



Partners in Lean Transformation *Microsoft, USCCG and OSGi Team Up*

USC Consulting Group (USCCG) has teamed up with Microsoft and the Orlando Software Group Inc. (OSGi) to offer one of the most comprehensive and user-friendly Lean transformation solutions available in the market today.

This began when Microsoft, in keeping with its “trusted advisor” role in which it helps clients who use Microsoft applications solve real business problems, formed an industry solutions group for the manufacturing companies dedicated to Lean practices that were using an application called LeanView™, designed by OSGi.

LeanView, which runs on a Microsoft platform, empowers managers and Lean practitioners by providing a tool set that supports the systematic collection, design, analysis, reporting and dissemination of value stream mapping data. Also, with LeanView, users can improve and integrate Lean and Six Sigma processes and programs; communicate information

clearly and collaborate more effectively; define and analyze parallel paths and processes; and draw diagrams using a variety of styles, shapes and templates.

USCCG, now a Microsoft certified partner, will use the LeanView software solution to help manufacturing and service industry clients implement Lean processes to improve their operational and financial performance.

USCCG became part of the new solutions group as an early user of LeanView with a well-established track record for

successful implementations of Lean practices within the manufacturing sector. The consulting firm originally selected LeanView because its functionality aligns with and supports the world class Lean practices the firm has employed in over 1200 engagements, while also providing a framework for enterprise-wide Lean deployment and continuous improvement – two of the company’s hallmarks.

In turn, OSGi asked USCCG to develop a Lean curriculum to help instruct users of LeanView, based on USCCG’s own e-learning platform M-Abler®. When OSGi introduced the concept to Microsoft and they learned more about USCCG’s broader capabilities, Microsoft recognized the consulting firm as a “turnkey” provider that bundles consulting, technology and e-learning, as well as supporting LeanView, into one package for its clients and prospects.

USCCG, now a Microsoft certified

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Microsoft continued

partner, will use the LeanView software solution to help manufacturing and service industry clients implement Lean processes to improve their operational and financial performance. To date, USCCG is the only consulting firm to participate in a relationship of this nature with Microsoft.

“What differentiates us from other consulting firms,” says Jim Ostrosky, USCCG’s senior vice president for product development and technology, “is our pro-technology approach to business solutions. We have found successful ways to build technology into our offerings by using it as an enabler and sustainer. We use it to enable the change process and sustain the results that we deliver in the course of our engagements. When Microsoft saw what we’d done for our clients, they felt we were the right company to help move their initiative forward.”

“This is a real breakthrough in the Lean transformation process,” says Margaret Wilson, USCCG’s operations manager responsible for leading the firm’s new technology alliance with Microsoft and OSGi. “James Womack, who is the United States’ guru of Lean, has been adamantly against using computer programs to do the value stream mapping part of the transformation and Stan Duffendack, the president of OSGi, agreed that people really need to be out on the floor to observe the value stream first hand.

“On the other hand,” she adds, “Duffendack realized that the traditional

six-foot sheet of butcher block paper covered with sticky notes that is the value stream map is not functional over the long term, but that it requires a Lean practitioner two to three weeks to convert all that data to an Excel spreadsheet, put values to it and produce the analytics on it. By that time all the momentum generated by the initial activity has dissipated and nothing much really happens after that.

“So OSGi developed LeanView using Microsoft’s Visio, Excel and Project

“When Microsoft saw what we’d done for our clients, they felt we were the right company to help move their initiative forward.”

products and they created the analytic that speeds the whole value stream mapping process, making it easier to manage throughout the transformation process.”

“OSGi specializes in the design, development and implementation of advanced business process modeling, analysis and simulation solutions for businesses of all sizes,” states Frank Kapper, OSGi vice president of sales and marketing. “But our true expertise lies in creating high value, low cost solutions that can be seamlessly

integrated into existing portfolios of IT solutions of clients like USCCG and rapidly deployed to their workforce.”

“It became very apparent in our initial discussions that OSGi and its LeanView solution would be a natural complement to our own operational expertise and the technology we deploy on behalf of our clients almost every day,” says Ostrosky. “Together we’re able to offer our clients a complete solution rather than just a tool for diagnosing Lean opportunities. This collaboration represents a real solution to real business problems and a ‘win-win’ situation for both companies’ clients.”

Letters to the Editor

Metrics invites you to share your thoughts with us in writing. If you’ve got a comment or observation to share, an issue to raise or simply would like to request that we cover a specific topic, please e-mail us at metrics@usccg.com or write to us at USC Consulting Group, 3000 Bayport Drive, Suite 1010, Tampa, FL 33607.

We look forward to hearing from you.



Margaret Wilson to Lead Technology Alliance

Margaret Wilson has been promoted to operations manager responsible for USCCG's new technology alliance with Microsoft and the Orlando Software Group Inc. (OSGi). In her new position, Ms. Wilson will be the primary interface with Microsoft and OSGi.

USCCG acts as the implementation arm of the alliance to introduce and implement a turnkey business solution comprised of a technology offering called LeanView™, which is supported by USCCG's e-learning platform M-Abler® and a suite of USCCG Client Technology Solutions that help enable the Lean transformation process and

sustain the results for the partnership's manufacturing and service sector clients and prospects. In addition, Ms. Wilson is responsible for guiding and directing USCCG's technical group efforts to support the partnership with Microsoft and OSGi.

"We needed a point person who is organized and disciplined and who understands technology and Lean," said Jim Ostrosky, USCCG's senior vice president for product development and technology. "Margaret has done tremendous work for us in the past and she has the right mix of skills to make our new relationship with Microsoft and OSGi really work."

Ms. Wilson joined USCCG in 1999 as a senior project manager. She is a graduate of the United States Military Academy at West point, where she earned a BS in civil engineering. She served with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers as a project officer and construction manager and retired as a captain. After leaving active duty, she joined American Tobacco Company as operations engineer.

In 1994 she became one of the first women on Frito Lay's maintenance operations team. Before joining USCCG, she was a facility engineer with Mervyn's California in Plano, Texas.

LeanView™: An Innovative Value Stream Mapping Tool

LeanView is a fully integrated Lean process design solution developed to help businesses of all types and sizes cost-effectively design, evaluate and implement Lean processes for improved operational and financial performance.

Its functionality aligns with and supports world class Lean practices while providing a framework for enterprise-wide Lean deployment and sustained improvement.

Because it is built on Microsoft's Visio, Excel and Project products, LeanView delivers powerful and user-friendly tools that leverage and extend the inherent strengths and widespread

availability of those Microsoft Office solutions. When integrated with the Microsoft products, LeanView forms a closed-loop Lean execution system that gives Lean professionals the tools, guidance and support they need to succeed.

The key benefits of applying LeanView include:

- increased productivity and efficiency;
- enhanced visibility and mitigated risks;
- standardized processes and best practices;
- reduced costs with quality maintenance; and

· accelerated time to benefit.

With LeanView, users can:

- improve and integrate Lean and Six Sigma processes and programs;
- communicate information clearly and collaborate more effectively;
- define and analyze parallel paths and processes; and
- draw diagrams using all Visio styles, shapes and templates.

For more information on LeanView, contact Frank Kapper, vice president of sales and marketing, Orlando Software Group, Inc., at 407-562-1999 or fkapper@osgi.com.



Lean: What's Next



By Paul Harker,
Senior Operations
Manager

In the previous issue we described what essentially has been the outcome of ten-plus years of Lean practice in the Western World. That is, of course, the Lean Enterprise.

Higher quality, flexibility, and profits are hallmarks of those organizations that have diligently applied the principles of Lean. Those principles originated in post-WW II Japan, but were codified and popularized in the US through a book titled *Lean Thinking*, penned by James Womack and Daniel Jones.

These gentlemen described five key principles that serve as a guide to action for companies wishing to implement Lean:

1. Precisely define *value* by specific product.
2. Identify the *value stream* for each product.
3. Make value *flow* without interruption.
4. Let the customer *pull* value from the producer.
5. Pursue *perfection*.

In November of last year Womack and Jones brought some new thoughts to the bookstore shelves. The title of their new offering is *Lean Solutions: How Companies and Customers Can Create Value and Wealth Together*. The premise of the book is that, due to a lot of work over the last ten years, great progress has been made in the world of production. More and better products are available more quickly from ever wider and

more creative distribution networks.

The problem is that the customer experience has not advanced. The authors contend that it has, in fact, grown more complicated and less satisfying. Their vision is that those companies that can learn to respect the customer's time and the effort required to do business with them will have a distinct advantage when customers decide which products and services to buy.

The book introduces the concepts of Lean Consumption and Lean Provisioning. Lean is still lean. It still means doing things without waste. Consumption is described as a problem-solving process that involves researching, selecting, ordering, receiving, assembling, configuring, maintaining, upgrading, and eventually disposing of an item. This is a process that all too often creates significant hassles for the customer.

Provisioning entails all that enterprises do after production to respond to the customer's requirements throughout the consumption cycle. Specifically, it is providing the goods and services that customers actually want when and where they are wanted, without wasting valuable time and causing frustration.

Womack and Jones also introduce a variant of Value Stream Mapping that takes advantage of all of the typical functionality, but adds the element of the customer's and the provisioner's mindset as they are engaged in each process step. The smiley, angry and 'frowny' faces they employ may strike readers as a bit hokey, but there is certainly value in assessing more than time and distance in a value stream.

To make their point, Womack and Jones take the reader chapter by chapter

through the application of the mapping technique in order to respond to the consumer's requirements:

- Solve my problem *completely*.
- Don't waste my *time*.
- Get me *exactly* what I want.
- Provide value *where* I want.
- Solve my problem *when* I want.

Throughout the book there are fresh perspectives that will serve businesses well. The customer remains the primary focus, but the areas of attack extend beyond the walls of the producers. Previously the view of customers has been as a faceless whole that will eventually learn to appreciate the hard work producers do to reduce cycle times and improve quality and cost. Here customers are viewed as individuals whose needs are or are not being met at a personal level. That view will produce better process decisions that have a more direct impact.

Secondly, and certainly more novel, is the attention to the experiences of the provisioners themselves. Our workforces have long grown accustomed to bending over backward in the name of customer service.

It is recognized and acknowledged here that everyone's time is valuable and frustration with cumbersome processes serves no good purpose. Provisioners have a close interface with individual customers. It pays to have smooth processes that are painless on both sides.

Lean Solutions may not have the impact and the legs of *Lean Thinking* – few books do. However, the fresh perspective presented here is well worth the price of admission.



Progress Report

Tom Klebeck Named Manager of Accounting and Administration



Tom Klebeck has been named USCCG's manager of accounting and administration, based in Tampa.

He will be responsible for broad financial oversight of the firm's activity, as well as targeted financial analyses for specific clients.

"Tom Klebeck's extensive experience in financial analysis, coupled with his executive management skills, make him an exceptionally strong addition to USCCG's team," commented George Coffey, senior vice president of business development.

Mr. Klebeck was most recently a financial consultant for VantagePointe Solutions in Orlando, FL. He also founded three successful companies, including an automobile dealership, a real estate brokerage and a real estate development and investing company. Prior to that he spent 12 years with Equifax in Tampa and Atlanta, where he rose through various controller and vp-finance roles to become vice presi-

dent of operations. He was also a founding officer of the firm's multi-billion-dollar information services spin-off, ChoicePoint. He has earned a solid reputation as a fierce cost controller and profit improvement specialist.

Mr. Klebeck began his career with Kash n' Karry as a staff accountant in 1985 before joining Trammell Crow Company, where he was a senior property manager. He earned his MBA and his BA in accounting from the University of South Florida and he holds a certificate of mastery in reengineering.

Automotive Veteran Gary Ghent Joins USCCG



Gary Ghent has been retained by USC Consulting Group as vice president, automotive business, based in

Detroit, to support the firm's initiatives in the automotive industry sector.

Mr. Ghent has 25 years of automotive experience, primarily with TRW, Inc., where he rose to global vice president of customer development (sales, application engineering and program management) for the company's two

largest product lines, Occupant Safety Systems and Chassis Safety Systems. During his tenure with TRW, Mr. Ghent also gained experience in sales, marketing, purchasing, plant management and general management, including both OEM manufacturing and aftermarket distribution. He was a two-time recipient of the firm's prestigious CEO Leadership Award.

Most recently Mr. Ghent was vice president of sales and marketing for MetoKote Corporation in Lima, Ohio. In this post he helped design and implement a growth initiative focused on the automotive industry supply base.

"Mr. Ghent brings vast automotive experience to the USCCG team," comments David Shouldice, USCCG senior regional manager. "Even more importantly, his high energy, drive, focus and 'can do' attitude will add excellent value to our automotive practice."

After earning his BA and MBA degrees from the University of Western Ontario, Mr. Ghent began his career in the advertising business followed by the pulp and paper industry. A native of Brantford, Ontario, Canada, Mr. Ghent moved to the USA in 1988 and maintains dual citizenship.





First we make it work. Then we make it last.®

For more information contact us at 800-888-8872 or www.usccg.com

Metrics is a quarterly publication of USC Consulting Group, LLC, specialists in operating effectiveness. In coming months you'll read more about how USCCG works and how we help executives go about the process of significantly improving their organizations. Metrics is published in both electronic and printed formats.
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