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- แก้ไขล่าสุด วันศุกร์ที่ 09 มกราคม 2015 เวลา 11:12 น.

Part I – How to choose the right learning management

software

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29 December 2014

A large majority of IT projects fail

There are hundreds of studies analyzing the successes and failures of IT projects, and nearly all of them

show that the vast majority of projects will not meet their objectives and cannot be considered

successful. What's more, the reasons for these failures are also remarkably familiar, have not changed

over the last decades and cover the usual suspects: insufficient analysis, planning and stakeholder

involvement and communication as well as an inability to bridge the gap between business- , user- and

technical requirements all contribute to poor technical and business performance of IT projects.

Advice and guidance on how to manage IT projects to successful outcomes can be found in many places,

and support from experienced and trusted IT partners should be sought for complex projects or when

internal expertise is not at hand.

Selecting and implementing the right Learning & Knowledge Management software contains some

unique aspects and criteria - in this paper we will look at the most important of these factors.

What you should NOT do when choosing & implementing your Learning &

Knowledge Management software

To preempt the many common mistakes organizations make when selecting and implementing Learning

Management Software (LMS), here are a few tips on what to avoid:

Don’t consider LMS as an ‘IT Systems Purchase’: Many organizations look primarily at the

technical IT specifications and requirements when selecting the software. While technical criteria

are certainly an important factor, this can be a dangerous distraction from the main reason to

introduce such a system...which is to make the right learning and knowledge easily available at

the right time, and independent of the knowledge that comes and goes with people. As an

organization, you don't need to be particularly IT savvy, but you need to be exceptionally clear

about your learning and performance outcomes.

Don't delegate 'digging deeper' to an unqualified person or to the IT department: For the same

reasons explained above, the task to work out the exact requirements of the system should not

left to someone insufficiently qualified for this task, or to an IT person whose focus and expertise

is only technical. Instead, select someone who has the skills, relationship and imagination to map

out the learning & knowledge requirements for LMS functionality.

Don't sign an order before a "full trial access": Any system considered for purchase should be

tested rigorously, technically, functionally, and from a holistic integration, stakeholder and enduser

point of view. This is possible only with a so-called ‘full trial access’, where you the customer

are given access to a fully functional trial version of the product. Most vendors will allow you such

access, for a pre-defined period or with some other time-bound element. Such a trial period

needs be used to test the system systematically and rigorously. Naturally you won’t be able to

trial each and every potential aspect but it will give bring you a whole lot closer to a realistic view

on the tools potential and match to your requirements, and will serve to compare tools to each

other.

Do not leave the planning & thinking to the vendor: often organizations assume that that the

vendor will take care of every possible need or eventuality. Certainly the vendor should be

experienced enough with the product to answer important questions honestly and critically, but

not all vendors have the in-depth experience or the interest to help you maximize the success if

your LMS decision. They also do not know the unique ins and outs of your business and

processes. So the task of scoping and describing your requirements as detailed as possible, to IT Peace of Mind

identify the required customizations, work-arounds or LMS limitations is by and

large up to you, the customer. Ideally this task must be completed before the vendor gets

involved, so that the two parties can have some healthy conversations about your requirements

and about the capability of the software. By being prepared and by sharing your well-defined

requirements this way you will maximize the opportunity for making the vendor a more capable

and supportive partner in this undertaking.

What you SHOULD do

There are a few critical actions an organization must take and questions to answer before choosing the

right LMS.

Take stock of your current & future needs: What are the managerial and leadership goals for the

Learning Management System? How many employees will use, benefit or be affected by the

system, now and in the future? To what extent will trainings and classes be conducted online or

in a classroom format?

Research both the system AND the vendor first: What is the vendor's reputation? Are they

successful with offering this and other systems? Are the willing and experienced to customize

your system and in what ways? Can the vendor estimate how long it will take to build the system,

make it available to users and go live with it? How easy is the data transfer to the system? And

don't forget to walk through the 'standard user experience' with guidance from the vendor.

In the next edition of this whitepaper we will look at the significant benefits that a well-chosen and

professionally implemented LMS can deliver to your business.

About SoftControl

Founded in Bangkok in 1993 by a team of German and Thai entrepreneurs, SoftControl has

helped global companies in Thailand and worldwide focus on growing their business for more than two decades.

Over this period, we have delivered ITC services and solutions, including responsive websites in more than 20 countries, to more than 200+ local and international customers including small and medium size companies as well as enterprise level businesses across different industries. For many of our long list of satisfied customers we continue to be a preferred IT consultant and provide ongoing IT support and strategic advice.

SoftControl's success and continuity as an IT partner of choice arises from always placing your business interests firmly at the centre of the innovative solutions and services we offer. Our know-how and expertise as an IT partner is aimed single-mindedly at giving customers the freedom to get on with business – a vision which we call IT Peace of Mind.

Read more about SoftControl Learning Management Solution (LMS) here:

http://www.softcontrol.net/hr-and-lms/lms-and-knowledge-management-system.

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