



RedPrairie Revs Up New Product Development and Growth with Bleum



RedPrairie Corporation was looking to enhance its outsourcing approach and bolster its position in a very competitive market when it began a search for a new offshore provider. The software company wanted a partner to help make the product development process for its supply chain and workforce management software more nimble and cost-effective while preserving top-notch quality and innovation.

"We are a very fast-moving company," says Joe Olson, RedPrairie's Vice President of Product Development. "We needed a partner that could react quickly and scale quickly."

After investigating outsourcers throughout Asia, Eastern Europe, Mexico and rural America, RedPrairie teamed up with Bleum in 2003. Shanghai-based Bleum offered the best of both worlds— lower-cost, high-performance software development in China, a key target market for RedPrairie, with a Western management team and business practices.

BECOMING AN INTEGRAL PART OF THE TEAM

From the start, RedPrairie set key metrics for judging Bleum's success, notably productivity,

rework rate and attrition. To quickly move up the learning curve and accelerate the team's productivity, Bleum sent 15 developers to the software company's Wisconsin headquarters for several months. Divided into testers and developers, the Bleum team soon proved itself by performing its assigned tasks effectively and building productive professional relationships with the U.S.-based development team.

The developers returned to Shanghai to form the nucleus of Bleum's dedicated offshore development center (ODC) for RedPrairie. To ensure on-time, on-target software releases, the ODC followed Bleum's proven development and project management methodologies. These processes continually improved, with Bleum achieving a CMM Level



5 rating companywide in 2005 and reappraised as CMMi Level 5 companywide in 2010.

Bleum also has leveraged its industry-leading practices in quality assurance (QA) testing to make RedPrairie's quality even better during development while also accelerating time-to-market. It did so by enhancing requirement analysis and management and incorporating testing throughout the development process, automating regression testing for 98% of test cases to compress cycle time.

Bleum's standout results begin with a rigorous hiring process, supplemented by effective retention and career development programs. "What really separates Bleum is its process for recruiting and retaining talent," notes Olson.

To further encourage retention and career development, the two companies created an incentive program for top ODC performers. They join RedPrairie teams in Europe and the United States for up to six months, seeing first-hand how clients use the products they helped to develop. The program enables the developers to garner key domain knowledge, which then helps Bleum to build the most customer-relevant products in the shortest amount of time.

The advantages of Bleum's business culture also have been significant, says Olson. They have helped strengthen Bleum's relationship with RedPrairie's in-house team and overcome barriers that often bedevil outsourcing relationships. "The total cost of ownership in an outsourcing relationship is not just the hourly rate. There's also the ease of the relationship, the ability to work in harmony and reduce tension when building products across multiple time zones and development groups. That's what Bleum brings," Olson says.

RedPrairie has steadily grown its Bleum ODC. Bleum works on many of the company's major software lines, performing product development, application maintenance and product testing. "Bleum is an important part of our development team," says Olson. "They have moved from doing only what they were instructed, to contributing throughout all phases of the development process."

TEAMWORK PAYS OFF

RedPrairie and Bleum have made important strides in lowering the cost and increasing the speed and efficiency of product development, which in turn has helped drive RedPrairie's strong growth both in the U.S. and abroad. Bleum continually raises the bar on its performance, with such important gains as:

- ❖ Reducing rework by 46% since launching a peer-review process in 2005
- ❖ Increasing application development productivity by 28% in the past four years
- ❖ Decreasing hours of rework per assignment by 55% since 2007

"Communicating with our Bleum team is never a problem. We can converse easily with team members at every level, by phone, email or conference call. And they are super-responsive."

QA testing has succeeded in improving both productivity and quality while streamlining the entire development lifecycle. In the past three years, test case productivity climbed 27% while test quality improved by 34%. With time-to-market a critical competitive advantage, RedPrairie has been able to speed up new releases from two a year to once a month.

Bleum's experience in China also has benefited RedPrairie. In 2007, the software provider began leveraging Bleum's local knowledge to supplement its presence in the Chinese market. As part of the effort, the ODC was branded RedPrairie. "It has helped to quickly locate and hire the best talent for our company, establish a meaningful presence, and enable our corporate capabilities in one of our most important markets. We continue to provide superior service to our customers in the APAC region," Olson says.

The two companies continue to expand their relationship. Two new areas: Working on software as a service (SaaS) offerings and developing mobile applications.



BLEUM
China's Outsourcing Experts

WORLDWIDE HEADQUARTERS

Cloud-9 Mansion 8F
1118 West Yan'an Road
Shanghai, 200052
+86 (21) 6282 1122

www.bleum.com