

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## FOR MEMBERS

## OVERVIEW

# Business Requirements Tracking Traceability

by Bank of America

**Vice President Barbara DeVries explains how Bank of America is reworking its project management system to reduce project failures, preserve historical project requirements and better communicate across the pool of participants.**

**BANK OF AMERICA** is one of the world's largest financial institution and is among the world's leading wealth management companies, with operations in more than 40 countries

Barbara DeVries, Vice President, MDMI Document Management Requirements, Center of Excellence at Bank of America. DeVries has worked for more than 20 years in banking and financial services. She is a project management professional who holds software development and networking certifications and is a practicing project manager, business analyst and change manager.

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*“It quickly becomes highly complex to try and tie all these things together.” – Barbara DeVries, on the critical elements of a traceability matrix.*

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A requirements traceability matrix provides one-for-one mapping between the elements of the projects from the beginning to the end of the process to ensure that the implemented solution meets the business partners' needs and requirements and that each element of the solution is driven by a requirement.

“What we find is that some of the traditional ways that requirements have been captured are just itemized bullets ... and they seem somewhat disjoint... By elaborating them through use cases and writing user stories in collaboration with our business partners, it better shows the relationship and the ‘why’ of what we are doing and what we are requesting for a solution. And we find this is critical for our technology partners to understand that motivation in order to produce a satisfactory result.”

They are moving away from the high- and low-level design documents phases toward business and technology use cases that can eliminate the need for HLD and LLD.

In the past, requirements traceability was optional at Bank of America. One of root causes of project failure is missing or incomplete requirements, so they set up a Center of Excellence for business requirements to improve requirements gathering and tracing. The incidents of missing requirements have dropped significantly.

Historically, this work has been a manual process, so there has not been an overall inventory or manual of requirements, which means they can't be reused and some history and requirements detail can be lost. Part of the objective of evolving the system is to build inventory and reusability.

They realigned the critical elements of their traceability matrix, to tie each requirement to use cases. This simplifies traceability and allows them to deliver a better requirements concept for business and technology partners, and assures improved alignment of requirements end to end.

In the past, the process involved many relationships, and that was difficult to manage in terms of flow. They are now aligning use cases to make sure each process step is covered in those use cases and business stories. This has enabled them to identify requirements not specified through original iteration, because they are now caught when they do requirements tracing while still in the business requirements phase. For testing and quality assurance partners, they align use cases with test scripts which is one way they can identify and ensure testing coverage. They use a policy and procedures portal to make information widely available.

Documents can now be reused in subsequent projects to accelerate the requirements process.



The executive summary above was written by staff from watching the presentation and many other ideas were presented. Members may watch the full presentation if wished by logging in.