



# Farnborough Projects Limited

## Farnborough Projects Limited

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Project Management, Training and IT Contracting  
243, Tubbenden Lane South  
Farnborough  
Orpington  
Kent  
BR6 7DW

TEL: +44 (0) 1689 609 574

FAX: +44 (0) 1689 609 573

E-mail: [sales@farnborough-projects.com](mailto:sales@farnborough-projects.com)

Web: [www.farnborough-projects.com](http://www.farnborough-projects.com)

## Case Study – Global CRM Programme Office

### Runaway changes, costs, slipping plans and late surprises

No one wants to have a failing project on their hand let alone close to 40. Farnborough Projects were appointed to review the programme and project management issues that had beset the programme and its sub projects and to setup a programme office to collate and coordinate the various activities that were being undertaken globally in support of the programme.

The first thing was to get the projects under close management and to stop the uncontrolled change that was damaging the product development and release itself and to tackle the issues of quality and configuration management.

### First things first

The priority was to get to the root of the problems as quickly as possible. There were the usual problems associated with a development project of this size and complexity. The initial plan was for a global CRM. The product as it stood was more of a diary and sales commission tool and many of the components originally planned were missing. A number of components that were not in the original brief had made their way into the product by requests, directly from users, not going through change control and being added "as favours". Other problems included work on bugs being "done on the fly" and patches being applied without having gone through any process of testing prior to being released. Some were released globally and some locally giving all sorts of issues to the users. As the product was still being developed, all help desk queries were coming through the development team, not being tracked and again being fixed on the fly without documentation and without consideration for any knock on effect this may have had.

The product had been released to a number of offices worldwide and there were about 40 projects still ongoing. These project managers had to deal with the users who were receiving a less than stable and not fully functional CRM.

### Report & A Way Forward

A report was produced outlining the implementation of a structured methodology and the initiation of a service desk, change and release boards. All changes were stopped and bugs and faults were run through a fault tracking system and reviewed. Initially daily meetings were held with the various project managers to ensure that the processes and major changes being made to the programme's structure were understood and communicated throughout the team.

Project Managers were expected to provide weekly reports and updated plans, documentation and other control documentation for each area of their responsibilities. This was a major change to the haphazard way in which the programme had been conducted up until this point and there was a lot of resistance to change requiring us to provide one on one mentoring and coaching to ensure that the message was being received, understood and complied with.

Senior management meetings were held, initially fortnightly and later monthly reviewing the state of play and the future plans to bring the programme back onto track. Some difficult decisions were needed

including the requirement to drop some of the unplanned functionality and get the main product back on course first. The Steering committee formed of the Directors and sponsors were tasked with ensuring that the Programme Office was given sufficient authority to continue to build on the initial changes that were needed to be made.

## Outcome

Through a structured and closely managed regime the Programme came back under control. As with many programmes that are in problems, there were a lot of issues to be solved and these needed prioritising and controlling. Before these would have been reacted to in a “knee jerk” way but with the introduction of the change board and the steering committee these were able to be managed through.

The main product (CRM) came back into line with its original brief and the enhancements that had been made were incorporated (where applicable). All other changes were submitted through change control and were accepted or rejected as required. Problems associated with configuration management were brought under control by implementing a quality manager and team and a full independent test team were employed to put the product and its increments through rigorous testing.

The Programme was brought back under control and the budget was stabilised, changes were detailed and outlined for future investment and the steering committee were able to report accurate budgets and dates for the various functional releases of the product.

## About Farnborough Projects Limited

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Farnborough Projects Limited is a privately owned Project and Programme Management company specialising in Project and Programme Management in the Finance (Retail and Investment), Telco, Logistics and Insurance markets. With in excess of 25 years experience in managing projects, using project tools and project and programme recovery, Farnborough Projects Limited experience is helping project teams and customers improve the way they deliver, track and plan business change.

## Contacts

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Marketing Office  
Farnborough Projects Limited  
243, Tubbenden Lane South  
Farnborough  
Orpington  
Kent  
United Kingdom  
BR6 7DW

+44 (0) 1689 609 574 or [sales@farnborough-projects.com](mailto:sales@farnborough-projects.com)  
[www.farnborough-projects.com](http://www.farnborough-projects.com)