



Raising Standards. Bridging Technologies. Building Value.

**QuEST Forum Newsletter
March 2009**

How Important is Benchmarking to Your Organization?

In 1993, research and consulting firm, Bain & Company, launched a multi-year research project to obtain the facts about management tools and trends. Their objective was two-fold; provide managers with the information necessary to identify and integrate tools that will improve bottom-line results and understand how global executives view their strategic challenges and priorities.

Over the past 16 years they have completed 12 surveys and assembled a database that includes 9,933 respondents from more than 70 countries across the globe. This year 1430 completed surveys were received from a broad range of executives. This year's survey focused on 25 of the most popular tools and techniques used by senior management.

The results of the survey show some interesting facts:

Benchmarking passed Strategic Planning as the most used tool. Strategic Planning had been the most used tool every year since 1997.

The tools used vary by industry. The heaviest users are Consumer Products, Pharma & Biotech, Food & Beverage, and Chemicals & Metals. The lightest users were Utilities and Energy, Construction & Real Estate, and Financial Services.

While some tools stand out as winners and losers, no tool is right for everyone. Here are the top ten tools from the survey.

	Usage	Satisfaction
Benchmarking	76%	3.82
Strategic Planning	67%	4.01
Mission and Vision Statements	65%	3.91
Customer Relationship Management	63%	3.83
Outsourcing	63%	3.79
Balanced Scorecard	53%	3.83

Customer Segmentation	53%	3.95
Business Process Reengineering	50%	3.85
Core Competencies	48%	3.82
Mergers and Acquisitions	46%	3.83

QuEST Forum excels in providing opportunities for companies to benchmark their products and services. In fact, a requirement for companies that become TL 9000 certified is that they provide benchmarkable data which can be used to create trend charts that show best in class, the industry average, and worst in class. Consequently, each company certified to TL can compare themselves to the industry and make key decisions regarding quality and customer satisfaction.

2009 EMEA Best Practices Conference

The [EMEA Best Practices Conference](#) will be held in Paris, France 22-25 June 2009 and will focus on “**TL 9000 as a Business Excellence Journey in Times of Economic Challenge**”.

Scheduled workshops include:

- Jump Start
- Changes to the TL 9000 Handbook (R 5)
- TL 9000 Performance Measurements FRT OTS
- End-to-End Performance Measurements
- Network Operation Center Benchmarking Program
- Making the most of Your QuEST Forum Membership
- Customer Metric Reporting Toolkit

Registration for the EMEA Best Practices Conference is scheduled to open 22 April.

2009 QuEST Forum Americas Best Practices Conference Call for Abstracts – Opens 2 April 2009

The Americas Best Practices Conference will be held in Orlando, Florida 21 - 25 September 2009 and will revolve around the theme “Achieving Next Generation Business Excellence”.

QuEST Forum is looking for speakers to share the best practices and methodologies that have made their organizations successful and you are invited to submit an abstract for presentation at this informative event. You are also encouraged to invite colleagues and other industry professionals to submit an abstract.

The online abstract submission tool will open 2 April 2009 and the information provided within the tool will help potential presenters prepare their presentation abstract for submission. [Click here](#) to download a list of suggested themes for abstracts. The deadline for submitting an abstract is **1 June 2009**.

For more information, please contact the QuEST Forum Administrator at +1-972-423-7360 or via email at information@questforum.org.

2009 QuEST Forum APAC Best Practices Conference – Save the Date

Start making your plans to participate in the APAC Best Practices Conference. The conference will be held in **Shanghai, China, 19 – 22 October 2009** at the Renaissance Shanghai Pudong and will focus on the theme of “**Doing Business in the North American Markets - Using TL 9000**”.

Look for information coming soon on speaking opportunities and workshop topics.

May Work Group Meetings – Registration Open

Registration is now open for the May Leadership Council and Work Group Meetings in Dallas, Texas (18 – 21 May 2009). The Leadership Council will meet Monday, 18 May and the Work Group Meetings begin on Tuesday, 19 May and go through Thursday, 21 May. [Click here](#) to download a detailed meeting schedule.

[Register Now](#)

While registration is complimentary, we ask that you register by 26 April to ensure accurate numbers for planning purposes. Please note that you are responsible for making your own hotel and travel arrangements. The deadline to receive the QuEST Forum room rate of \$129 is 26 April 2009. [Click here](#) to make your hotel reservations. Remember to use Group Code G - QUE1.

The May Work Group Meetings are sponsored in part by:*



* *Sponsorship opportunities are still available for the Work Group Meetings. For details, please contact Rebecca McVeigh at rmcveigh@questforum.org or 972-423-0268.*

Executive Board Project Updates

Executive Board Project #1 – Operational Efficiencies

The new 2009 Balanced Scorecard has been the focus of this team during the past several weeks with the purpose to match the project management deliverables of the Work Groups and Regions to the Project Management Tool in order to report accurate and timely updates to their progress. In addition, the Executive Board Projects deliverables will be added to the metrics, as well as more detailed metrics on QuEST Forum staff and UTD performance.

Development and deployment of a new Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system is under way and due to be completed early this year. The team has also been involved with engaging the work groups in using the Meeting Tracker function on the web portal.

Work is also ongoing to ensure alignment with the Global Work Group's expanded role and Executive Board Major Project #7 - Engaging the Hubs.

Project #1 Leads:

Don Pickens, COO, QuEST Forum, dpickens@questforum.org

Rob Darden, Executive Director, QuEST Forum, robdarden@questforum.org

Executive Board Project #3 – Membership and TL 9000 Registrations

This project has completed setting its 2009 objectives. The project scope is to develop and implement a strategy to retain and expand both QuEST forum membership and TL 9000 registration throughout the Telecom ecosystem of Service Providers and Supply Chain partners.

The green goal objectives are:

- Identify 20 new tier-1, tier-2, and small companies
- Recruit 5 net tier-1, tier-2 companies
- Recruit 3 net small companies
- Reconnect and recruit companies not renewing 2009 QF membership.
- Add 20 tier-1, tier-2 to TL9000 certified
- Add 10 small companies to TL9000 certified

The blue goal objectives (beyond green goal level) include:

- Recruiting 5 net tier-1, tier-2
- Recruiting 2 net small companies
- Identifying 10 new tier-1, tier-2 companies to be TL 9000 certified
- Identifying 5 new small companies to be TL 9000 certified

The assignment of board members, to follow up with companies who have suspended membership or are at risk for non-renewal for 2009, continues. This strategy has proven to be an effective and successful strategy for member retention. Scorecards have also been developed to track member retention, recruitment and to maintain accountability. Lastly, the project team has reviewed the proposal by 'Beyond Philosophy', an independent consulting firm, to conduct a survey on QuEST Forum's strength and weakness. Next steps include coordination with the Survey Sub-team and the Oversight Work Group.

Project #3 Executive Board Leads:

Dave Ayers, Nortel, dayers@nortel.com

Dave Stahl, Tellabs, david.stahl@tellabs.com

JoAnn Brumit, KARLEE, jabrumit@karlee.com

Member Participation

Based on past Membership Surveys, QuEST Forum knows that members that participate the most in QuEST Forum events and work groups are the most satisfied with their membership.

The Green Goal is to achieve a 10% increase in the number of companies participating in Forum activities. We will work with each hub to develop active engagement processes that will work well for their regions.

The Blue Goal is to achieve a 15% increase in number of companies participating and a 10% increase in number of companies scoring more than 11% on the "Participation Matrix".

Verification and validation of correct membership names and participation data with each hub is progressing and expected to be completed before the next Board call. A meeting is scheduled with America's Region to clarify the engagement process for the hub to work with companies that are highlighted as "under-participating". Similar calls will be scheduled for EMEA and APAC Regions. The plan is for the Regions to work with the companies and provide feedback and comments to the project leaders.

Executive Board Leads:

Ed Rohlf, ADTRAN, ed.rohlf@adtran.com

Trevor Putrah, KGP Telecommunications, taputrah@kgptel.com

Executive Board Project #5 – Performance Data Reports

Progress continues on this initiative's three-part plan to improve performance data reports: 1) Improve PDR accuracy, 2) Maximize PDR usage value, and 3) Expand PDR scope. Last month's update summarized the key deliverables for 2009 in each of these areas.

As mentioned, one of the deliverables was to implement decisions on "uncertified" data retroactively in the data repository, which would have the impact of improving the accuracy and completeness of PDR industry statistics. Recall that the primary issue this decision addresses is numerous cases where a registration's data became "uncertified" due to delays in paper work from recertifications. Once the paperwork was finalized, data became "certified" again, but the net result was major impact on the industry statistics. Previous studies had shown that the impact on some of the statistics was very significant. The time between the expiration date of a certification and when the data being submitted is treated as uncertified has been increased to prevent this problem in the future. But the Forum still needs to address past data.

UTD developed a tool to help identify cases where a registration's data went from certified, to uncertified and then back to certified again due to this problem. 876 active certifications were reviewed and 258 of these certifications were impacted, in that they included data that was "uncertified" but should have had a "certified" status. In the end 2478 data submissions were "flipped" to certified. The net result is that about 10% more data has been added to the repository that will now be available to calculate PDR industry statistics! PDR users will see the impact of this change in the March PDR run, which should be available on March 28th.

This is a major milestone for the PDR improvement initiative, and will benefit all users of the PDRs. It also sets the stage for the Forum to begin crafting professional "industry reports" to assess overall industry performance based on more complete and accurate PDR TL 9000 industry statistics.

One last news item on improving the value of PDRs. "Advisor" software, which has been mentioned in previous updates, will soon be launched with an alert. The intent is to roll-out this software on one, yet important product category to the industry (Edge Routers 1.2.9.2), and incorporate lessons learned before rolling out to the remaining categories. This software will provide much greater error checking when submitting data to UTD, and it has been trialed by a number of companies. Studies have also shown that had the advisor software been implemented in the past, some data issues would have been detected. The PDR team is putting the final touches on the alert and associated documentation, including guidance for registrars. Once fully implemented, "Advisor" software will further improve the accuracy of PDR industry statistics.

Project #5 Executive Board Lead:

Ken Koffman, BigBand Networks, ken.koffman@bigbandnet.com

IGQ Co-Chair/PDR Evaluation Subteam Lead:

John Wronka, Alcatel-Lucent, jwronka@alcatel-lucent.com

Executive Board Project #6 – Network Reliability

This is a new project for 2009. The intention of this initiative is to develop a set of service provider metrics to enhance the TL 9000 Quality Management System (QMS). These enhancements will measure quality and services as managed by Network Operations Centers (NOCs) and/or Network Reliability Centers (NRCs).

This initiative will recruit several operators globally in a benchmarking study. Our goal is to engage the service provider membership in all the regions: Americas, APAC and EMEA.

Major Project #6 should result in the following:

- Enhancements to the TL 9000 Quality Measurement System (QMS)
- Encourage increased member participation with the inclusion of the Network Operations units within the Service Provider member category
- Provide new TL 9000 registration opportunities
- Raise the standards of IT, IP/Data and Legacy Network Management for the service provider community
- Provide a benchmark study for network management
- Provide new product offerings and marketing opportunities for QuEST Forum
- Enhance Product Category #9 with additional measurements and requirements (Product Categories table)

This project is broken into the following phases:

Phase 1 – Develop a White Paper or Executive Briefing. This document will be used to engage senior level leaders in a service provider's operations unit.

Update: This phase is complete as both the Executive Briefing and the White Paper were finalized. Two executive level conference calls were held on 17 March 2009 at 8 AM Central and 26 March 2009 at 7 PM Central.

Phase 2 – Identify at least 5-15 companies to participate and begin the NRC benchmark study.

Update: The list of service providers is being actively engaged and the following 8 organizations have agreed to participate:

- AT&T
- Bharti Airtel
- Qwest Communication
- Reliance
- Tata Group
- Telecommunication Services
- TELUS Communications
- Verizon Communications Inc.

The Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) in these organizations are being identified and a call schedule is targeted to start in mid-April. The working committee is engaged with the EMEA KPI sub-team and alignment activities are underway.

Phase 3 – Publish study results. Incorporate into the Measurements and Requirements TL handbooks.

Update: Not yet started.

Phase 4 – Add more Network Centers for benchmarking. Begin studies. Have core team make suggested additions to TL 9000 Measurements and Requirements Handbooks.

Update: Not yet started.

Phase 5 – Find and/or develop centers of excellence in network operations. Once these centers of excellence are identified, develop training on managing world class network centers. This should be a value added service and revenue source for QuEST Forum.

Update: Not yet started.

Project #6 Executive Board Leads:

Fraser Pajak, TELUS Communications (Lead), fraser.pajak@telus.com

Amador Lucero, Qwest, amador.lucero@qwest.com

Pierre Cyr, Alcatel-Lucent, pierre.cyr@alcatel-lucent.com

Tim Harden, AT&T, th8261@att.com

Dave Sanicola, The Desara Group, Dave.Sanicola@DesaraGroup.com

Executive Board Project #7 – Engaging the Regions

Executive Board Project #7 is closely aligned with the Global Work Group and is working to actively engage the regions in developing short term and long term plans to address regional needs. The initial activities will be focused in EMEA, the Greater China Hub (APAC) and the Indian Hub (APAC). These regions are in the beginning stages of preparing their first Best Practice Conference (BPC) which will be crucial events in the growth of these regions. The Americas region is leveraging the successful Annual BPC processes as it plans its conference in September. Another key Green Goal aligns closely with Executive Board Project #3 team's mission to increase membership, TL registrations, and participation in QuEST Forum as a whole. Executive Board Project #7 will be working closely with the regions to achieve those goals.

Besides the Best Practices Conferences, the other critical deliverable is the high level executive visits to Europe and China by key leaders of QuEST Forum. In EMEA, we are looking for senior level involvement and engagement from key service providers, including BT, Vodafone, France Telecom, Bouygues Telecom, Telecom Italia, Telefonica, Belgacom, Wind and Vimplecom amongst others. The executive visit to Europe is 27 April to 1 May.

Another executive visit is scheduled for 11 – 19 July to Beijing and Shanghai, China with the key mission to further engage China Mobile, China Telecom and China Unicom in QuEST Forum. Also on the tentative itinerary are visits to key government agencies and other suppliers crucial to the success of QuEST Forum's mission in APAC.

The objectives of Executive Board Project #7 for 2009 are:

- Enhance Products and Services by engaging and energizing the Regions in activities that utilize their marketplace needs
- Help recruit leaders and members for all regions, especially their local areas
- Leverage the core competencies from each Region (i.e. Improve Software development processes and measurements – India)
- Promote BPC type events globally
- Provide learning/educational opportunities at all events
- Improve usage & visibility of the Knowledge Library
- Incorporate both regional and global best practices into company operations
- Meet regularly with SME's to Ensure communications tools and processes are in place and to engage the regions in a professional manner
- Complete Regional Value Props to make sure critical market needs are identified and QuEST Forum Products and Solutions are positioned to address those needs

Project #7 Executive Board Lead:

Kevin Calhoun, Corning Cable Systems, kevin.calhoun@corning.com

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2009 Sponsorship Opportunities

QuEST Forum Members and conference attendees consistently testify that the business they gained through networking at QuEST Forum Conferences exceeded their expectations.

[Sponsorship Levels and Corresponding Benefits](#) *

Sponsor multiple events and receive a discount. The discount is determined by the level of sponsorship and the number of events sponsored. [Click here](#) to access the online sponsorship calculator to see how much you can save. Sponsorship packages can also be tailored to meet your desired level of exposure and expenditure.

To commit to sponsor in 2009 or for more information on sponsoring or to design a custom sponsorship package, please contact Rebecca McVeigh at +1 972-423-0268 or via email at rmcveigh@questforum.org.

* Sponsorship opportunities are also available for the Work Group Meetings. Please contact Rebecca McVeigh for details.

QuEST Forum EMEA and APAC Executive Visits

The dates for the EMEA Executive Visit are 27 April – 1 May and scheduled visits include BT, Vodafone (London), France Telecom, Bouygues, Orange, and Belgacom (Paris), Telefonica and ONO (Madrid) and Telecom Italia and Wind (Rome). Don Pickens, COO QuEST Forum, Kevin Calhoun, Corning Cable Systems, Ken Koffman, BigBand Networks, Ashok Dandekar, Fujitsu, Richard Morrow, UTD and Johannes Schuck, Alcatel-Lucent all anticipate participating as part of the QuEST Forum Delegation.

The dates for the APAC Executive Visit are 11 – 19 July. The delegation will be led by Tim Harden, AT&T, and Don Pickens, QuEST Forum COO. Other delegates include Ken Koffman, BigBand Networks, Ashok Dandekar, Fujitsu, Richard Morrow, UTD and Rod Bothwell, The DESARA Group. The delegation will visit both Beijing and Shanghai and meet with China Telecom, China Unicom, and China Mobile. The group also hopes to meet with various Government Regulatory Groups.

Forum-wide participation on visits such as these is vital to their success. Please contact Don Pickens at dpickens@questforum.org if you are interested in participating.

New QuEST Forum Members

QuEST Forum welcomes new members **3K Technologies LLC**, Supplier, Americas Region, **Intraline**, Supplier, Americas Region and **MasTec**, Supplier, Americas Region

New TL 9000 Registrations

Congratulations to the newest TL 9000 registrants: **China Enterprise Communication Ltd**, **SFO Technologies PvtLtd-Optronics Division**, **Capgemini India PvtLtd**, and **Global Capital, Ltd**.

Congratulations to the organizations that have added new locations: **Sasken Networks**, **Hong Fu Jun Precision Industrial**, **CSC Vietnam**, **ECI Telecom**, and **HTC Corporation**.

QuEST Forum's Maryellen Basanda, Manager, Membership and Administration

With a background in customer service and over 19 years with another non-profit membership organization, Maryellen Basanda joined QuEST Forum in September 2007 as the Membership and Administration Manager. If you call QuEST Forum, you will be greeted by her cheerful voice; if you email information@questforum.org with a request she will track down the necessary information with ruthless determination. Maryellen's willingness to assist with any project and her dedication to ensuring a positive experience for all QuEST Forum members make her an integral part of the Management Team.

Maryellen was born and raised in New York and moved to Texarkana, Texas in 1980 where she worked as a detention officer for the City of Texarkana. A job, she considered not much different than being a mother to three now grown children, Sly, Joe and Patti.

Maryellen currently lives in a lake house in Lake Tawakoni, a very rural area of Texas. She is Nana to four grandchildren, Marisa, Alexis, Avery and Grant, and acts as the head zoo keeper to three cats, one dog and any strays that need some TLC. Maryellen spends her time renovating the house and gardening (raking leaves). She loves the color red, the movie "Gone with the Wind" and the Beatles...well, what's left of them.

You may reach Maryellen at + 1 972.423.0137 or mbasanda@questforum.org.

2009 TBE Work Group Chair Elected

Congratulations to Vinny Arrigali, Cisco on his recent election to the position of TBE Work Group Chair for 2009. Previously, Vinny capably served as the 2008 QuEST Forum Project Director and spearheaded the development and launch of the online project management tool.

New Fee Schedule for the Registration Management System

QuEST Forum charges all non-members an annual Registration Management System (RMS) fee for creation and managing the registration record. This fee covers the use of the system, and includes all data submissions and re-submissions. The new fee will be \$444.00 and will go into effect on 1 April 2009. It is applicable for both initial registrations and annual renewals and is assessed for each registered product category.

One of the benefits of QuEST forum membership is that QuEST Forum members are not subject to these fees. For those member companies that have multiple product category registrations this member benefit alone is truly valuable and even more so with all the other benefits of being a QuEST Forum member.

Suggestions or Comments on the QuEST Forum Newsletter?

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