

Karen Barrera

Principal

EXPERIENCE SNAPSHOT

INDUSTRY

- Health Insurance
- Manufacturing
- Advertising
- Apparel
- Telecommunications
- Travel
- Government

TECHNICAL SPECIALIZATION

- Project Management
- Business Process Analysis (BPA)
- Business Process Management (BPM)
- Document Management
- Custom Application Development

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BACKGROUND

Karen has worked in the IT industry for 30 years focusing the last 20 years in the management of application development, its supporting methodologies and processes. Her extensive background in managing large and small development teams using varied development tools and computing platforms, demonstrates her ability to easily transition her management knowledge to whatever technology is needed to get the job done. To maintain abreast of current practices and techniques in business analysis and project management, Karen is a member of the International Institute of Business Analysis and the Project Management Institute.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Project Related

INDIVIDUAL HEALTH INSURANCE PROCESS IMPROVEMENT

Facilitated the reduction in time to underwrite health insurance applications through the implementation of an automated workflow solution.

- Analyzed existing business processes of all departments involved in the receipt, underwriting, issue and ongoing administrative support related to the submission of an application for individual health insurance. Documented workflows, time measurements and potential inefficiencies. Worked with client to identify desired modifications to the process, and subsequently with the client's 3rd party vendors to provide a solution of paperless processing coupled with automated workflow technology. The outcome cut processing time from days to hours, and provided greater visibility into key performance indicators to assist in ongoing optimization.

INDIVIDUAL HEALTH INSURANCE PREMIUM PAYMENT PROCESSING

Assisted in implementing solution for client's policy holders to pay premiums online.

- Conducted meetings with key stakeholders from the various departments involved in establishing, processing, posting, reconciling and servicing customers related to premium payments to identify the associated business processes. Developed resulting process diagrams and supporting business requirements document. Facilitated ongoing meetings to track tasks assigned to various departments required for the successful implementation of the solution. Worked with 3rd party vendors to understand contractual obligations associated with their solution, set up system configurations and coordinate testing.

SHORT-TERM INDIVIDUAL HEALTH INSURANCE POLICY CREATION

Defined solution to automate policy creation for Short-Term insurance applications submitted via the web.

- Analyzed current processes to review, approve and create Short-term policies from applications submitted via a 3rd party web-based application. Working with the client's development teams and their 3rd part vendor, identified data mapping/transformation requirements and electronic communication processes to automate the creation of a policy in the client's back-office systems. Developed supporting business requirements document and high-level test plans. Executed test plans to confirm solution met the defined objectives.

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ASSIST CLIENT IN THE FORMATION OF A BUSINESS ANALYSIS TEAM

- Participated in all recruiting efforts to build out initial team, consisting of both the client's employees and external contractors. Led team to develop common elicitation processes, standard deliverables and supporting templates, and estimating guidelines. Attended elicitation meeting with analysts new to the team to provide background on corporate systems related to their project, observe and mentor facilitation techniques, and assist in producing the standard deliverables.

STATEWIDE JUDICIAL CASE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

Analyzed core business functions and mapped existing processes to a new case management system.

- Led client team in analyzing and documenting workflows for the key court and clerk's office business functions. Detailed step-by-step procedures identifying how these functions will be performed using a new centralized system.

CORPORATE-WIDE HUMAN RESOURCE/PAYROLL SYSTEM RE-IMPLEMENTATION

Led client team in the re-implementation of a corporate-wide Human Resource / Payroll system deploying to 16 facilities.

- Organized and managed a complex Human Resource / Payroll project for a large, highly decentralized, apparel manufacturer. Coordinated and assisted in educating client on capabilities of their software. Led client team in gathering related business requirements, defining the optimum software configuration and confirming the unique functions requiring custom development. Developed outline of the system's user manual and recruited a skilled Technical Writer to produce the end product. Successfully deployed system to three facilities. Outlined 'cookie-cutter' implementation process to assist the client in managing future deployments internally.

CORPORATE TRAVEL ON-LINE BOOKING APPLICATION

Pioneer in rules-based corporate travel on-line booking application development for the world's largest automaker.

- Led the analysis and development of an on-line reservation system for a large travel agency. Gathered requirements from and coordinated activities with several external sources, conducted several public demonstrations of the product's capabilities on behalf of the client, and represented both the product and the client at several travel industry-related meetings.

AUTOMATED NETWORK DOCUMENTATION APPLICATION

Facilitated the reduction of time to produce a competitive-edge service from weeks to hours through the development of an integrated custom-application solution.

- Managed the design and development of a multi-million dollar application to automate the network documentation activities of a leading telecommunications company. This system had been in development internally for over seven years with limited success. Facilitated a series of Joint Application Development (JAD) sessions with representatives from the company's engineering, project management, IT and field support staff which ultimately produced an integrated solution addressing all phases of documenting the network designs of their clients. Provided a train-the-trainer approach to educating the company's implementation team on the use of the system.

MANAGEMENT CONSULTING SERVICES

Organized out-of-control project providing client key decision-making information. Restructured processes to more effectively align IT resources to corporate priorities.

- Provided management-consulting services for a division of a global consumer credit information provider.
 - Assessed the status of a critical project underway whose goal was to consolidate the order processing and billing functions of four divisions. Deadlines had been missed in the past and the cost/benefit of continuing was in question. Identified key remaining activities, resource requirements, risks and timing required to complete. Analyzed this information against the benefits to be achieved resulting in a recommendation to senior management to terminate the project.
 - Introduced processes to streamline the request, prioritization and justification of IT projects. Developed a steering committee charter outlining senior management's role in overseeing IT activities.

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- Outlined the activities to be considered in developing a strategic plan for IT services. Working with an external consulting firm, identified approach, timing and investment required to undertake this effort.

COURT CASE MANAGEMENT APPLICATION ASSESSMENT

Identified issues impeding progress on a grant-funded project and provided tactical steps to achieve maximum return with remaining budget.

- Performed an assessment for the Louisiana Supreme Court to evaluate the current state of a system being developed to streamline the activities of the state's largest Juvenile Court. Conducted interviews with representatives from the Supreme Court, Juvenile Court and IT staff to understand the system requirements, technical infrastructure capabilities, issues impacting progress and the budget and effort remaining. Outlined the benefits and risks of the current system, capabilities of the development firm, and effectiveness of project team communications and processes. Provided near-term recommendations to allow the Court to maximize their current investment and an outline of future considerations should additional funding be obtained.

MEDICAL ADVERTISING PROJECT INFORMATION CONTROL APPLICATION

Re-engineered business processes and developed supporting system for a business unit whose internal job accounting practices were lacking effective controls and impeding growth.

- Jointly led team of analysts in the company's first JAD effort to identify and reengineer the account management processes of a medical advertising business unit. Subsequently, led the development and implementation of a custom-developed project information control system. This was also the company's first client/server system. Instituted power user function within the business unit to provide on-site support, ad-hoc queries and management reports.

MANUFACTURING BUSINESS PROCESS REENGINEERING

Facilitated the restructuring of job accounting processes and supporting applications.

- Involved in a business reengineering study for a mid-sized manufacturing and distribution company. Developed workflows, gathered requirements and evaluated packaged applications to determine a build vs. buy recommendation.

CORPORATE INFRASTRUCTURE STUDY

Recommended client-server architecture for a large advertising agency.

- Consulted on a corporate-wide technology study resulting in a decision to migrate to client/server technology and the purchase of supporting hardware and software in excess of \$5 million.

Management Related

Managed professional services staff of 60+ for a multi-billion dollar product firm.

- Managed consulting staff of project managers, architects and developers for the Midwest region. Prepared forecasts and reconciled billings. Assisted sales teams in the presentation of solutions to potential clients. Staffed implementation teams with qualified technical resources from both internal and external (partner) sources. Assisted in the development and management of project plans.

Managed application development staff of 80+ for a leading advertising agency.

- Managed and directed the application development activities of a multi-billion dollar advertising agency. Responsible for business unit P&L, staffing strategies, training plans, performance goals. Led a 'front-runner' team whose charter was to aggressively attack both a methodology-based development approach and the client/server development environment. Introduced and implemented a 'team philosophy'; including the concept of roles vs. titles, total team participation and peer performance reviews.

Managed all aspects of IT for a tier-one automotive supplier.

- Managed and directed the computer operations and application development activities of a large manufacturing company. Directed the research and acquisition of all corporate computer hardware and software. Assisted in the development of a strategic information systems plan, including the formation of an executive steering committee.

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COMPANY AFFILIATIONS

2004 – Present	Entara Management Services Cleveland, OH <i>Principal</i>
2000 – 2003	Independent Consultant
1996 – 2000	REALOGIC/Computer Associates Ann Arbor/Southfield, MI <i>Consulting Manager</i>

EDUCATION

Associate in Computer Science, 1983, Henry Ford Community College

PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

Member of Project Management Institute (PMI)

Member of International Institute of Business Analysis (IIBA)