

Music Studio

System they were building: accounting to keep track of music contracts

Problem: keep track of clients and avoid lawsuits due to errors in payments

Outcomes:

\$10 million lost with no completion in sight

Executive in charge fired and replaced with someone worse

Mistakes made...

... By Management (people like us):

Hired (and let him keep working) a designer who was egotistical and a control freak

Too much emphasis on one person's decisions rather than a committee

I.T. people on the project were not capable in this type of project—didn't assign the right people to the right project. For example, the designer did not have experience in this type or size of project

Too many stakeholders who wanted a say – made requirements gathering very difficult

When the system development work was going badly, no one spoke up and raised the red flag – should have stopped and assessed the situation

Unrealistic estimate of time and cost – trying to rush it

No checks and balances in place to check on progress

... By I.T. People

None

California Pharmaceutical Company

System: Global knowledge sharing system

Problem: bring new drugs to market quicker

Outcomes:

8 months late

Over budget by \$1 million

System didn't work – stripped out features the system was supposed to have

Mistakes made...

... By Management (people like us):

Didn't bring in infrastructure group until the end

Two managers (one for consultants and one for pharmaceutical company) didn't report to one person so the communication was bad and there was lots of blaming and arguing

Time and materials contract was not managed well – as a result, they had scope creep

... By I.T. people:

System not designed to run over a WAN – didn't test the network end to end