



Sound Transit Resolves Complex Compliance Requirements with AgilePoint



The Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority is a metropolitan public transit agency serving the greater Seattle, Washington area. It operates light rail, commuter rail, and express bus services, as well as a regional fare card system.

Federal funding regulations require that Sound Transit adhere to a comprehensive certification process. In fact, about 5,000 certifiable items are required for each of the expansion phases of the Sound Transit system that cover initial to final design as well as construction and ongoing operations. All exceptions must be mitigated and documented, and the auditing process must provide representative documents to ensure overall compliance.

Challenge & Objective

Sound Transit faced both organizational and technical challenges with this certification process. Its design and construction teams did not communicate and used different software documentation tools. The volume of documentation limited the auditors' ability to find and evaluate appropriate documents to ensure compliance. Furthermore, Sound Transit's project size ballooned from about \$3 billion to more than \$50 billion, effectively preventing the Authority's preexisting documentation and workflow capabilities from meeting the needs of the expanded initiative.

Solution

Sound Transit called in OTB Solutions, a professional services firm that specializes in application development for rapid transit organizations. OTB then recommended the low-code automation platform AgilePoint to design new business processes, create metadata, implement four interrelated applications, and enhance applications based on ongoing needs.

Increasing Transparency and Visibility

Previously, Sound Transit used email, spreadsheets, a shared network drive and Microsoft SharePoint. "The software was siloed," explained Cristina Fonseca, senior system safety specialist for Sound Transit. "The construction team didn't know what

the design team was doing or what kind of documentation was being provided." At the same time, auditors had a difficult time finding the documents they required.

AgilePoint-based applications removed those silos and increased end-to-end visibility for all parties. "What designers mention during the final design phase in AgilePoint goes into the construction phase and the construction team can see the information and documentation provided in the design phase," Fonseca continued. "At any phase of the project the project team can now see what kind of documentation has been provided for each certifiable item in AgilePoint."



Perhaps the most important value-add that a low-code automation platform like AgilePoint provides is the ability to update applications on a continual basis. "If we have something we want to change, it's a flexible tool."

Cristina Fonseca
Senior System Safety Specialist at Sound Transit

The flexibility also makes it straightforward to take an existing AgilePoint application and tweak it to meet the needs of different departments.

The AgilePoint-based applications also facilitate the work of the auditors. "Auditors normally look at a sample of the total items we're certifying," Fonseca said. "AgilePoint gives them IDs and provides access through AgilePoint where auditors can look up documents based upon IDs."

Complementing Custom Coding

Because hand-coding takes so much time, low-code tools are especially popular with resource-constrained enterprise application development teams. However, OTB Solutions could provide coding expertise as their consultants have experience in tools like K2 and TIBCO that require hand-coding. Yet, AgilePoint was the tool of choice. "Code is not the best way to manage processes, with AgilePoint we can avoid rework and mitigate failed audits," said Dick Federle, senior manager at OTB Solutions. AgilePoint enabled OTB to be more responsive to evolving customer needs, thus making them a more valuable business partner for Sound Transit.

AgilePoint's process-centric orientation enabled OTB Solutions' application design to focus on business processes that cut across individual tasks within individual departments. The process centricity was most helpful because AgilePoint had built integration capabilities into its platform.



"AgilePoint is well-suited for tech-savvy business process people. It abstracts APIs to support them so no coding skills are required. However, when Sound Transit needs new or augmented functionality, OTB Solutions had no trouble addressing the requirements with AgilePoint's extension framework. AgilePoint is enterprise ready at scale."

Dick Federle
Senior Manager at OTB Solutions

Business Outcomes

When Sound Transit needed updates to existing applications or the development of new applications all together, OTB Solutions leveraged AgilePoint to facilitate the reuse and extension of existing application components to accelerate the development of new applications.

Reuse not only reduced the cost and time requirements for the new applications, but also facilitated consistent user interface and process behavior across applications. That consistency promoted further collaboration across organizational silos. The end result was better business outcomes across the breadth of Sound Transit's capital projects and by extension, better and safer services for the citizens it serves.



"With the Safety and Security Information Management System (SSIMS) implemented with AgilePoint, it allows us to focus where we need to: risk management, safety analysis and security assessments."

BEFORE

Most of our time was taken up with administrative tasks, large spreadsheets, formatting duties, and revision tracking. In addition, the emailing of large spreadsheets back and forth, often led to lost information.

AFTER

Now Sound Transit has a systematic, quantifiable and auditable process, including risk management, safety and security certification documents.

"The process is vastly more efficient now, allowing us to focus more on the risk factors rather than specification conformance and quality control."

Ameed Shaban
System Safety & Assurance Supervisor Safety & Quality Assurance Division at Sound Transit

