



Boeing Taps Its Managers Worldwide

To Enhance Business Decision Making



The Company:

A US-based aerospace leader.

The Goal:

Rapidly secure feedback from 8,000 managers on ways to improve decision support.

The Results:

A rapidly executed idea campaign yields 35% participation and new ideas on making smarter business decisions.

A unit of The Boeing Co., Boeing Integrated Defense Systems (IDS) provides a diverse range of systems solutions in areas such as defense and space systems, networking systems, and innovative technologies. While this combination of scale and diversity is both a measure of—and a reason for—Boeing IDS's success in the aerospace and defense business, it also poses challenges to the efficient operation of the company.

Constant quest for improvement

Whatever their function or line of business, it's strategically essential for Boeing IDS employees at

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*- Rob Williams Senior Manager
Innovation & Integration Boeing IDS*

all levels to access the best possible information and analysis to make business decisions.

However, in companies as large, diverse and decentralized as Boeing, simply finding the knowledge, data, tool or best practice to support a business decision can be a major challenge. Though the challenge wasn't new, the company saw the chance to apply an innovative approach to address it, an effort spearheaded by the company's Analysis, Modeling, Simulation and Experimentation (AMSE) organization.

As part of its broader function of providing analytical and experimentation support to Boeing IDS and its customers, AMSE works to ensure that the most effective modeling and simulation tools and processes are available. To this end, they hold an annual series of conferences to solicit needs from various communities across Boeing.

This year, in preparation for these conferences, AMSE struck upon an innovative and efficient idea. Prior to the conferences, it would gather a list of decision-support needs from managers across all of Boeing IDS—not just technical, but HR, finance and other line-of-business functions. AMSE would then conduct a rigorous analysis to identify opportunities to leverage modeling and simulation techniques to improve the quality of decision-making in IDS.

However, realizing this vision required AMSE to solicit inputs on decision support needs from the roughly 8,000 executives and managers spread across all of Boeing IDS, and to do so within a very short timeframe. Having successfully used Imaginatik's Idea Central for several other projects within IDS, AMSE saw Idea Central as the most effective answer to its challenge. With the conferences fast approaching, AMSE ran a three-week ideation event, known as Decision Makers. Of the 8,000 managers invited

to the event, 2,908—or more than 35 percent—participated from all parts of IDS, yielding more than 300 ideas and related collaborative feedback.

Achieving results

As it was designed to do, the Decision Makers event and subsequent analysis yielded insights into the needs that managers have as they struggle to make the best possible decisions. AMSE is now working to develop tools and processes that will satisfy those needs.

While Idea Central played a crucial role in the Decision Makers campaign by reaching out to large numbers of employees rapidly and efficiently, its benefits clearly extend beyond, notes Rob Williams, AMSE's Senior Manager, Innovation & Integration. "The work we've done with Idea Central enables us to reach broadly and deeply into our diverse enterprise to harvest new business and process improvement ideas, and make stronger cases to our executive leadership to pursue and invest in growth and productivity opportunities. The breadth and objectivity of ideas and opinions we achieved through Idea Central make it an important tool to enable innovation within Boeing IDS."