



Telecom Directions, LLC – Institutional History and Capacity

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Founding and Development

Telecom Directions LLC (Telecom Directions) was founded in 1987 as Baird & Associates by Henry Baird. At that time the company was a sole proprietorship with the mission of improving communications within organizations by delivering independent, customized advisory services that promoted the informed and intelligent use of technology. These consultative services were technical in nature and focused on the design and installation of business communications systems, largely involving telephony products and services.

By 1996 however, the work of the company had evolved to include greater emphasis on telecommunications planning on a strategic level, supported by custom analysis and research. By this time the firm's clients included strategic planning groups within AT&T, IBM (ROLM Division) and Fujitsu, as well as the facilities development group for the U.S. Navy Submarine Base in Bangor, Washington. Such continued emphasis on telecommunications-related development and planning made it advisable to restructure the firm as a Limited Liability Company and assume the new name of Telecom Directions, LLC in 1996.

Telecom Directions is licensed by the State of Washington and the City of Seattle under the State's Unified Business ID# 602342429. The firm is listed on both Dun & Bradstreet (D&B 178417374), as well as the U.S. Government's Central Contractor Registration (CCR) database (TIN# 010804050).

Subsequent client work has involved a combination of custom research and analysis, related largely to communications planning and market conditions. Work performed for a client in 1998 involved an assessment of plans for the establishment of terrestrial and marine fiber optic routes to serve North America, South America, Europe, and China. This assessment included planning and development of the Trans Asia Europe fiber optic cable. In 2001, Telecom Directions was retained by Illuminet, now VeriSign, to analyze regulatory tariffs related to data channel signaling in support of the public switched telephone network in the United States.

As a result of other custom "boutique" client engagements relating mostly to market research for innovative software applications, Telecom Directions under Henry Baird has become known within the ICT community in the United States as a resourceful and knowledgeable source of information and insight relating to telecommunications systems and services, as well as public network infrastructure.

Process Management

Telecom Directions employs a seven-step approach for its client work that varies only slightly according to individual project circumstances:

- Determine Project Objectives
- Field Suitable Team
- Develop High Level Project Plan
- Execute Coordinated Project Tasks
- Produce Deliverables
- Confirm Suitability of Delivered Findings
- Deliver Approved Findings as Written Report

Henry Baird serves as the project manager for the work performed by Telecom Directions. In this role he develops the final project plan (following an initial kickoff meeting with client) and manages the execution of project tasks to ensure that the project stays within its assigned time frame. He also serves in a leadership capacity to provide guidance to the project team. Guidance delivered in this fashion helps ensure that work products remain in conformance with project objectives.

Staffing

As Telecom Directions has evolved, Henry Baird has adopted a project staffing procedure based on his 25-year long association with the telecommunications industry. Namely, after determining project objectives (prior to submitting a proposal for the work) he identifies individuals who possess the necessary expertise for the project work.

His primary source for project expertise is his fellow members in the Society of Telecommunications Consultants, an international association of independent information and communication technology professionals. Secondary sources of project talent include contacts he has made through his activity as a writer of trade publication articles, and through contacts made within the telecom equipment and services vendor community. Telecom Directions has no full-time employees.

Telecom Directions requires members of its project teams to sign a services agreement that delineates project roles and responsibilities. Telecom Directions also assumes all legal responsibilities for project fulfillment and completion. Team members are compensated directly by Telecom Directions as independent contractors, and reports their income tax purposes using Internal Revenue Service form 1099 MISC.

Telecom Directions has been using this project staffing model since 2001 and has refined it to work extremely well in conjunction with its process management scheme, as described above.

Resources

Telecom Directions has remained financially solvent throughout its history and is backed by three business lines of credit and a 21-year business banking relationship with the Bank of America.

The company delivers its work products using an office network of three personal computers, led by a main computer running a Microsoft Windows operating system. Henry Baird and his team members use

laptop personal computers while traveling. This team's productivity network is equipped with most of the business software applications in the Microsoft Office 2007 family of products.

Project communication among team members is supported by the Spontania Web Conference application, delivered by Dialcom Networks. This web conference application enables project team members to collaborate and share project documents anywhere in the world with a broadband Internet connection and will help eliminate project delays caused by travel schedules or time zone differences.

Quality Management

Telecom Directions ensures maintenance of a specific set of work performance criteria by utilizing an adaptation of the ISO 9001 2008 Standard, which applies well to its organizational structure. Telecom Directions' adaptation of this standard contains the essential elements of developing and documenting its quality management system and then demonstrating its application on a consistent basis by ensuring that client objectives are identified and addressed. The responsibility and authority of quality management rests with Henry Baird. Project team members are briefed on the standard as it will be applied to current work prior to each project.

Because Telecom Directions utilizes a team building approach that engages project-suitable expertise, it has no formal training program aside from project-specific briefings. As the firm's principal, however, Henry Baird actively pursues training by attending a minimum of three professional conferences each year, two of which are oriented exclusively to telecommunications consultants, as well as more formal training in current technologies, which he schedules at a minimum of one session every two years. Recent certified training sessions have covered metropolitan wireless networks, construction management, and convergence technology.