

# Csa case study

Business



CHILDREN SUPPORT AGENCY CASE STUDY By Killian Mangezi Student Number: MB2008-0392 Information System Engineering COMP1304 CTI 2010

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The Child Support Agency (CSA) is a charity organisation that focuses on four key areas including housing, family support, education and training and tackling crime. It focuses on providing support for young people between the ages of 12 and 24.

CSA is divided into 3 geographical regions, Northern, South West and South East. Each region has its own Regional Director and administration team, including Area Managers that oversee the projects. The head office is in central London. CSA runs various projects that are funded by the appropriate government agencies or trusts that support the kind of work it does.

The Senior Executive Group (SEG) with the backing of the board of trustees has decided that CSA need a Management Information System (MIS) that will help manage the organisation better. Currently CSA has a wide variety of management styles, each region has its own way of doing things, most staff lack interest in technology and there is no standard way of recording information about users.

The MIS will assist the head office in monitoring projects, will have effective tools to help manage work and will record and monitor key performance indicators (KPIs).

Data will be available for viewing by Regional Directors and Area Managers and contracts will be recorded centrally. This assignment involves the analysis of the whole organisation and trying to understand the problem situation. Rich pictures and use cases are the two tools that are going to be used to analyze the user requirements of the organisation and to identify what the concerns within the organisation are. The two tools will be compared to find out what their weaknesses and strengths are. Section A – Requirement analysis using rich pictures A1.

– Rich picture of CSA

A2. – Discussion and justification of rich picture A2. 1 -I approached this case study by reading through it first and trying to get an understanding of the organisational structure of CSA and how it is run. I tried to gain an understanding of the key roles within the organisation and identify who the key decision makers are. At the centre of the organisation are the SEG who are the key decision making body of the CSA. They are located at the head office in central London.

The 3 geographical regions are managed by regional managers and their administrative team.

Within each region are Area Managers who are responsible for the management of the projects in their area. Analysing the structure of the organisation helps you to visualize the key roles in the organisation. I <https://assignbuster.com/csa-case-study/>

particularly payed attention to the requirement analysis interviews given as they help to emphasize the concerns that people within the organisation have. The purpose of this study is to identify the problem situation and so the interviewees' thoughts and concerns become important.

They also help identify potential areas of conflict.

I identified the boundary of the system by highlighting the government agencies, trusts and the Learning Skills and Council (LSC). Although they are not a part of the system they play a key role in that they help fund and support the projects. A2. 2 -The key issues and areas of conflict I have chosen for my diagram have been identified through the analysis of the interviews. By carefully going through what each interviewee said, I was able to identify that not all the staff agree about what needs to be achieved and not all of them like that idea of having an MIS.

Jim Massey (Administrative Services Director (ASD)) and Steve Sutherland (Finance Director (FD)) are in agreement that there needs to be a MIS that can manage all the information in the organisation and are both in agreement as to what is required. The main area of concern for the ASD is that they may be resistance from the staff to using the system. He wants to ensure that they are properly trained to use the new system. The main concern for the FD is security. He wants to ensure that people only have access to data that they are authorised to view.

Sally Smith (Head of HR) is new to the organisation and her main concern is the outdated HR software that HR department currently uses. She is overworked and feels that the development of a new HR system is more

important than developing a MIS. The potential area of conflict is between Sally and Jim as they both have different views on what is required. Jim is adamant that CSA has a MIS, whilst Sally seems only interested in sorting the HR department out through the development of a new HR system.

Julianne Black (Information Quality Officer, Administrative Services Department) is mainly interested in measuring Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). She is also concerned that the contracts are not effectively recorded.

She wants a system that will help support the Contracts and Fund Raising Team. Sean McNally (Northern Regional Director) is concerned that the MIS will allow head office to interfere with what they are doing. The Northern Region already has its own databases installed. He feels that another system will add more work for his staff.

Sue Williams (Team Leader, Bridlington Tackling Crime project) is not happy at all with the idea of introducing a MIS.

She feels that she has too much administration work and so does not have the time to focus on the children. There is potential conflict between her and Julianne over KPIs. Julianne expects to receive KPIs from the different regions, while Sue feels that all they do is add to her work load. “ Then we get Julianne, with her KPIs...

What is KPI anyway? They don't seem to be of any use to me. Just give me additional work. ” Another area of concern is that she is not good with technology.

Head office will need to ensure that the staff are effectively trained. Central to CSA are contracts.

Each project can only proceed once the contract has been awarded. The problem with CSA is that contracts are not held centrally. Each region holds its own contract which makes it difficult to manage them. This has led to Area Offices competing against each other to run projects. A2. 3 -The main focus of the environment shown in my rich picture is the relationship between the different staff members in the organisation.

Their thoughts and concerns are important and must be addressed.

Central to this organisation is the MIS. For the MIS to be effective all the staff in CSA must be effectively trained and their thoughts regarding the MIS cannot be ignored because they are the ones who will be using the system. All the issues may not be initially resolved but its essential that they are understood. Failure to address the major concerns and conflicts could lead to the system failing. A2.

4 -The controls of systems, data and processing lie in each region as shown in my rich picture. I have tried to show that each region has their own way of recording their data.

One of the major concerns about CSA is that there is no standard way that information about projects is recorded. The Northern Region uses a database system to record its information whilst the South East Region uses a paper based system. The South West Region uses simple spreadsheets.

I have shown how the government agencies, trusts and LSC are interested in funding and supporting the projects. All projects have a contract with the appropriate agency or trust. Section B – Requirement analysis using use case modelling B1. – Use case diagram Use case diagram for CSA B1. 1 – Primary use case scenarios

Primary scenario 1 Primary scenario 2 Primary scenario 3 Primary scenario 4 B1.

2 – Secondary use case scenarios Secondary scenario 1 Secondary scenario 2 Secondary scenario 3 Secondary scenario 4 B2. – Discussion and justification of final use case diagram B2. 1 -The actors that I chose for this system are the contract team, funding body, Regional office, project team and the SEG. The reason I chose the contract team is that central to this system are the contracts negotiated with the funding body. The contract team plays an important role in that they write the bids for future funding and develop new projects.

The funding body is important to the system because they provide the funding for the appropriate project area.

The Regional office in partnership with the contract team helps assess the criteria to ensure that it meets the requirements. The project team is important to the system because it is the one that actually runs the projects.

B2. 2 -Primary scenario 4. This scenario involves the activities that occur once the funding body has approved of the final criteria for the bid and the contract is created. I identified the key activities by going through the steps that occur once the funding body has approved of the bid.

Once the bid has been approved the contract team creates the contract. Once the contract is drawn the resource are assigned, the appropriate staff and project team leader are chosen. The project is then advertised and then the project team proceeds with the project. B2. 3 -I identified the alternative scenario by writing the steps that occur if the bid is rejected.

When the bid is received by the funding body there are two alternative scenarios that can occur. The first is that the bid can be approved subject to change or it can be rejected.

When the funding body receive the bid they assess the criteria and if it does not meet the requirements it is rejected and the reasons for the rejection are recorded. The other alternative is the bid can be approved subject to change. The bid is sent back to the appropriate project team. The project team assess the new criteria and if it cannot meet the requirements, the funding body is notified and the bid is rejected.

B2. 4 -The assumptions that I would have made about the system are that there is a possibility that either the criteria for the bid would be rejected or a bid for a contract could be rejected.

I would try to find out what actions would occur should the bids or criteria be rejected. The first question I would ask would be to the contract team and that would be what steps occur if a project lead does not meet the criteria for CSA? Another assumption I would have made would be that because of the current state of the system and information about contracts being held in different regional offices and area offices , there must have been a lot of



confusion and lost information regarding contracts. I would approach the contract team and the regional leaders to get more information.

Another assumption I would have made is that in the bidding process there are time when CSA did not meet the requirements of the funding body for a particular project.

The question I would ask to the project team leader what steps are taken in the event that CSA does not meet the requirements of the funding body? With current state of the system and with contracts being held in different regions and area offices it must have been difficult for the contract team to keep track of all the information. In the event that there is confusion as to what bids are being made and in the event that two project teams bid for the same project what steps are taken to resolve the confusion? I would approach the contract team for this information. Section C – Critical analysis of the tools used The tools that have been used in this case study are user requirement gathering tools. Their main focuses are on user analysis and assist the users to understand and visualise what is required of the system. An important aspect of systems development is requirement analysis.

In order to successfully develop a system it is vitally important that developers understand and know what is required in order to develop a successful system.

Rich pictures and use cases can assist developers in understanding the user requirements and to understand the potential issues within the system.

Developing systems that are user centric has become crucial in systems development. They are the ones that are going to be using and interacting

with the system on a daily basis. / Failure to understand what they require of the system could lead to system failure.

User centricity is not just about gathering user requirements but it is about working with the users in order to develop a system to develop a successful system.

The first tool that is used in this case study is a rich picture. A rich picture is a diagram that is used to understand the environment of an organisation and the system. It helps the developers and the users to visualise the system and displays the potential issues and conflicts that the organisation may be facing. Understanding these issues and conflicts is essential as failure to address those issues could result in the system ultimately failing.

It helps define the problem situation and helps users to understand the issues and conflicts within the organisation.

The rich picture includes actors which can be anything that interacts with the system. It shows the flow of information and processes within the organisation. It portrays the hard and soft aspects of the system. It displays the concerns and issues relevant to the system. At the centre of the system is the problem owner. The boundary of the system is displayed.

The actors that have an interest in the organisation but are not necessarily a part of the system are placed outside the boundary of the system. A rich picture is a useful tool because it helps developers and users to understand the environment of the organisation. Rich pictures help developers and users to understand the issues and conflicts within the system. A rich picture helps to focus on what is important and relevant to the system because of the <https://assignbuster.com/csa-case-study/>

limited space in which is available to draw the picture. Whilst rich pictures may assist in define the problems in the system they do not provide the solutions to those issues and problems.

Specific information about the system may not be displayed using a rich picture. There is no standard method for drawing rich pictures. It all depends on who is drawing the picture. Rich pictures are not as widely used as other development methods such as data flow diagrams (DFDs). They are used to support those other diagrams. Use case diagrams are used to describe the functions of the system from the user's perspective.

They are used to show the different scenarios within the system that are important to the user.

They do not show any specific detail regarding the functionality of the system, they display a sequence of activities that are important to the user. They describe the activities that are involved or carried to achieve a specific goal within the system. The use cases depict a specific scenario within a system and display the events that occur within that scenario to achieve a certain goal. Use cases include actors that can be anything that interacts with the system, the use cases themselves that are displayed within an oval shape and the association lines that are used to show the interactions between the actors and the system.

Use cases may include a system boundary which is often depicted as a rectangle around the use cases. They may be many levels of use cases used to describe the functionality of a system. There is usually the main use case which displays the sequence of events within the whole system. There are

primary uses case diagrams that are used to display more detailed interactions within the system and secondary use cases that are used to display the alternative scenarios. The overall functionality of the system can be displayed using many use cases.

The benefits of use case diagrams is that they describe the way in which the system will be used by showing the sequence of events that must occur as the actor interacts with system. They are also useful in that they show all the alternative scenarios and the events that occur should the activities not proceed as expected. The main focus of the use cases is on the user. They display the activities that are important to the user of the system. There is no specific development language used, so this makes it easy for the users of the system to understand what is going on.

Once the use case modelling is completed it can be used as a support tool to other development methodologies. The disadvantages of use cases are that they do not display the internal processes of a system. They are high-level diagrams used to capture the events important to a user. Use cases are focused on the user's interactions with system and so may ignore other aspects of the system that may be important and relevant. Rich pictures and use cases are both useful tools to use in gathering user requirements.

Rich pictures assist the developer and the user to understand the overall environment of the organisation. They highlight the issues, concerns and conflicts that may be in the organisation and help to users to understand the problems. They give a visual representation of the system to the user including the roles, processes, boundaries, issues and concerning the system. Use case diagrams display the sequence of events that must occur

to achieve a specific goal within the system. They display different scenarios and also display the alternative scenarios in case something goes wrong in the system.

Rich pictures and use cases are not exhaustive tools and do not show a great level of detail and are used as support tools to the other development methodologies. Conclusion This case study involved the analysis of CSA's current system. SEG of CSA has requested that a new MIS system must be installed in order to improve and centralize the management of CSA. CSA currently has a wide variety of management styles, each region has its own way of doing things, the staff lack any interest in technology and there is no standard way of recording information about users.

A rich picture and use cases were used to analyze the user requirements of the organisation and to define what the concerns and issues within the organisation are.

The two tools were discussed and a critical analysis of both tools was written. Gathering user requirements is an essential part of any system development. Failure to effectively develop a user-centric system can result in the system failing. Rich pictures and use case diagrams are two useful tools that can be used to gather user requirements.