementing and Operating". BSI are also holding seminars which review the business case for integration and consider the organisational challenges faced when trying to implement an IMS. For more information please contact BSI Customer Services.

Sterilisation of Medical Devices

BS EN 556 – Sterilisation of medical devices – Requirements for terminally-sterilised devices to be designated 'Sterile' has been revised. The revision takes into account the requirements of the in-vitro Diagnostic Medical Devices Directive (98/79/EC). It covers the requirements for the sterilisation process of medical devices e.g. blood collection tubes, dressings and cardiac pacemakers. The revised standard will be available shortly and further details can be obtained from BSI.

Study Guides

There are two new guides to help students in schools and colleges use the BS 8888:2000 Standard.
PP 8888-1:2001, Engineering drawing practice – Part 1 : A guide for schools and colleges to BS 8888:2000, is designed to help with GCSE and 16+ courses in design and technology.
PP 8888-2:2001, Engineering drawing practice for higher education to BS 8888: 2000, is for those in both higher education and industry.
They replace PP7308. Further information can be obtained from BSI.

December 2001 Quality Assurance Bulletin

European Organisation for Quality

Turkey recently hosted the 45th Congress of the European Organisation for Quality. This year's theme was 'Quality – The Bridge to Global Competition'. The Congress focused on co-operation within Europe across all boundaries and markets towards achieving excellence and a healthy, competitive economy.

Sun Safety

A number of organisations, including the Department of Health, the National Children's Wear Association and the National Radiological Protection Board, have collaborated with the BSI in drafting guidelines for sun-safe clothes. The guidelines introduce a yellow sun logo for clothes like t-shirts, summer wear and ski wear. The logo would show that the clothing helps prevent sunburn and reduces long-term risk like skin cancer caused by sun exposure. The draft standard 'BS EN 13758 – 2 Textiles – Solar UV Protective Properties – Part 2: Classification and marking of Apparel, proposes minimum requirements for UV permeability and skin coverage. BSI are currently asking for feedback on the proposal and the final standard should be available next year.

Standards for the OIL and GAS Industry

Fifty new ISO standards have been released covering a wide selection of oil and gas industry materials, equipment and off-shore structures. These are the result of collaboration between the International Association of Oil and Gas Producers (OGP) and ISO. The OGP and ISO hope that these new standards will be used worldwide and replace the mix of industry, national and company currently in use. A study showed that the oil and gas industry could save the equivalent of 1% of its annual expenditure if the standards were implemented. This translates into savings of $180 million.

Annual Meeting of the European Committee for Standardisation (CEN)

This year's Annual Meeting was held in London in October. As well as routine business there were keynote speeches and opportunities for debate on the main theme of 'Standardisation: helping to shape Europe'. Fabio Colasanti, Director General of the Enterprise Directorate delivered a keynote speech covering the fast moving European arena; whilst Digby Jones, the Director General of the CBI spoke on how important standards are to Industry.

Tested for Clarity Quality Service

The finance industry's new Raising Standards quality mark has been given to; Norwich Union, Cooperative Insurance Society, Scottish Widows, Scottish Equitable and UNUM. The awards were given by the independent Pensions Protection and Investment Accreditation Board. The award is given to firms who meet new standards for clarity and comparability of information, appropriateness of the products purchased and customer service. It is all part of a campaign by the finance industry to improve its image. Mary Francis, Director General of the Association of British Insurers, said " I hope consumers will look out for the quality mark when considering options for future financial provision and that more companies achieve accreditation in the future."

December 2001 Quality Assurance Bulletin

Do Call Centres provide a good service to customers?

Recent feedback has suggested that there are thousands of customers who are frustrated because they end up speaking to call centre operatives, whereas they would prefer to speak to someone at the local branch. Most of the High Street banks now have centralised call centres, although some, like Halifax and Abbey National will put you though to the branch if you ask. Customers would seem to prefer to speak to a specific person at their branch and build up a rapport with them, particularly if they are experiencing problems rather than just require information. However, research by Yorkshire Building Society found that 80% of calls could be answered by a call centre, because just information was required. It would seem that banks need to provide two options for their customers, a call centre service which can provide information 24hrs a day, but also access to their branch for more detailed queries or concerns.

Software Failures

It would appear that at the United Kingdoms premier Academic Institution, quality assurance is a forgotten subject. It has been reported that Cambridge University has wasted £10 million of public money.

The events that prompted the inquiry and subsequent reports was the serious failure of a newly introduced financial software based system. The report indicated that the university did not have a professional approach to such a risky project and there did not appear to be anyone in charge. See The Telegraph www.telegraph.co.uk

Quality Assuring projects (specifically software) is not new, the detail differs but the basic approach is still the same; planning, reviews, milestones, project specifications, test and trial specification, risk analysis, document approvals and control (not in any particular order). For further information visit www.qmt.co.uk/lecturenotes/tcats.pdf