"Improving Quality in Information Product Manufacturing: A Financial Services Company Case Study"

Robert Zerby
Systems Quality Assurance Analyst
A Leading Financial Services Company
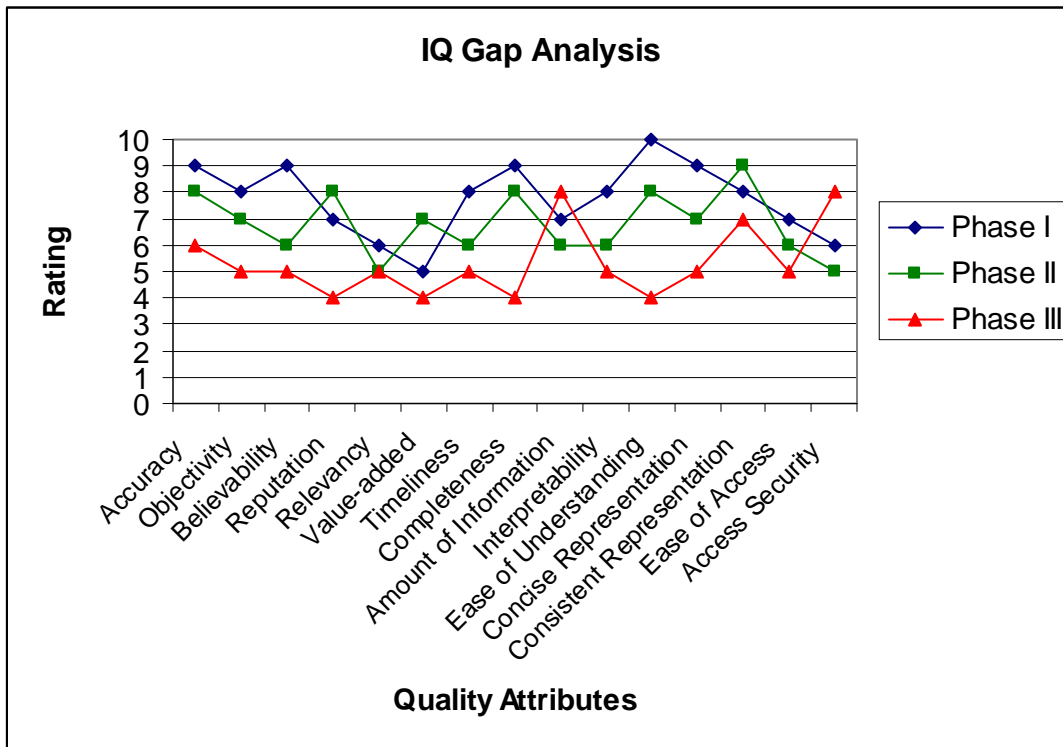rob_z@eudoramail.com

Abstract

Working from "AIMQ: A Methodology for Information Quality Assessment," developed by Lee, Strong, Kahn and Wang, I plan to propose a value-added methodology by using the survey tool to influence the quality built into an information product during the development phase of its life cycle. As well, I plan to provide feedback regarding the assessment instrument and its fitness for the use in which it was intended.

My contribution to the methodology will be to show its usefulness as a product specification guideline by introducing the survey during the design phase for several deliverables that will combine to produce a comprehensive information and reporting system for a specific financial services product. The approach will be to add a *development tier* to the assessment, whereby the team leaders for each phase of the project (deliverable) will be responsible for rating the product on how well it addresses each of the 15 quality attributes addressed in "AIMQ." The individual assessments will then be aggregated to give an overall *developmental quality assessment*, which can then be compared to internal IS department and external customer quality assessments at various intervals during the product life cycle. I outline my proposed data collection and analysis techniques below:

Data Collection

Data collection for the Information Quality Assessment will be conducted in three phases:

- *Phase I* – An assessment is made by the team leader for each deliverable submitted for a project. The results of these surveys serve a two-fold purpose: they allow the business managers to review the quality initiatives at each milestone, and the results can be aggregated to provide an overall consideration of quality at the conclusion of a project.

- *Phase II* – The quality assessment survey is given to all members of the IS department to determine what the general sentiments about product quality are by those responsible for its development and maintenance.

- *Phase III* – A survey identical to that of Phase II is given to all the users of the product, after enough time allowed for testing, to determine the overall impressions of quality as seen by our customers.

IQ Gap Analysis

Rating

10
9
8
7
6
5
4
3
2
1
0

Accuracy
Objectivity
Believability
Reputation
Relevancy
Value-added
Timeliness
Completeness
Amount of Information
Interpretability
Ease of Understanding
Concise Representation
Consistent Representation
Ease of Access
Access Security

Phase I
Phase II
Phase III

Quality Attributes

Sample IQ Gap Analysis

Analysis

The results of each phase are immediately usable, insofar as they provide feedback to managers regarding quality considerations at each step in the product development cycle. More value can then be found in conducting a gap analysis by comparing the assessments of the team leaders/development managers, IS team members and external customers.

For each of the quality attributes measured we can calculate the difference between how we feel quality was at the time of development, how the IS department feels about the quality of the product as it is used, and most importantly, how our customers perceive the quality of the product. If there is a significant gap for any of the attributes, it can lead to an exploratory or root-cause analysis to determine the source of the problem.