

2008

National Institute of Standards and Technology  
Department of Commerce  
Baldrige National Quality Program



# Novel Connect Case Study Packet

## Executive Summary

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## Executive Summary

The Novel Connect Case Study was prepared for use in the 2008 Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award Examiner Preparation Course. A team of experienced Baldrige Examiners evaluated the Novel Connect Case Study, using the Independent and Consensus Review process. The Novel Connect Case Study describes a fictitious manufacturing organization. There is no connection between the fictitious Novel Connect organization and any other organization, either named Novel Connect or otherwise. Other organizations cited in the case study also are fictitious, except for several national and government organizations. Because the case study is developed to train Baldrige Examiners and others and to provide an example of the possible content of a Baldrige application, there are areas in the case study where Criteria requirements are not addressed. This case study is based on the 2008 Criteria for Performance Excellence, which is used by both business and nonprofit organizations.

Novel Connect scored in band 4 for Process Items and band 5 for Results Items. An organization in band 4 for Process Items typically demonstrates effective, systematic approaches responsive to the overall requirements of the Criteria, but deployment may vary in some areas or work units. Key processes benefit from fact-based evaluation and improvement, and approaches are being aligned with organizational needs. For an organization that scores in band 5 for Results Items, results typically address most key customer/stakeholder, market, and process requirements, and they demonstrate areas of strength against relevant comparisons and/or benchmarks. Improvement trends and/or good performance are reported for most areas of importance to the Criteria requirements and the accomplishment of the organization's mission.

## **Organizational Snapshot**

Novel Connect is a mid-sized cell phone and cell phone accessory manufacturer, with \$3.25 billion in sales and approximately 26.6 million phones sold in 2007. As well as producing standard cell phones, Novel Connect designs and manufactures other communication devices that integrate audio, video, text, and other features. Novel Connect's workforce numbers approximately 4,200, with around 1,600 located at its headquarters in Rochester, New York. Approximately 2,500 employees work through 11 pod sites, which are small, leased office spaces located in mid-sized U.S. communities and serving as hubs for clusters of mostly home-based employees.

Novel Connect's key strategic challenges have shifted considerably in the rapidly changing cell phone industry. Current challenges include the availability of a highly skilled workforce, communication in the company's decentralized environment, the ability to maintain a predominantly virtual culture, the logistics of transportation and supply-chain management, volatility in niche markets, protection of intellectual property, the volatility of the overseas environment, and market forces driving the cost of cell phones and market penetration. Novel Connect has several strategic advantages that allow it to effectively counteract these challenges and compete in a difficult industry: product/feature design innovation, an innovative business model, and supplier partnerships that result in lower costs.

## **Use of a Case Study Packet**

Baldrige case study packets, which are available on the Baldrige Web site in electronic format (e-format), are composed of the tools used to train Baldrige Examiners and the Examiners' working documents in the evaluation process. As such, the packets demonstrate the Baldrige Award application and evaluation processes and provide insight into the Criteria on which evaluations are based. A case study packet includes information relating to scoring, Criteria responses, and examination processes and illustrates the format for an application. In addition to Examiners and Award applicants, state and local Baldrige-based award programs across the United States and the internal award programs of many organizations make use of case study materials. Countries around the world have also used the documents in creating their Baldrige-based award programs. The self-assessment and self-improvement applications of the case study packets are limitless. In addition, the use of the materials in this packet strengthens the outreach efforts of the Baldrige community.

## **Case Study Packet Documents**

This Executive Summary and the documents described below constitute the 2008 Case Study Packet. The packet is used in conjunction with the *2008 Criteria for Performance Excellence* to illustrate a 2008 Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award application and the processes used to evaluate it. As the Criteria and the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award processes undergo change each year, this case study packet may not be directly comparable with future editions of the Criteria.

## **The Novel Connect Case Study**

The Novel Connect Case Study is a sample application written about a fictitious manufacturing organization applying for the Baldrige Award. It demonstrates the form and content of an application, providing information requested in the seven Categories of the Criteria for Performance Excellence. Responses are presented for each of the 18 Items, which

comprise 32 separate Areas to Address. The Novel Connect Case Study was an important part of the 2008 Examiner Preparation Course. Because the case study was developed to train Baldrige Examiners and others, including state and local Baldrige-based programs and organizations that use it internally, the case study does not fully address all Criteria Categories.

### **The Novel Connect Scorebook**

The Novel Connect Scorebook contains comments and a scoring range for each of the 18 Items of the application. The recommended scoring ranges for the Novel Connect Case Study shown at the beginning of the scorebook represent the opinion of one Examiner team; these scores are not meant to be definitive scores. For an actual application, the Panel of Judges uses information from the Examiners' scores to determine if the applicant should advance to the next stage of the review process. Scorebooks represent the work of Examiners; they are converted into feedback reports, which are sent to all organizations that apply for the Award. Details of the review process are included as an appendix in the Novel Connect Feedback Report.

### **The Novel Connect Feedback Report**

The Novel Connect Feedback Report is an example of the written assessment that all Award applicants receive in response to their applications. Prepared by members of the Board of Examiners, a feedback report is based on the written application, comments and scores, and the results of a site visit, if any. The feedback report summarizes the key themes of the application evaluation, identifies the bands of an applicant's total scores, identifies a percentage range for each Criteria Category or Item, and lists strengths and opportunities for improvement. It is intended to report the findings of the Examiners and should not be prescriptive in nature.

## **Baldrige Educational Materials**

### **Criteria for Performance Excellence**

To receive up to five free copies of the *2008 Criteria for Performance Excellence* booklet, the *2008 Education Criteria for Performance Excellence* booklet, or the *2008 Health Care Criteria for Performance Excellence* booklet, contact the Baldrige National Quality Program (see contact information on the last page of this Executive Summary).

To order bulk copies of the Criteria, contact ASQ (see ordering information on the last page of this Executive Summary). The fee is \$39.95 per packet of ten, plus shipping and handling. The item numbers for ordering bulk copies follow.

*2008 Criteria for Performance Excellence* (referred to as the Business/Nonprofit Criteria)—

Item Number T1518

*2008 Education Criteria for Performance Excellence*—Item Number T1519

*2008 Health Care Criteria for Performance Excellence*—Item Number T1517

### **DVDs of Award Recipients**

DVDs of Award recipients are a valuable resource for gaining a better understanding of performance excellence and quality achievement. The DVDs include highlights from the

annual Award Ceremony and interviews with representatives from the Award recipient organizations. DVDs are available from ASQ for each Award year since 2005.

### **Case Studies**

Case study packets are available in e-format (PDF) at the Web addresses shown below.

**2008 Case Study Packet: Novel Connect (a manufacturing organization)**

[www.baldrige.nist.gov/Novel\\_Connect.htm](http://www.baldrige.nist.gov/Novel_Connect.htm)

**2007 Case Study Packet: Share Food (a nonprofit food bank)**

[www.baldrige.nist.gov/Share\\_Food.htm](http://www.baldrige.nist.gov/Share_Food.htm)

**2006 Case Study Packet: Arroyo Fresco Community Health Center (a nonprofit health care center)**

[www.baldrige.nist.gov/Arroyo\\_Fresco.htm](http://www.baldrige.nist.gov/Arroyo_Fresco.htm)

**2005 Case Study Packet: Landmark Dining, Inc. (a small business organization)**

[www.baldrige.nist.gov/Landmark.htm](http://www.baldrige.nist.gov/Landmark.htm)

**2004 Case Study Packet: Sandy Hill School District (an education organization)**

[www.baldrige.nist.gov/Sandy\\_Hill.htm](http://www.baldrige.nist.gov/Sandy_Hill.htm)

**2003 Case Study Packet: GeoOrb Polymers, North America (a manufacturing organization)**

[www.baldrige.nist.gov/GeoOrb.htm](http://www.baldrige.nist.gov/GeoOrb.htm)

**2002 Case Study Packet: CapStar Health System (a nonprofit health care system)**

[www.baldrige.nist.gov/CapStar.htm](http://www.baldrige.nist.gov/CapStar.htm)

**2001 Case Study Packet: TriView National Bank (a financial services organization)**

[www.baldrige.nist.gov/TriView.htm](http://www.baldrige.nist.gov/TriView.htm)

**2000 Case Study Packet: Coyote Community College (an education organization)**

[www.baldrige.nist.gov/Coyote.htm](http://www.baldrige.nist.gov/Coyote.htm)

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The National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), an agency of the U.S. Department of Commerce, manages the Baldrige National Quality Program (BNQP). For more than a century, NIST has helped to lay the foundation for the innovation, economic growth, and quality of life that Americans have come to expect. NIST promotes U.S. innovation and industrial competitiveness by advancing measurement science, standards, and technology in ways that enhance economic security and improve our quality of life. Through a network of nearly 400 assistance centers that serve all 50 states and Puerto Rico, NIST provides technical and business assistance to help smaller manufacturers overcome barriers to productivity and competitiveness.

Call BNQP or visit our Web site for

- information on improving the performance of your organization
- information on eligibility requirements for the Baldrige Award
- information on applying for the Baldrige Award
- information on becoming a Baldrige Examiner
- information on the Baldrige Award recipients
- individual copies of the Criteria for Performance Excellence—Business/Nonprofit, Education, and Health Care
- information on BNQP educational materials
- case studies

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By making quality a global priority, an organizational imperative, and a personal ethic, the American Society for Quality (ASQ) becomes the community for all who seek quality technology, concepts, or tools to improve themselves and their world. ASQ administers the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award under contract to NIST.

Call ASQ to order

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