

Background

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the principal U.S. agency extending assistance to countries recovering from disaster, trying to escape poverty, and engaging in democratic reforms, was itself facing a growing disaster: a *tsunami* of paper directives. It had thousands of policy and regulatory documents that need to be in compliance with all applicable governing authorities: Executive Order 12866, Regulatory Planning and Review; the Paperwork Reduction Act; Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act; and the Presidential Memorandum on Plain Language. Documents were scattered throughout the agency in various forms (cables, letters, memos). More than 200 authors were needed in an effort to stay on top of it all.

Every Federal agency needs a directives program to manage the creation and dissemination of policy information.

DKW Communications, Inc.,

is a diversified IT company providing a wide range of products and services to Federal civilian, DoD, and commercial customers. We are currently performing on more than 26 major contracts across the United States. In 2006 we enjoyed another year of growth, exceeding expectations and realizing over \$8 Million in revenue. DKW is 8(a) certified until September 2010, and are on track to achieve CMMI Level 3 by mid-2008.

With 8 IDIQ contracting vehicles, DKW offers flexibility, competitive pricing, and convenience to our customers. The contract ceiling on our vehicles is over \$60 Million. Our experienced management team and expert staff allows us to deliver quality work on time and within budget. Our ability to deliver and our commitment to excellence has gained us a stellar reputation with our existing customers - and one which we look forward to working with our new ones to establish.

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USAID needed to:

- Reduce the mountain of paper by producing a quarterly CD-ROM.
- Enhance the USAID Automated Directives System (ADS) *Internet* Web site and update it in real-time.
- Enhance the ADS *intranet* Web site and update it in real-time.
- Maintain the USAID Policy Notice distribution system and disseminate updates nightly.

Prior to DKW partnering with USAID, actions were taken to meet those four needs by current Directives staff. These employees continue meeting the on-going challenge of transforming USAID's directives program.

Challenge

Easy access to clearly written documents is vital to:

- Substantially reduce time wasted searching for information.
- Minimize disruptions from people looking for information or assistance.
- Ensure documents are easy to use.
- Ensure information is understandable on the first read.

Although processes and procedures existed, when

DKW began this contract the conversion and update tasks were not finished. Many directives were still in the old, outdated structure and writing style; they were redundant or lacking in clarity. Others were not really directives at all; they were simply a "wish list. DKW was brought in to move the task forward by implementing a content management system (CMS) solution, creating a computer based overview-training program for the directives program, and updating the clearance process for all Agency directives. DKW was to do all this while still meeting all the federal mandates.

USAID

A Case Study in Directives Management

Solution

DKW analyzed the situation at USAID and developed a plan to modernize the accessibility and content management of their directives.

As a result of this plan, USAID continues to cut the number of regulations in half, thereby meeting the presidential mandate. Currently, there are over 700 directives documents that are available, both internally and externally through Section 508-compliant Web sites, and are hyperlinked for easy access. 45,000 visitors access the Internet site monthly. In addition to enjoying immediate access to information, visitors can obtain responses to specific questions or request other documents. DKW's goal for the Agency is to implement a content management system to manage publication to the Web and version control for the Authors, and to provide computer-based training for all users of the directives program.

By simply migrating to CD-based distribution of documents, USAID realizes an annual cost savings of more than \$250,000.

DKW's seasoned technical editors provide expert technical editing and writing services to over 100 subject matter experts and authors at USAID. Our editors tailor their editing of ADS material depending upon the needs of the customer, providing detailed line-level copyediting and substantial, substantive rewrites of complex ADS source material. We edit Agency policy documents to bring USAID into compliance with all applicable governing authorities. We have successfully streamlined the volume of ADS material and continue to meet the mandated 50 percent reduction in internal regulations. We adhere to the GPO Manual of Style and have created an extensive, USAID-specific guide, which reinforces plain language principles and

45,000 visitors can now access over 700 documents via the Section 508-compliant Web site www.usaid.gov/policy/ads

guidelines. Additionally, DKW editors stay abreast of current and upcoming developments in the presidential, legislative, and technical regulatory arenas that affect USAID. We alert ADS authors to these developments for their information and action.

DKW is the primary creator of detailed policy guidance governing all aspects of USAID's Automated Directives System (ADS) and their Notice creation and distribution process. The

ADS includes the provisions for drafting, clearing, issuing, and distributing the full range of USAID directives. The USAID directives staff vets this new or revised policy through the ADS clearance community and stakeholders and modifies it as appropriate.

As directives process experts, the DKW professionals who staff this contract effectively communicate USAID's policies and procedures with stakeholders, employees who write and implement policy guidance, end users, and the public. We guide subject matter experts and authors through the drafting, clearing, and issuance processes. By conducting continuous research, we provide them with best practices, current trends, and revised regulations. DKW also trains end users in access, and search and retrieval mechanisms through the ADS portal. For USAID employees, stakeholders, and the public DKW has produced a glossy reference guide to the ADS, and on an ongoing basis we create and distribute an ADS newsletter, monthly tips for ADS authors and clearing officials, and fact sheets. Finally, we conduct educational presentations for USAID personnel and contractors.

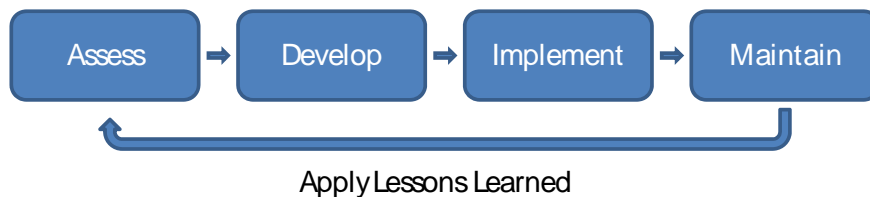
Benefits

By partnering with DKW, USAID has enhanced its directives management program. To achieve our goal of continued progress, we have a clear vision, our cost-cutting measures are paying off, and the DKW staff is highly motivated to complete the work of modernizing the directives process.

DKW knows how to help agencies save time, money, and resources by implementing or improving the quality of existing directives programs that adhere to all applicable Federal regulations and key practices: Government Paperwork Reduction Act (GPR), Presidential Memorandum on Plain Language, Clinger-Cohen Act, Executive Order 12866 (Regulatory Planning and Review), Executive Order 12861 (Elimination of One-Half of Executive Branch Internal Regulations), OMB Bulletin for Agency Good Guidance Practices, and the President's E-Government Initiative. Our process begins with an assessment of needs. The next step is to develop plans and proposals, implement solutions (systems, protocols, web sites, training) and maintain quality control, updates, archives and lessons learned. Lessons learned feed into the assessment process, ensuring continual process improvement.

DKW provides a complete lifecycle solution to USAID's directives management process.

Figure 1. A Simple and Effective Directives Process



We understand your directives program needs and we value the partnerships we develop with all our customers. We field multidisciplinary teams covering all areas of expertise. Our team members adhere to the highest standards of product and service delivery.

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DKW Communications, Inc. provides information technology, software engineering, and business process services and solutions to a range of government customers in intelligence, law enforcement, security, and diplomacy.