Introduction

Annual goals are based on objectives jointly developed by America's Job Link Alliance–Technical Support (AJLA–TS) and its Customers. The annual Work Plan Status is a retrospective of the fiscal year from October 1, 2018, through September 30, 2019. In this report, we review our goals and the steps we took to achieve them. Goals are divided into those for AJLA–TS as a business and for AJLA–TS products.

Business Goals

Goal 1

Improve our technology and operational processes to provide the most secure solutions possible by adhering to 90% of NIST moderate standards by December 31, 2020.

Results

1. AJLA–TS implemented several changes to the infrastructure.

    a. In order to meet increasing regulatory requirements for compliance, archiving, data management, and security, AJLA–TS moved the production data center to a SOC 2 Type II Data Center. Complete September 24, 2018.

    b. To improve security and availability, reduce licensing costs, and simplify administration and resource management processes, two existing domains were consolidated into one domain. Complete October 16, 2018.

    c. To meet the increased network and security needs of our organization. AJLA–TS restructured its existing network to take advantage of multiple subnets and VLANs. Complete March 28, 2019.

2. AJLA–TS continues to build a more robust security footprint.

    a. AJLA–TS is contracting with Denim Group to execute application scans prior to every code release in addition to annual application scans, code review, and penetration tests.

    b. Kansas Office of Information Technology Services (OITS) continues to provide network monitoring on a 24×7×365 basis.

    c.   Kansas OITS continues to perform network vulnerability scans monthly. Remediation is performed by AJLA–TS staff.

    d.   The AJLA–TS Governance and Risk Compliance Council continues to meet weekly to review and update policies, procedures, and plans, increase our alliance with NIST 800-53 Rev 4 Moderate controls, and address any security questions that arise.

Goal

Improve customer service and satisfaction survey results by 20% in PY19 so that customers feel heard, understood, and valued.

Results

1.   Introduced quarterly customer surveys to determine overall customer service.

- A baseline survey was sent was distributed October 1–November 1, 2018, with 67 responses. Questions were then adjusted so they could be better compared from quarter to quarter. We experienced a high volume of responses in the Jan–Mar survey, as we encouraged states to distribute the survey more widely. In following surveys, we encouraged just Steering Committee members and users familiar with AJLA–TS to take the survey.
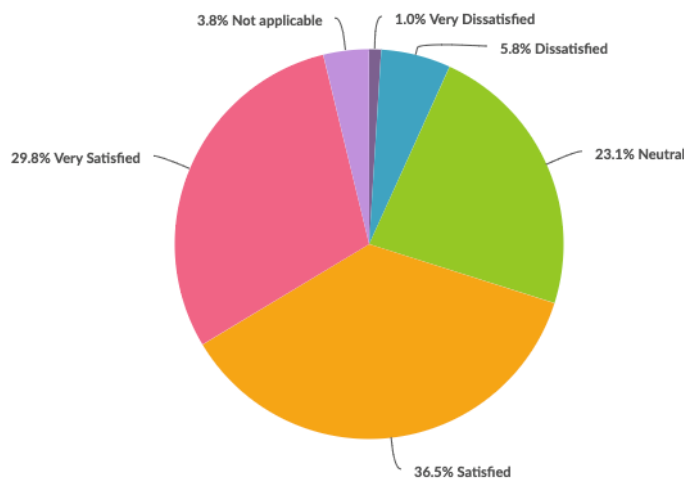
Overall, how satisfied are you with AJLA– TS?
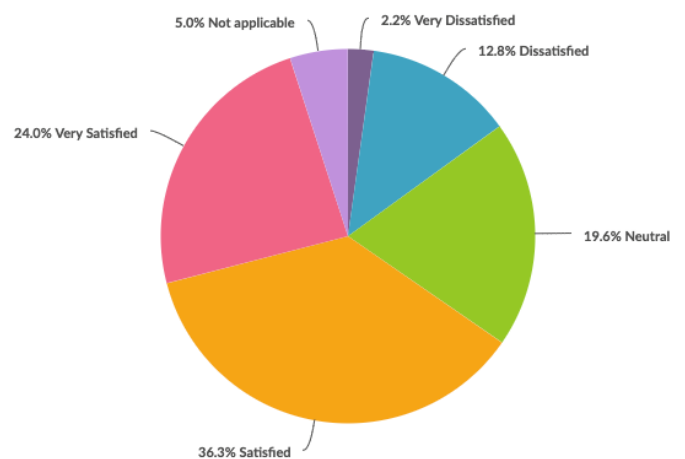

Figure 1. Oct-Dec. N = 104.
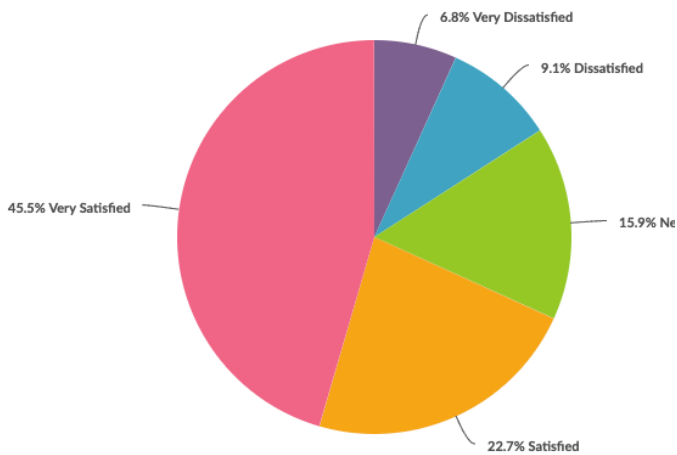
Figure 2. Jan-Mar. N = 179.
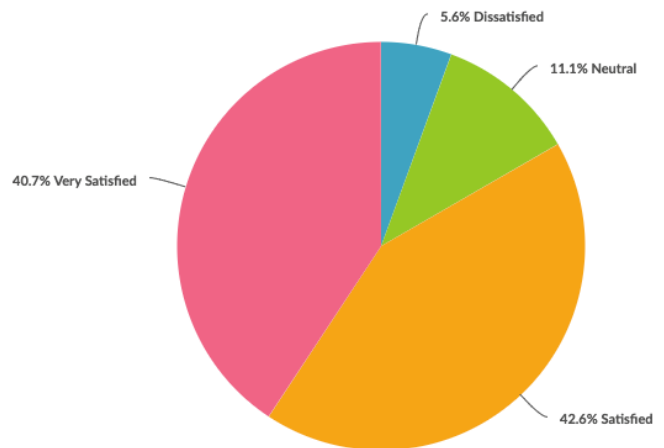
Figure 3. Apr-June. *N* = 44.

Figure 4. Apr-June. *N* = 54.

2. Introduced a survey on Redmine tickets so that customers can comment on their satisfaction with each ticket after release.

3. Hired 2 full time UX/UI designers to encourage a focus in our products on end user satisfaction.

4. Interviewed job seekers, employers, and staff in four states (AR, KS, VT, and OK) in 2019 about their experiences with AJL. The balance of the state visits will take place in 2020.

   - Introduced the industry-standard System Usability Scale tool to KS, VT, and OK during the user experience visits to begin establishing baseline customer satisfaction with legacy AJL so that we can compare satisfaction against RapidStorm deployment.

5. Demonstrated the redesign of AJL pages in RapidStorm based on user feedback, competitor analysis, and UI/UX best practices, continuing to modify design based on stakeholder feedback.

6. Demonstrated wireframes for new functionality to integrate into RapidStorm once it is deployed.

7. Continued Monthly Design Meetings for AJL, CertLink, and Reporting as an opportunity for Steering Committee members and stakeholders to speak with AJLA–TS staff about the future of the products.

Product Goals

America's JobLink

Deliver RapidStorm to production by August 30, 2019, so that customers and end users have an improved product and experience for labor exchange and case management.

Results

1. While great progress has been made toward the release of RapidStorm, we have updated our target implementation date to October–November of 2020. This timeframe allows for the 3-month deployment process and final user acceptance testing of the application.

    - Part of the extended timeline is to allow for the UX and accessibility team to test and approve each page. We are committed to providing an updated and more consistent user interface and to an application that meets WCAG 2.1 AA standards (which is compliant with Section 508 guidelines). The team has completed work on self-service job seeker and employer.

    - The reporting database is being converted from SQL 2014 to PostgreSQL. Data conversion and testing is ongoing.

        o The November 2019 data purge has cleaned the legacy database and will allow for cleaner, faster conversion to RapidStorm.

    - Initial development is wrapped up for most areas of the application. A cross-functional team has been tasked with testing closely for any missed or incomplete port work.

    - Reports and web services have yet to be completed. We are considering the implementation of a Business Intelligence (BI) tool to allow states to perform ad hoc testing and reduce the burden of porting existing reports. The purchase and implementation of such a tool must be further discussed with Steering Committee members.

2. Work on Legacy and state grant-funded projects continues and at times takes resources from RapidStorm.

3. AJLA–TS continually analyzes areas for improvement.

ReportLink

Ensure all reports are WIOA-ready based on regulations and guidance provided by the Federal Government.

Results

All reports are WIOA-ready based on regulations and guidance provided by the Federal Government. AJL and ReportLink provide validation and edit checks for PIRL files based on WIPS specifications, with user-friendly functions for viewing and correcting data.

CertLink

Refactor and deliver the updated CertLink system to production by January 31, 2020 to improve the user experience and security of the system.

Results

1. CertLink 6.0, the refactor project, is approximately 65% complete as of October 1, 2019.

    - The project will improve the overall functionality and security of the application, allowing for streamlined implementation of future enhancements.

    - A UX designer has been dedicated to the product to create consistency within the product and across other AJLA–TS products, while enhancing functionality and accessibility.

2. User Acceptance Testing is scheduled for 2nd quarter 2020.

Conclusion

We did not meet the goal to release RapidStorm this year, but we are confident that the implemented product will be worth the wait. We envision AJL becoming the leading product among workforce development solutions, based in large part on the effort we're making to bring satisfaction to our end users. We also anticipate an increase in CertLink subscribing states as we further improve this product. While we are dedicated to our flagship products, we also delight in creating flexible, innovative solutions, like the new job search mobile app and the Vocal product. The ongoing development across our product suite is evidence of our mission to make a difference in America's workforce.

We're proud to be in partnership with our customers, and we believe in the work we're doing. Thank you for joining us in this journey.