

“Serena Dimensions RM has given us the ability to globally collaborate as a project team during the business analysis phase. With RM, we are able to manage requirements, in an agile fashion, quickly responding to the business’ needs.

Furthermore, as Serena RM provides full traceability, we quickly understand the impact of changing requirements allowing us to behave in a truly agile fashion. But the real icing on the cake is that RM publishes CSM compliant requirements documentation...a huge time savings!”

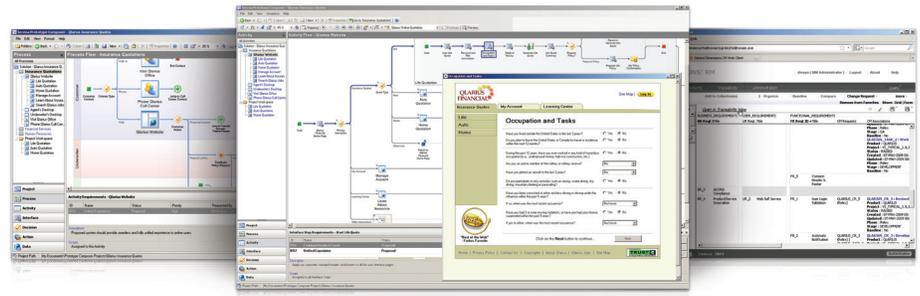
—Senior Manager, Data Acquisition
International Pharmaceutical
company

DIMENSIONS RM

The Proven Way to Accelerate Development

Many software problems arise from shortcomings in the ways that people acquire, document, agree on, and modify the product’s requirements. Typical problem areas include informal information gathering, implied functionality, inadequately defined requirements, and a casual change process.

Most people wouldn’t ask a construction contractor to build a custom \$300,000 house without extensively discussing their needs and desires and refining the details progressively. Homebuyers also understand that making changes carries a price tag. However, people blithely gloss over the corresponding issues when it comes to software development. The widely quoted CHAOS reports from The Standish Group relate the consequences of casual approaches to requirements engineering. Year after year, lack of user input, incomplete requirements, and changing requirements are the major reasons why so many information technology projects fail to deliver all of their planned functionality on schedule and within budget.



Serena Dimensions RM is a web application to improve the definition and management of requirements across the product lifecycle to ensure visibility from initial ideas to deliverables as well as cost-effective on-time delivery.

ACCOMMODATING ALL STAKEHOLDERS

Nowhere do the interests of all stakeholders intersect more than in the requirements definition process. In a software or system development project, the stakeholders can include end-users, customers acquiring the product, requirements analysts, project managers, developers, testers, regulators and auditors, manufacturing staff, sales and marketing, and field support or help desk staff.

Handled well, this intersection can lead to exciting products, delighted customers, and fulfilled developers. Handled poorly, it is the source of misunderstanding, frustration, and friction that undermine the product's quality and business value.

Requirements are the foundation for all software development. They form the backbone for release planning and project management activities. Therefore, all stakeholders must be committed to following an effective requirements process.

Dimensions RM accommodates the needs of all stakeholders with support for:

- Requirements definition (eliciting, analyzing, specifying, and validating requirements)
- Requirements management (managing and tracking requirements through development)

AVOIDING THE IMPACT OF POOR REQUIREMENTS

Requirements shortcomings cause no end of headaches for software projects. For example, creeping requirements contribute to schedule and budget overruns, and rework consumes additional development costs.

Now, change is going to happen. Requirements change because initial elicitation activities are imperfect, because business needs evolve, and because customer expectations change once they see the product beginning to take shape. Project plans and commitments therefore need to anticipate change, rather than expecting that an initial stage of gathering requirements is all that's needed. Requirements creep, though, is the uncontrolled growth of requirements well beyond the original scope boundary.

The way in which requirements changes are incorporated into the product can influence quality. No matter where or when a change might be proposed, it is useful and necessary to follow the links in the traceability chain to see the impact of each proposed change. Dimensions RM enables you to store this traceability data, greatly facilitating and simplifying impact analysis.

Dimensions RM simplifies the management and organization of requirements, with both visual and textual representation and provides powerful collaboration capabilities to help prioritize, validate and secure the necessary approvals to eliminate misunderstandings that so often lead to scope creep.

COLLABORATION

In virtually any enterprise project, several types of requirements will come from multiple sources – customer and end user requirements, design-models from development, test procedures from QA, defects from customer service, and change requests. Dimensions RM facilitates and organizes input from all relevant functional areas and stakeholders on a global basis. Once requirements have been captured into Dimensions RM, any stakeholder with appropriate access rights can view and edit the requirements. Users can discuss requirements, submit change requests, and create polls querying the user community about the requirements. This information is stored within Dimensions RM so that the history and the rationale behind decisions are preserved.

FAMILIARITY AND USABILITY

All projects involve different types of information that must be classified and linked appropriately. These include stakeholder and system requirements, designs, tests, schedules, costs, changes, defects, and more. The Dimensions RM repository facilitates information classification, and then links classes together to define logical relationships. Users can graphically organize classes and relationships into a project. Requirements information can also be organized into different categories such as usability or security and reused in many different documents or baselines of requirements.

Once data is captured into the Dimensions RM repository, users can then begin to track that data across development lifecycles, projects, and even organizations. This traceability gives users the power to answer key questions, like: What marketing requirements have no product requirements associated with them?

- What functions in the design are not justified by customer requirements and should be eliminated?
- What is the test coverage of requirements and what is the current test status?
- What software applications and modules need modifications?
- What is the impact of changes?

With visual impact analysis for the classification and linkage among requirements, RM users can also take advantage of powerful query and reporting features in the product for higher-level analysis.

ABOUT SERENA

Serena Software, the Change Governance leader, helps more than 15,000 organizations around the world—including 96 of the Fortune 100 and 90 of the Global 100—turn change into a business advantage. Serena is head-quartered in Redwood City, California, and has offices throughout the U.S., Europe, and Asia Pacific.

CONTACT

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FLEXIBILITY AND INTEGRATION

The inherent flexibility of Dimensions RM is shown in our customers' use of the product for everything from managing software requirements, embedded systems, and even IT infrastructure changes.

Through bi-directional integration with Prototype Composer, it combines requirements elicitation and planning using prototyping and modeling to visualize the requirements to gain clear & concise agreement.

Integration with Dimensions CM extends both the management and tracking of requirements through the applications and systems development lifecycle, providing end to end traceability from inception to deployment.

Dimensions RM also tightly integrates with HP Quality Center to ensure complete traceability from requirements to test, ensuring requirements and test case data are synchronized with QA activities.