

SigmaSense

Accelerating Business Improvement Projects



Grouputer SigmaSense is the first collaborative, end-to-end software solution for implementing Six Sigma and process improvement projects. SigmaSense equips project leaders with structured tools and techniques to properly implement projects – with reduced cycle time, improved team productivity and greater management and staff buy-in.





Overview

Since the 1990's Groupware electronic meeting technology has been speeding up process improvement project cycle time by as much as four times – and boosting productivity by up to 200 percent. At the same time meeting duration has been shortened as much as 56 percent.

A new customized program, SigmaSense, comprising a suite of Internet-delivered tools is the first program to enable online team collaboration in structured meetings that implement the DMAIC methodology. Team members work together in an interactive environment to analyze problems, brainstorm, share statistical tools and undertake group process mapping.

SigmaSense's best-practice DMAIC and process improvement meeting methodologies allow facilitators to lead teams through a structured set of steps that describe and automate the implementation of each activity.

Local and global team members use the interactive, automated meetings to implement projects faster, with repeatability, and at lower cost.

Complex methodologies, such as FMEA and CTQ have become much easier to use because of SigmaSense's automation. Navigational help is always "at the fingertips", and process-thinking prompts and checklists enhance critical thinking. Consequently, facilitators require little or no training to competently use SigmaSense. SigmaSense manages Voice of the Customer including providing the online Survey tools for qualitative and quantitative questionnaires.

Key Benefits

- Slashes project cycle times by up to 91 percent²
- Fosters management participation and buy-in
- Equips Green Belts with skills to quickly manage project teams
- Enhances participation of global teams and overcomes cultural barriers
- Drives up team member recruitment





Where Do Six Sigma Projects Fail?

While Six Sigma offers a sophisticated and effective approach to business improvement, common shortcomings in the identification, design and execution of projects have emerged. The most often cited problems include:

- Lack of internal skills to deploy and sustain projects
- Long project cycle times which erode project savings
- Lack of buy-in to projects by front-line employees and managers
- Insufficiently structured methodology for the implementation of DMAIC
- Heavy training investment and delayed “readiness” by Green belts
- Compromised meeting productivity caused by manual meeting tools, such as flipcharts
- Inefficiency in decision making and document revisions as a result of serial email



Improving Six Sigma Results

Shorter project cycle times

Pressure to complete projects in shorter and shorter timeframes without reducing project effectiveness is cited as the biggest barrier to successful Six Sigma project implementation. The technology on which SigmaSense has been developed is proven to accelerate process improvement project completion by as much as four times and increase productivity by up to 200 percent while cutting meeting time by up to 56 percent.²

More participation from front-line managers and staff

Non-Belt participation is more forthcoming if meetings are consistently short and effective. Time is often the most difficult commodity to acquire from a leadership team, so it helps to keep planning meetings as brief as possible.

A SigmaSense meeting will accomplish in a manager’s typical 30 or 60 minute time slot, as much as would be accomplished in twice the time.

Greater buy-in and commitment

With shorter project cycle time thanks to briefer, effective meetings, more people can engage in problem solving. SigmaSense facilitates idea sharing through brainstorming, decision making and action planning. Larger numbers of ideas contributed from a broader range of sources will result in better solutions – plus greater commitment to improvement strategies and immediate implementation of action items.

Action Learning techniques make Belt training faster

With SigmaSense’s structured methodologies, running meetings follows a “learning-by-doing” approach. There is no longer a need to memorize how to use the many tools employed in Six Sigma projects. Focus can be directed onto the special requirements involved in facilitating team performance. Released from the need to

think about the next step in the methodology, Belts rapidly become competent in facilitating complex meetings with enhanced critical thinking.

Collaboration technology empowers team members

Online collaboration tools typically emphasize meeting productivity as a goal. Look further. What dramatically empowers teams and improves team effectiveness are the positive effects gained from sharing ideas in a collaborative work space. Decision making is accelerated through brainstorming, prioritizing and action planning, all of which are widely incorporated into SigmaSense tools; and without a flip chart or word processing tool in sight. The more ideas generated, the greater the likelihood of producing high-quality solutions.



Use a structured methodology

In a recent survey 33 percent of respondents blamed “lack of a structured methodology” for shortfalls in Six Sigma projects.³ SigmaSense integrates online collaboration with a structured Six Sigma methodology to achieve accelerated project cycle time and high levels of management buy-in. High-performing teams with a systematic, structured methodology and the right collaboration tools have been found to reduce project cycle time by as much as 91%.⁴

Productivity tools for Belts

The integrated tools and processes in SigmaSense provide leadership support to Belts. Why? Belts are required to demonstrate high levels of competence in three diverse areas – statistical analysis, team and stakeholder management and meeting facilitation. Each of these draws on separate skill sets, and so increases the complexity of facilitating successful Six Sigma projects.

When equipped with automated methodologies for each DMAIC tool, group statistical tools, a facilitation “script”, a roadmap and formatted Report, new Green Belt project leaders quickly become self-sufficient. Productivity increases follow, and projects are delivered in shorter cycle times.



Global reach and cultural barriers

Managing a multicultural, transglobal project team presents specific challenges to team leaders. There are crosscultural issues which discourage members from contributing their knowledge during audio-only conferences. Such factors compromise outcomes, particularly where Belts are relying on local team members’ skills and knowledge to identify process improvements. While verbal input may be difficult, brainstorming using the Discuss “intelligent chat” tool elicits rich ideas from culturally reticent team members.

Who Benefits from SigmaSense?

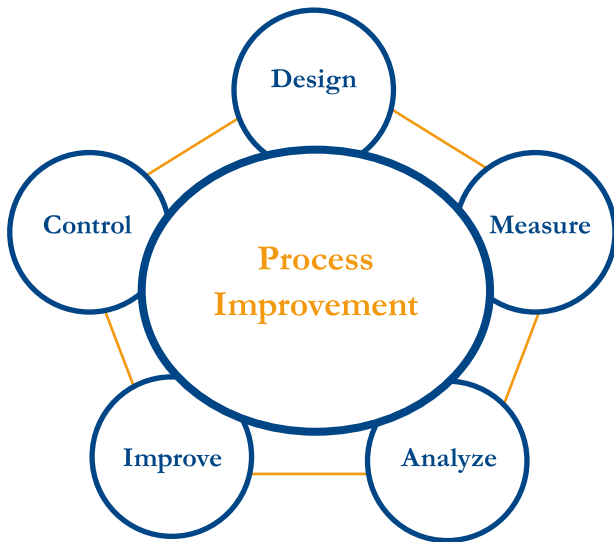
- Time-poor project teams able to accelerate project cycle time
- Global and local collaborative and multicultural teams
- Black Belts seeking buy-in from line managers and staff
- Green Belt project leaders empowered with automated methodologies
- Staff involved in shorter projects
- Stakeholders engaged in decision making
- Line managers involved in shorter meetings
- Customers who benefit from continuous improvement projects

SigmaSense Tool Set

SigmaSense comprises collaborative team meeting processes and statistical and process mapping tools for each phase of DMAIC and Process Improvement programs.

SigmaSense provides an interactive, virtual work space for team meetings that stimulates critical thinking and problem solving while allowing facilitators to focus on teamwork.

Use SigmaSense with SigmaFlow Mapper for all your statistical and process mapping requirements.



Improvement Charter	Brainstorming	Communications Plan
Stakeholder Analysis	Process Mapping	Plan, Do, Study, Act
Voice of the Customer	Statistical Tools	Risk Management
Critical to Quality	Affinity Tree	RASCI
SIPOC	Force Field Analysis	Team Performance Improvement
Benchmarking	Cause & Effect Analysis	Control Plans
FMEA	Surveys	Problem Solving
Data Collection Plan	5 Whys	
	Issues, Causes, Consequences	

SigmaSense Features & Benefits

Features

- Group-enabled collaboration
- Over 20 collaborative DMAIC & process improvement team meeting methodologies
- Suitable for face-to-face and remote meetings or combinations of both
- Offers real time/facilitated (synchronous) and anytime/self-guided (asynchronous) meetings
- “Learning-by-doing” model for training and meeting support
- Share your favorite statistical and process mapping tools during meetings
- Formatted and custom reports on-demand
- Available as a hosted service and perpetual license
- Requires only a web browser
- Additional features for Application Sharing, Document Viewing, Discussions, Web tours and Surveys
- Optional add-in program, SigmaFlow Mapper provides process mapping and a suite of statistical tools in easy Excel formats

Benefits

- Accelerates decision making and critical thinking
- Promotes high-performance teams
- Standardized implementation for all projects
- Eliminates paperwork, minute writing
- Requires minimal facilitator training
- No training required for team members
- Replaces whiteboards, stickies, minute taking, serial email
- Engages more people in problem solving, requirements gathering, improvement plans
- Preserves organizational memory
- Audit trail of idea creation and decision making



If you would like more information or to contact us at:

Grouputer

Grouputer Pty. Ltd

119 Willoughby Road
Crows Nest. NSW 2065

Tel: +61 2 9965 3778

Email: enquiries@grouputer.com

Web: <http://www.grouputer.com>

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