

EVALUATING STATE INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY PROJECTS: VERMONT

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Vermont: 2015

- Several major IT project failures over the years
 - DMV system
 - Judiciary Case Management system
 - Health Insurance Marketplace: VT Health Connect
 - Very expensive
 - High visibility
 - Did not work
- Administration's credibility at a low
- Legislature asked to fund additional major IT projects
 - Very skeptical

Solution: Independent Reviews

- Joint Fiscal Office: Hire an employee or consultant
 - “to provide support to the General Assembly to conduct independent reviews of State information technology projects and operations”
 - Requires Administration to develop an MOU allowing the IT expert access to relevant documents and confidential material
 - 2 year position (started 2015)
 - Budget = \$125,000/yr

Work Plan

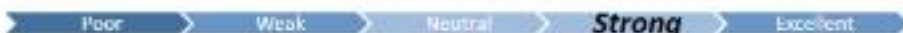
- Develop a process for legislative review of IT projects and operations;
- Review and provide a critique of IT projects and IT operations;
- Participate and coordinate with IT specialists and managers in developing necessary data for input into analytical constructs; and
- Testify before legislative committees, advise leadership, provide guidance and expertise to the legislature and staff, and consult with all involved staff on IT issues.

Consultant's Work Product

- Developed a consistent template to evaluate high cost, high risk or high visibility IT projects
 - Simple executive summary
 - 1 page chart showing status of key measures
 - Details in full report
 - Periodically updated
- Regular witness in legislative committee IT discussions
- Advises administration on IT project development and their preparation of testimony

One Page Summary

Overall Status:



The Judiciary knows that they need a new Case Management System, they have a general idea of what is in use by other states and what is available (Commercial Off the Shelf, or COITS systems), they have a general idea of how much such a system should cost, and they have a good initial plan on how to go about procuring and implementing such a system.

1. Project Justification: (Why are we doing this? Is the project necessary and beneficial?)



The legacy system from 1990 (VTADS) is overdue for replacement with a modern, more capable system.

2. Clarity of Purpose: (Is there a clear definition of success? Is the scope statement complete?)



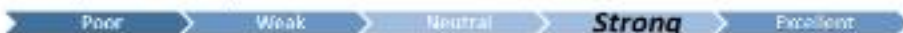
While general goals have been described, specific, measurable, achievable, and realistic goals must be developed, agreed to, and documented as the project matures.

3. Organizational Support: (Is the organization ready to undertake this project? Has the potential need for business process change been acknowledged, and is there a Change Management Plan?)



Judiciary support and governance for the project has been documented, and must be included in the Project Charter. In addition, a Change Management plan must be developed to ensure business practice adaptation as the NG-CMS is implemented.

4. Project Leadership: (Has a qualified person been designated to lead the project, and has that person been empowered to do so?)



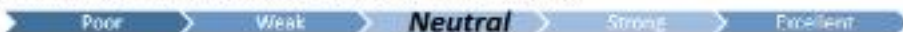
Project leadership has been officially assigned to one individual, and this must also be documented in the Project Charter. This leader must be continually empowered by the key stakeholders to drive the project to a successful conclusion.

5. Project Management: (Is the project management staff appropriate, and will project management conform to State of Vermont standards?)



A qualified Project Manager (BerryDunn) has been selected. This PM will work in partnership with the Project Leader, who will ensure that the PM is conforming to State and Industry standards.

6. Financial Considerations: (How much will it cost to complete the project, how much will it cost to maintain and operate the system, and how it will all be paid for?)



Initial estimates of development and maintenance costs are adequate for this phase of the project. The Project Leader and PM must ensure that costs and budgets (to include post deployment maintenance and operations) are updated and tracked through the Planning and Executing phases of the project.

7. Technical Approach: (Is the proposed solution achievable, realistic, and appropriate?)



The proposed technical approach (obtain a commercially available system) is sound. Project leadership must ensure that the system selected matches project goals, gaps between system capabilities and current business practices are identified and addressed, and adequate planning is performed for system implementation and operation.

What Difference Did It Make?

- Legislators
 - More comfort evaluating & funding projects; better understanding of risks and issues from trusted source
- Project managers
 - Clear criteria for evaluation
 - Prepare annual report on all projects \$1 million+
- Several projects cancelled or restructured
 - 18F hired to assist with major project (IEE)
 - Use of modular approach to projects and contracts
- Survey of legislators and administration: Positive
 - 2 year consultant/position has been renewed twice (6 years)

Contact Information

Website with the reviews and reports

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