

Staying Connected

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Web surveys

Have a survey you'd like to Web-enable? Looking to get employee or customer feedback? We now provide secure, online survey capability to our clients.

New clients

Welcome to recent clients: Standard & Poors, Syracuse University, Arizona State University, Arizona Department of Education, DOT Federal Credit Union, Columbia Green Federal Credit Union, Springville-Griffith Institute, and Union Volunteer Emergency Squad.

UMM Board

Sean Brady has been appointed to the Board of Directors of United Medical Management Inc.

SoL Convergence

Sean Brady recently traveled to Cambridge, MA to attend a Society for Organizational Learning (SoL) *convergence*. The *convergence* is designed to facilitate the professional development and networking of SoL's consultant members. MIT's Peter Senge founded SoL in 1997.

On the web

Please visit Prism's new website for the latest news, services, and resources:
www.prismdecision.com

Our passion

Organizations often struggle through planning or decision-making. Planning teams experience conflict, fail to reach explicit agreement, end frustrated and finish drained.

Prism's client teams are engaged, have fun, move quickly and reach consensus. They emerge refreshed, energized and committed to a plan that will take them from where they are to where they want to be.

Your preferred future

Our passion is to maximize the human potential of client groups to make and implement decisions that achieve their preferred future.

Standard & Poors

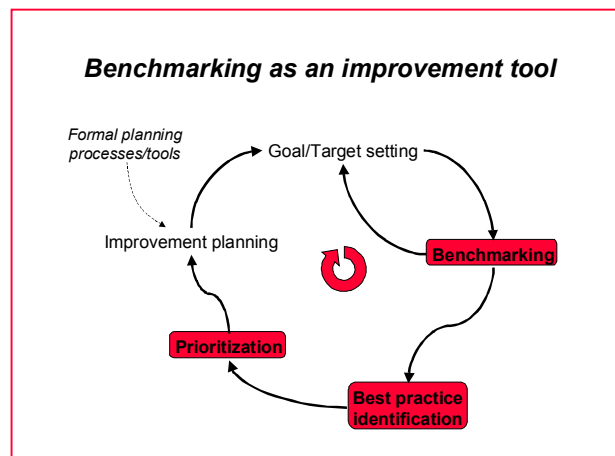
Prism Decision Systems, LLC has partnered with Idea Sciences, Inc. of Alexandria, Virginia to provide consulting services to Standard & Poors School Evaluation Services.

In July 2004, Prism's Sean Brady was on hand to assist Idea Sciences' Andrew Tait deliver Frontier Analyst® training to S&P's School Evaluation Services management and staff.

Throughout this past winter, Sean helped S&P to design training in the use of benchmarking as a school improvement tool. In March and April 2005, Sean was a lead presenter at S&P's Benchmarking Institutes in Detroit and in Saginaw, Michigan.

NY & AZ benchmarking

Prism has partnered in New York State with Syracuse University and in Arizona with Arizona State University to complete Frontier Analyst® school benchmarking studies.



Solutions

- Strategic planning
- School improvement planning
- Benchmarking, target setting and best practice exchange
- Alliance management
- Conflict resolution
- General decision support
- Training

Tools

- Group decision support systems for face-to-face sessions.
- Frontier Analyst® to benchmark, measure organizational efficiency and set performance targets.
- Concept Systems® for web-based focus groups and planning.

In New York, Prism has completed the first year of a four-year contract to identify best-in-class, or benchmark, schools in all demographic profiles. In a study of 2106 schools reporting grade 4 State assessment results, 61 were identified as benchmark performers; of 906 schools reporting grade 8 results, 42 were identified as benchmark performers.

SU's Office of Professional Research & Development is now studying a subset of these best-in-class schools to determine what strategies and practices they employ to achieve their results.

"Benchmarking" continued page 2

Benchmarking cont'd

Arizona study

In Arizona, Prism is completing a Frontier Analyst® study to identify benchmark schools reporting grade 3 and grade 8 State assessment results. Prism partner Idea Sciences will make the study results available to the Arizona Department of Education (ADE) via a Web service.

Study results will be used initially by ADE staff to design and deliver school improvement conferences where teams of educators from the benchmark schools will present their strategies, programs and practices to improvement teams from aspiring schools. ASU will also complete research at the best-in-class schools.

EMS planning

"Our organization accomplished more with Prism Decision Systems than at any of the other "strategy" meetings we have ever had," said Joseph Nirchi, President, Board of Directors—Union Volunteer Emergency Squad (UVES).

Like many not-for-profits, UVES needs good long-range planning to thrive and grow. The challenge is time: the board is volunteer; the management team is flat out. Prism's goal: use dynamic group processes and powerful Web-based and face-to-face decision tools to make this the quickest, most robust planning process UVES has ever experienced.

Online ranking: mission and vision

In a preliminary hour-long session, Prism led the joint Board-Management planning team through a creative session to draft vision and mission statements. Over the next two weeks, the team then logged into Prism's Web survey to rank the six mission and seven vision statements.

Planning retreat

Armed with the Web survey data, Prism was quickly able to facilitate strong consensus agreement on both a mission and vision statement.

This strong agreement was a springboard to strategic target setting. By the end of the first

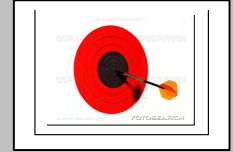
Optimal thinking tips

Target setting

Strategic planning is not rocket science. It involves three simple questions: Where are we? Where do we want to be? What are we going to do to get there? Yet when planning, many organizations ignore what no rocket scientist would—the numbers! Setting strategic improvement targets can be a difficult task, so many organizations skip this step—at their peril.

The dodge

Planning teams love to envision a preferred future. They are eager to do the bold, blue-sky thinking to describe where they want to be in conceptual terms. However, the same teams sometimes are reluctant to define a preferred future in quantitative terms.



The payoff

If your planning team truly wants to define where it wants to be, they need to know where the "where" really is. Setting strategic targets provokes performance, allows tracking of progress against plan, and encourages accountability.

The evidence

In 2000, GHS Federal Credit Union set aggressive strategic targets, in one case representing *an average annual increase on a key indicator of three times the historical trend*. The management team was excited but nervous. Were the targets realistic, attainable, they wondered? Four years later, the team looked back at the original targets they had set to achieve by the end of 2004. In each case, they hit the target dead on—or exceeded it!

evening, the planning team had also agreed to eight strategic targets in the areas of finance, operations, quality and members.

Strategies and priorities

The planning team arrived excited early the next day. They had a clear vision to compel them to the future and a set of targets to measure their progress toward it. Now all they needed was a set of strategies that would articulate what they need to do to get from where they are to where they want to be.

By lunch, they had agreed to a set of five-year strategies. Shortly after lunch, they used Prism's group decision system to complete a strategic profile and identify two immediate, high-leverage priorities.

According to Mr. Nirchi, "Prism's group decision system and the interaction with Mr. Brady focused the Board and management team on what was important for the future of the organization to become a leader in the EMS field. Over the next year, we look forward to focusing on our strategies and priorities and on hitting our targets."

Sample engagements

Albany City School District
Arizona Department of Education
Arizona State University
Arnot Medical Services
Baldwinsville Central School District
Binghamton City School District
Blue Marble Corporation
Broome County, New York
BT, Dutchess County, Herkimer, SCT, SW
Boards of Cooperative Educational Svcs.
Chenango Forks Central School District
Columbia-Green Federal Credit Union
DOT Federal Credit Union
Elmira City School District
City of Fanwood, New Jersey
First Heritage Federal Credit Union
Greater Boston Visitor & Conv. Bureau
Greenberg 7 Central School District
GHS Federal Credit Union
Irma S. Mann Strategic Marketing
Litton-Tasc
Mercy Health System of Philadelphia
National Institute for Health
New York State Education Department
New York State Electric & Gas
Oswego City School District
Science Application International Corp.
Springville-Griffith Institute
Standard & Poors, Inc.
Syracuse University
Telcordia Technologies
The Los Angeles Times
Three Village Central School District
Times Mirror Company
United Health Services, Inc.
United Medical Associates
Washington, DC Metro Transit Authority