

General Details

Organization: ZTE Telecom India Private Limited

Primary Industry: Telecommunications

Customer Name: BSNL (Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited)

Portfolio Name: BSNL Phase 8 North Zone Cellular Mobile Network Improvement Portfolio .

Portfolio Role: Portfolio Manager

Date Started: Nov2015

Date Through: Till Date

Description

The performing organization ZTE Telecom India Pvt Ltd is a global telecom Original Equipment Manufacturer (OEM) with global presence in 160+ countries. It provides a host of mobile network solutions and services to cellular operators and is a trusted partner to them in the network domain.

BSNL the customer was continuously facing issues in its mobile cellular network like network coverage issues, call quality issues and frequent call drops. All these factors led to BSNL having major problem of declining revenue from mobile services as well a drop in market share for them. In 2015 keeping in mind the expertise of ZTE Telecom India Pvt Ltd in the domain of building and operating world class cellular networks, BSNL decided to work together with ZTE to improve the cellular network and its maintenance in nine operation areas of North India.

I was selected as Portfolio Manager and entrusted the task to prepare the business case of ZTE Telecom. I collaborated with the senior executives, stakeholders of ZTE Telecom and closely studied vision and mission of ZTE and BSNL to create the Portfolio Vision, Mission and goals.

Portfolio Vision

To strengthen ZTE market share in mobile networks market in India by building and operating a robust and a high quality mobile cellular network for BSNL in nine service areas of North India. Showcase the successful implementation of network in BSNL for gaining market share especially in private cellular operators in India.

Portfolio Mission

The mission for ZTE was to support and enable BSNL to achieve following objectives:

1. Supporting and helping BSNL to increase its market share by 10% in these nine operation areas
2. Enabling BSNL to increase revenue by \$2 million.
3. Enabling customer delight for 50 million subscribers of BSNL by providing a robust network.
4. Helping BSNL to leverage on future enterprise domain opportunity of sales worth USD 100 million by making network ready for mobile enterprise solutions for Corporate customers
5. Ensure building and operating 99.999% network availability for BSNL.

Portfolio Objectives

The mission could be achieved if BSNL built a robust mobile network and rollout out of new radio base station sites to build on its existing capacity of network as well as having a strong operations to oversee the maintenance of newly implemented sites.

Following were the main objectives:

1. These goals were achieved with the rollout of 15009 new mobile base station sites in these nine operation areas which would increase both coverage and capacity of network
2. Rollout of 100 numbers core nodes and 4453 number of transmission nodes in these nine operation areas
3. All the network nodes were to be implemented as part of build, operate and transfer strategy and transfer of the nodes after rollout.
4. Network rollout in each service area of the total nine areas was to be implemented as a separate nine number of components.
5. The operations of live nodes was to be implemented as a separate component in addition to the nine components highlighted above.

Experience Summary #1: Strategic Alignment

A. Identified and prioritized portfolio criteria and evaluated portfolio component priorities based on the organization's strategic goals and objectives.

Option Answered: B Created and/or updated a portfolio roadmap based on the organization's strategic goals and objectives

BSNL Phase 8 North Zone Cellular Mobile Network Improvement Portfolio was a key telecom portfolio for our organization for showcasing ZTE as a reliable partner to BSNL and other cellular operators. So the creation of a very reliable Roadmap and its regular updating and communicating to stakeholders became a very important responsibility of me as the Portfolio manager.

For the creation of the roadmap the Portfolio Strategic Plan, the Charter and the Portfolio became key inputs. These documents provided the portfolio objectives, component information and also an understanding of high level timelines. Personal interview technique was used extensively by me to understand the dependencies both internal and external to the portfolio.

Our organizations' web based PMIS called as EPMS (Electronic Project Management System) became a very crucial tool to develop the roadmap. Key input data of components, objectives dependencies, and high level times were plugged in the EPMS and a detailed timeframe based Roadmap was generated which graphically showed all the milestones and dependencies. Using EPMS it was concluded that all the nine new site rollout components must start immediately and finish in a period of four years in Dec'2019. The operations component had to start immediately to continue bringing the benefits of an improved network.

ZTE had crucial objective of rolling 15009 base stations and 4453 number of transmission nodes in 4 years. So the whole objective was divided equally in the four year period with 3753 base station and 1110 transmission node rollout for the next 4 years. This information was further updated in the roadmap against which the progress of delivery would be tracked.

Over the next 4 years the EPMS became a regular tool for me to update the Roadmap based on the performance data and simulating the scenarios of delivery of portfolio components based on the current status. This flexibility of EPMS to simulate component scenarios gave me confidence that my delivery was in line to meet the originally planned Roadmap delivery.

In the regular portfolio review meetings Roadmap became a powerful tool to not only review progress but also highlight how the strategic benefits are being delivered. Flexibility of EPMS to show the above pictorially along with simulations made it easy for the key stakeholders to arrive at faster decisions to keep portfolio aligned with the strategic objectives.

Roadmap updates were done in EPMS every month aligning to the monthly health check meetings. Such reporting installed confidence regarding delivery in the stakeholders and led to processes maturity and improving the working relationship with all key stakeholders.

Experience Summary #2: Governance

Option Answered: A. Defined and implemented a governance framework for the portfolio and/or portfolio components

B. Implemented and enhanced the governance aspects of the portfolio management plan in support of portfolio goals and objectives

Keeping in mind the complex nature of BSNL Phase 8 North Zone Cellular Mobile Improvement Portfolio over a span of multiple years and spread over many operational areas with large geographic spread with high quantity of nodes I as portfolio manager along with the organizational management ensured the establishment of a very strong governance framework for the components.

The framework needed not only to align to corporate governance of both BSNL and ZTE but also to the complexity of the portfolio especially a span of multiple years and spread over many operational areas with large geographic spread.

I had to study the governance models of the previous and ongoing related similar portfolios from organizational historic process assets. Keeping in mind the nature of the portfolio and with inputs from the key stakeholders, I designed a robust portfolio governance framework. This framework designed the governance goals and highlighted the roles and responsibilities of the portfolio manager, the component managers along with the sponsor, PMO and other component management team members.

As part of governance framework the portfolio review meetings (including frequency, and mandatory participants), the phase gate reviews, the portfolio health checks, audits were finalized. The portfolio review meetings and phase gate meetings were scheduled quarterly and the health checks on a monthly basis. Audits were mandated on a yearly basis covering the process, document, financial and the quality aspects of the portfolio. Audits were mandated to be taken by external auditors.

An important decision with regards to governance was taken to have a separate governance meeting of all technical stakeholders which was mandated to take decisions on the technical aspects. This facilitated quick decision taking for complex technical problems. The participants included the Chief Technical officer of BSNL, all technical officers from the operational areas, project managers and the technical stakeholders from the performing and customer organizations.

This separate technical review meeting was one of the major governance achievements as it made technical delivery very fast. The frequency for this was decided on a biweekly basis. All the decisions of the technical stakeholders meeting were recorded in a governance decision register which was an important document presented in the portfolio review meetings and phase gate reviews.

EPMS (organizational PMIS) was the most important pillar of governance as I took the decision along with the support of PMO to use EPMS for configuring all the standard reporting, dashboards, issue registers, issue and risk escalation mechanisms. So the EPMS gave a standardized, consolidated reporting picture to all governance participants to enable faster decision making. Also EPMS gave warning triggers for any issue or risk whose response plan was not implemented

In the success of the portfolio one of the major pillar was a robust governance structure. It helped to monitor key performance indicators in financial health, technical domains, risks, issues and facilitated

quick response and remedial actions. All these actions in the Governance domain proved valuable to ensure that the portfolio remained aligned to the organization goals and objectives.

Experience Summary #3: Portfolio Performance

A. Managed portfolio performance to optimize portfolio effectiveness and efficiency (may include resource utilization, revenue enhancement, expense reduction)

Option Selected Is B: Evaluated continuous progress toward the achievement of business or strategic goals through the measurement of portfolio value.

Being the portfolio manager for BSNL Phase 8 North Zone Cellular Mobile Network Improvement Portfolio my key responsibility was to measure the portfolio performance continuously and ensure that the portfolios strategic goals were met. I needed to have a thorough understanding of strategic objectives since two organizations of BSNL and ZTE Telecom were involved, also I had to align the performance and ensure the strategic goals are being met for both organizations.

The first step was to create a performance management plan and ensure that all stakeholders had a common understanding as to how the portfolio performance will be measured against the strategic objectives. Taking the help of the PMO I first referred to key portfolio artefacts like charter, strategic plan, portfolio management plan to understand the objectives of performance. Then from the historic documents I set out to understand the methods and tools, techniques used by my organization in similar past portfolios. Using elicitation techniques like personal interviews I was able to design a robust portfolio performance management plan.

Using above I went on to use a number of techniques like SWOT analysis, what if analysis to conclude how a portfolio component was with respect to the intended benefits. To cover the most important aspect of measuring financial benefits I performed Cost Benefit Analysis (CBA), using various techniques like EVM (Earned Value Measurement), NPV (Net Present Value), IRR (Internal Rate of Return) and ROI (Return on investment) to quantitatively measure portfolio performance

Tools like and Outcome probability analysis helped me to increase the intended benefits accruing to the portfolio and also reach a perfect balance between risks and return I have also performed resource leveling to ensure the resources demand and supply balancing which helped in gaining efficiency, consistency and maximizing productivity of scare resources.

Through a constant analysis of enterprise environmental factor analysis like PESTLEED (Political Economic Social Technological Legal Environmental Ethical Demographical) analysis an impact of environmental factors on the portfolio was also constantly assessed and suitable actions taken accordingly.

ZTE Telecom's EPMS (organizational PMIS) was used extensively to communicate status of performance indicators configure the portfolio dashboard, communicate the traffic light (Red Amber Green) indicators, pie charts, histograms, bar charts, and the value of important performance metrics to enable take quick decision making. Also a component wise heat map was configured in EPMS which daily gave an indicator on the status of the portfolio components. It was useful tool to have a quick view update of the performance of components. Through easy web access to EPMS any stakeholder at any time could access

performance reports easily making communication of the performance indicators very seamless and smooth. Any deviations to the planned performance was quickly recognized by EPMS and triggers given immediately for corrective actions.

Through the above meticulous efforts, I was able to measure portfolio value, demonstrate that the portfolio was indeed delivering the intended business value and also ensuring strong executive support and achieve the organizational strategic goal.

Experience Summary #4: Portfolio Risk Management

A. Defined and/or enhanced the portfolio risk strategy, including tolerance and thresholds, based on the portfolio goals and objectives

Option Answered B. Enabled the organization to capitalize on opportunities or manage threats based on portfolio risk management processes, methods, and/or techniques

BSNL Phase 8 North Zone Cellular Mobile Improvement Portfolio was a very crucial portfolio for ZTE Telecom India as it would not only showcase ZTE as a reliable partner to cellular operators but also open the opportunities with the other private cellular operators in India. Considering its strategic importance I paid extra attention to managing risks so that the portfolio goals and objectives are met. I ensured proper risk management procedures are followed to reduce the impact of negative risks (issues) and enhancing the impact of positive risks (opportunities).

First step was to access the organizational process assets and come up with risks which were encountered by similar portfolios. A very key risk was recognized from the same that the organization had a deficiency of a particular skill set related to IP Multimedia Core Network. A suitable mitigation plan was devised due to this timely approach of referring the historic data.

Then a concerted effort was made in the portfolio to recognize all the component level risks. This was done by engaging maximum number of stakeholders from components, management, technical, finance, and executive level to gauge the risks which impact the portfolio. Different elicitation technique like personal interviews, focus groups were used. In each interaction with portfolio stakeholders, discussing risks was a key agenda item which helped in identifying risks timely, estimating their probability, calculating their impact, developing the risk response and monitoring and controlling in order to mitigate the negative impact in case the risk occurred and enhancing the opportunities.

As a portfolio manager it was also important to understand inter-dependencies and doing the inter-dependency analysis which helped in risk management. The portfolio qualitative and quantitative analysis was performed at the component level and suitable risk scores were assigned. Risk response ownerships were identified with senior portfolio team members being assigned for critical, high or medium risks. Risk owners were given autonomy to respond to risk for which they were the owners. A risk escalation mechanism/matrix was also put in place for timely trigger of unresolved risks.

Risk tolerance level of organization gave me an understanding and guided me while allocating contingency and management reserves. Small or residual risks or risks with very low risk score were kept in watch list for constant monitoring. A portfolio team member was assigned the ownership of these risks also.

In the review meetings whether phase gate reviews, governance meeting or health checks the primary focus was on risk management with due consideration to response based on type of risk like negative risks were to be avoided, transferred or mitigated and positive risks were to be enhanced, exploited or shared. This ensured that all team members practiced risk management in their day to day activities.

ZTE Telecom's EPMS (organizational PMIS) was also configured to put in place appropriate risk-related communication practices like developing common understanding of risk and opportunity terminologies, Timely distribution of risk level data to stakeholders, triggers to unresolved risks. RACI matrix for risk helped to managed clearly the roles and responsibilities of risks and their corresponding communications.

These focused efforts helped in ensuring opportunity-maximization and threat-reduction for both the portfolio as well as the organization.

Experience Summary #5: Communications Management

Option Answered A. Developed and/or updated a portfolio communications strategy to support effective decision making and achievement of portfolio goals and objectives

B. Engaged stakeholders to set and manage expectations and influence the success of the portfolio

Since BSNL Phase 8 North Zone Cellular Mobile Network Improvement Portfolio was to have delivery over nine operational areas it was a complex portfolio with multi components running for multiple years. It was absolutely clear that the stakeholder engagement and a robust portfolio communication strategy would play an important role in Portfolio success.

My first step was to refer the important artifacts like strategic plan, portfolio charter and roadmap. This helped us to identify the primary stakeholders. As a second step to stakeholder identification I went through the BSNL and ZTE Organizational charts and held meetings in all nine service areas where the components were being implemented to identify stakeholders in each operation area. I classified these stakeholders using power/interest/influence grid. The expectations of these identified stakeholders were understood using questionnaires and conducting interviews with them. I understood their expectations and determined which of them would have the most impact (positive and negative) on the portfolios strategic goals and objectives.

Having done this I put a stakeholder engagement plan in place and also developed a communication management plan for the stakeholders. As a part of the stakeholder engagement strategy, I used the stakeholder engagement assessment matrix tool and the tool had various category levels like Unaware, Resistant, Neutral, Supportive and Leading. From the key stakeholders that I had identified, I wanted to ensure that all of them move to the Leading or Supportive category. Communication planning was done keeping in mind the information requirement with stakeholder. An engagement with stakeholders was achieved on type of reports needed by stakeholders, frequency of reports the data expected to be shared and the formats for reporting. Also status meetings were planned along with health check reviews to ensure maximum participation of stakeholders.

Portfolio kickoff meeting was conducted where the key stakeholders were invited from BSNL and ZTE ensured that these persons felt actively involved during the portfolio execution by incorporating their feedbacks, understanding pain points and areas where they needed active support of the portfolio team.

ZTE Telecom's EPMS (organizational PMIS) became a central pivot for all communication processes. Portfolio Status Dashboard which showed the portfolios progress towards achieving the portfolios strategic goals and objectives was configured in the EPMS and regularly distributed to stakeholders as part of the communication process. Access to EPMS was granted to customer as well as other portfolio stakeholders. Also EPMS was configured to distribute the Portfolio reports regularly to various stakeholders

Also other multichannel communication channels like electronic, status meetings, review meetings, health check meetings were conducted to meet communication requirements. The attendance of the stakeholders was regularly measured and any reported issues were recorded as part of the issue log. Each issue was designated an issue owner who would engage with the stakeholder till issue closure providing important updates and status of the issue.

By closely interacting with all stakeholders, I kept the communications strategy and plan consistently relevant to changing business environment throughout the portfolio duration.