Case Study

The State Firefighter’s Association has a membership of 15,000. The purpose of the organization is to provide some financial support to the families of deceased member firefighters and to organize a conference each year bringing together firefighters from all over the state. Members are billed dues and calls annually. Calls are additional funds required to take care of payments made to the families of deceased members. The bookkeeping work for the association is handled by the elected treasurer, Bob Smith, although it is widely known that his wife, Laura, does all the work. Bob runs unopposed each year at the election, because no one wants to take over the tedious and time consuming job of tracking memberships. Bob is paid a stipend of $8,000 per year, but his wife spends well over twenty hours per week on the job. The organization, however, is not happy with their performance. A computer system is used to track the billing and receipt of funds. This system was developed in 1984 by a computer science student and his father. The system is a DOS-based system written using dBase 3. The most immediate problem facing the treasurer and 116 Chapter 3 Requirements Determination Copyright © 2015 John Wiley & Sons, Inc. his wife is the fact that the software packages no longer exists, and there is no one around who knows how to maintain the system. One query, in particular, takes seventeen hours to run. Over the years, they have just avoided running this query, although the information in it would be quite useful. Questions from members concerning their statements cannot easily be answered. Usually Bob or Laura just jots down the inquiry and returns a call with the answer. Sometimes it takes three to five hours to find the information needed to answer the question. Often, they have to perform calculations manually because the system was not programmed to handle certain types of queries. When member information is entered into the system, each field is presented one at a time, which makes it very difficult to return to a field and correct a value that was entered. Sometimes a new member is entered but disappears from the records. The report of membership used in the conference materials does not alphabetize members by city. Only cities are listed in the correct order. What requirements analysis strategy or strategies would you recommend for this situation? Explain your answer