



How ISO 9001:2015 helped Vortex Conceils align their QMS with their business plan, giving clarity on strategic goals

"We now have more focus on what we need to do. Our QMS is now even more aligned with the business plan and that's tremendous gain for Vortex"

Maxime Clerk,
Senior Vice-President of Communications

Vortex Conceils' objectives:

- Be one of the first organizations in Canada to achieve the certification
- Experience first-hand the various steps leading to the certification in order to better serve its clients in achieving their own ISO 9001:2015 certification
- Maintain its credibility and reputation as an expert
- Align the QMS with the strategic plan

How Vortex Conceils benefitted:

- Improved governance
- Better service to customers
- Better understanding of priorities

Client background

Vortex is a Canadian consulting firm, located in Montreal and Quebec City, with 20 years of experience in business process management (BPM). They offer a wide range of services in standardization, optimization and process management to help businesses achieve their goals.

This includes delivery of Lean Six Sigma improvement projects, training, and implementation of internationally recognized standards such as ISO 9001 and by handling quality function deployment and management.

As a consultancy firm, it was crucial for Vortex to achieve ISO 9001 certification soon after the publication of the final version of the standard to not only reap the benefits for themselves, but also to legitimize their position as a market leader and win new business. Maxime Clerik, VP of Communications at Vortex explains, "It was one of our strategic goals to be amongst the first companies in North America achieving certification".

Implementation

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For over a year before the final standard was published the team at Vortex made sure they kept up to date with the evolution of the new version of ISO 9001 throughout the standard development process. "As a consulting firm that helps other companies earn ISO certification and implement quality management systems, it was a strategic goal of ours to achieve our own ISO certification," said Maxime Clerik, SVP,

Communications, Vortex. "We planned for this well in advance of the standard's final release and worked diligently to align our management system to the new requirements."

Vortex foresaw there would be new requirements in the standard around the areas of strategic planning and risk management and these would involve some specific focus. Just before the final version of ISO 9001 was released Vortex took the opportunity to align their quality management system to the Final Draft International Standard (FDIS) version of ISO 9001. This was invaluable both in terms of preparation and readiness for certification to the final standard which they achieved in October 2015.

During the preparation to transition to the new version of the standard Vortex worked closely with BSI, both their local Canadian office and the HQ in the UK.

The benefits

Like other organizations, which have transitioned to the new version of the standard, there have been multiple benefits for Vortex according to Mr. Clerik, although it's still a bit too early he admits to see the full return on investment (ROI).

On a day to day basis it has helped them to deliver a better service to clients and improve their operations. There is now better governance, a better customer experience, and it has helped Vortex to improve on how they develop new markets

As a result of carrying out a risk management exercise and a strategic planning review, the team at Vortex now have greater clarity on their

objectives and priorities for the future. "Now we are well aligned with our business plan and strategic growth options" says Clerik. This has helped give them more focus on what they need to do to take the business in the direction that they want. It has also helped them to determine the success factors that need to be measured to drive Vortex towards sustainable growth in the coming years. As all employees were fully involved in this process, they now better understand the key metrics of the business and how they contribute to them.

Words of advice

"Planning ahead is key", explains Mr. Clerik, "Use this as a moment to fully leverage your QMS and make sure it's fully aligned with your business plan and strategic plan. It's not just a piece of paper and it will help you in so many ways". This approach has improved the framework in which Vortex manage its operations. The business is run in a more effective way where objectives are clearer and the customer experience has been improved.

His other piece of advice is to make sure top managers are fully involved in the transition process from the start. He believes they should be seen as the "promoters" and the "ambassadors" for the new standard.

In summary, Mr. Clerik concludes that the new version of ISO 9001 is a great opportunity for all organizations to improve. "We already had a really good QMS, but this has been complemented by the requirements of the new standard".

Start your transition to the new standards and find out how BSI can help your business make excellence a habit.

Call: **800-862-6752**
bsigroup.com/isorevisions



BSI Group Canada Inc.
Toronto
6205B Airport Road, Suite 414
Mississauga, Ontario
L4V 1E3
Canada
Tel: 1 800 862 6752
Fax: 1 416 620 9911
inquiry.canada@bsigroup.com
www.bsigroup.ca
www.bsigroup.ca/fr

Montréal
1, Place Ville Marie, Suite 2001
Montréal, QC H3B 2C4
Canada
Tel: 1 800 862 6752
Fax: 1 416 620 9911
inquiry.canada@bsigroup.com
www.bsigroup.ca
www.bsigroup.ca/fr

Ottawa
515 Legget Drive, Suite 110
Ottawa, Ontario K2K 3G4
Canada
Tel: 1 800 862 6752
Fax: 1 416 620 9911
inquiry.canada@bsigroup.com
www.bsigroup.ca
www.bsigroup.ca/fr



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