

“The SAP value management program helped us assess both the qualitative and quantitative aspects of our projects to identify which ones bring the most value to the organization.”

Bill McBain, Vice President of IT, ASICS America Corporation

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Integrating Value into Project Governance

Athletic footwear and apparel manufacturer ASICS America Corporation is on a mission. The Irvine, California-based company wants to be the number one brand among sports enthusiasts and intends to achieve this goal by making the best products possible. To support its quest, ASICS pursues excellence and efficiency in all areas of operations. One area that ASICS wanted to improve upon was the governance of its IT and business projects. The company had up to 100 projects going at any one time but had minimal business case methodology to assess the value of each effort.

“We wanted to establish a program to identify which opportunities bring the most value to the organization,” says Bill McBain, vice president of IT for ASICS. “We wanted to make sure we completed a proper financial assessment not only to manage resources but also to assess profitability of the opportunity.”

Participating in the SAP® Value Academy Program

McBain attended an SAP® Value Academy program event with a colleague to learn about value management principles championed by SAP that would help ASICS improve project governance. The program provides access to SAP value engineering

resources, industry benchmarks on project performance, business case development methodology, and the value lifecycle manager tool. McBain met with SAP value engineering executives and discussed how value management adoption could be leveraged at ASICS.

Identifying Value Management Adoption Activities

ASICS worked with SAP value engineers to identify a discrete set of value management adoption activities. One of the first activities was to complete two benchmark surveys to assess the company's performance. “We compared our performance to industry standards,” McBain explains. “Doing so validated our need to pursue certain projects, but it also identified areas where we were performing quite well compared to others.”

With executive support for the value management program, ASICS participated in on-site value management training and learned about business case methodology and the value lifecycle manager tool. ASICS team members input information to create business cases for five projects, which SAP value engineers assessed from both qualitative and quantitative perspectives during a business case review meeting. “This approach helped us become comfortable with the tool and business case methodology,” says McBain. “Our team members came to the meeting understanding the tool and were ready to ask questions and discuss next steps.”

Putting New Tools into Practice

Since embarking on its value management journey, ASICS has developed a project management office to help prioritize its business and IT projects. ASICS' new value management practices support the efforts of this office. “We get requests from across the enterprise,” McBain adds. “By instilling some governance around the projects, we can better prioritize the sequence of our projects and improve the allocation of resources.” Such efforts work to foster better collaboration among the business and IT groups and establish a consensus-driven project road map.

Sharing Lessons Learned with Others

In keeping with its commitment to excellence, ASICS has been active in its value management initiative. Representatives from the company participated in an event hosted by SAP for retail executives. The company also hosted a session of SAP Value Academy to share what it has learned with others. “It's not just about the numbers,” McBain says. “By using a tool that provides a side-by-side comparison of potential projects, you can evaluate the payback and collectively determine what's best for your business.”

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