

Spotlight on Victoria

Think Melbourne, Australia for ICT

Case Study: iComply

Company Profile

iComply is a Melbourne-based audit consultancy and software development house, specialising in management solutions for large organisations and government. Complementing its world-class audit team, iComply's software products enable any type of audit, performance assessment activity or survey to be set up and conducted on-screen, and if required, online via the web. Users have complete control over audit structure, formation, security and content. The company has also written leading-edge software for pocket PCs to enable organisations to efficiently and accurately collect data from the field. The company also assists organisations to better understand their compliance responsibilities.



Company History

iComply began operation in March 2003 after forming a strategic alliance between Audit Enterprises, a company with a background in compliance for both the public and private sectors, and Performance Management Systems, a software development consultancy. Both of these companies bring a combined total of 12 years' experience to iComply. The company is based in Wheelers Hill and has a staff of six full-time, two part-time and access to a diverse group of professional contractors.

Major Projects and Customers

- Malawi Social Action Fund – software to assist Malawi Government and World Bank to implement community-driven aid projects aimed at alleviating poverty in Malawi.
- Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario (AGCO) – software to assist Canadian Government body monitor and report on the administration of alcohol licensing and gaming.
- Continental Express (US) – regional airline requiring software capability to undertake compliance audits on internal and external maintenance suppliers.
- iComply are certified partners with Microsoft and are authorised resellers for Hewlett Packard and Ericsson.

Turning Point

“... Audit Easy will significantly improve nearly all the aspects of the management of audits, including touch of a button availability of audit information and reports, communication management with field staff and auditees, record management of audit findings, management of audit resources and inputs, reports management, relationship management with auditees, questionnaire management, planning and control management, assignment management, audit inventory management and contact management. The costs of the package are acceptable in terms of the visible capital and maintenance cost, and invisible costs such as staff time spent in learning and operating the system...” – Steve Mchenga, Audit Manager, MASAF.

Project Focus: Malawi Social Action Fund

The Malawi Social Action Fund (MASAF) was established by the central African Malawi Government and the World Bank in 1995 to help fight the country's poverty. MASAF's main aim is to distribute and administer aid to community-based projects in areas such as education, health, water supply and road infrastructure. Its model gives communities responsibility for the financial management of selected programs, from the identification and preparation of the project through to implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the project. However, the remote locations of many communities created an obstacle for auditors who needed to verify that projects were managed and constructed according to MASAF guidelines and policies.

The Malawi Government insisted on a consultative, community-driven approach, and emphasised the need for equal representation, to give women a greater say in the outcome of projects. The Government also insisted that the projects positively enhance the environment.

iComply's iAudit software was chosen for its range of features, particularly its focus on management and the mobile auditing capability via handheld pocket PCs.

Methodology

Last September iComply installed the software on MASAF's system, where it was customised to adhere to the compliance issues demanded by both the World Bank and Malawi Government. Sixteen management and staff were then given software training sessions, which were successful despite inadequate power infrastructure causing several shutdowns and interruptions from wildlife that entered the training room. Once the systems were in place and the staff trained, fund auditors could take the Windows-powered pocket PCs and conduct field audits. The auditors, who visit remote villages over a period of days, have an identical audit checklist on their pocket PC to ensure information collected is uniform. On return, auditors upload the data to the main system, where the software creates reports and summaries and analyses the data. The simple, integrated system has increased accountability and removed the likelihood of mismanagement.

Nuts and Bolts

The project took about a year from the time iComply first spoke to the MASAF until the project was completed.

Outcomes and Benefits

iComply's involvement with the MASAF had a number of benefits, including training people to recognise fraud, a major problem confronting third-world aid. The Malawi Social Action Fund's demonstrated commitment to compliance, using iComply's software, was instrumental in the renewal of World Bank funding amounting to \$US240 million over the next 12 years.

The benefits for iComply include recognition of the value of its product in the aid environment, and the possibility of further work from the Malawi Government and other African nations.

iComply is extremely proud to be associated with MASAF in leading the way in the fight against mismanagement, and for improved corporate social responsibility.

Customer Feedback

"The product was acquired, installed and operational within three months. We were extremely pleased with the product, support and the knowledge of the staff at iComply during the acquisition, planning, implementation phases and now their ongoing support of the product. In spite of our geography, we are able to conduct business in an efficient and timely way, maintaining our ongoing relationship with iComply."

– Jean Persaud, Manager, Business Systems Development and Support, Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario.



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