

leading resolutions INSIGHTS

Measurements and metrics the key to successful projects

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leading resolutions



of metrics and delivery

2021 sees Leading Resolutions celebrate 20 years of providing business focused technology services to blue chip clients in the UK and overseas. We are proud to be seen by our customers as the voice of authority and are privileged to be supporting you through your critical business transformation initiatives and programmes.

Deploying the right capability, skills and experience at the right time, we focus purely on providing the most efficient and cost effective solution for you, delivering on time, to budget and operating with our ethical values, underpinning everything we do.

All customers want the reassurance that their project is being delivered on time and to budget; we use metrics to measure and communicate during the proposal and delivery of all projects.

The use of metrics is key to defining a project, following progress and all the way through to operation after it has been delivered. What we measure will vary, but all projects must have a measure of success, and where the project delivers improvements, the metrics should be at the centre of reporting.

The Business Case

The business case is produced to demonstrate the benefits of the project and obtain agreement to invest the necessary resources in the project. Without defining what success looks like in a measurable format, there is nothing to demonstrate the success of the project.

The measures may be in terms of additional profit, reduced time to perform an activity or improved customer satisfaction. It's important to be realistic and not to exaggerate either the extent of a challenge or the benefits that are going to be delivered, as the measurements will show the reality. If the benefits are expected to be in a range then provide the range.

At this point the level of understanding may be low, in which case the request from the business case could be to obtain approval to perform the analysis and then review the details.

Analysis

The level of analysis will depend on the amount of time spent, and understanding obtained, in producing the business case. In improvement projects this is likely to be a bigger activity than in developing a new system.

Where possible, and in all improvement projects, it is important to fully understand the size of the challenge and the complexity of the issue; metrics such as the time to process transactions, or the number of failures, are essential. If a range of benefits were provided in the business case this should significantly reduce that range.

Where possible, produce a dashboard that takes inputs from specific sources and displays the measures that are going to be delivered or improved. If you don't have all the details at this time, document the assumptions.

The end of the analysis phase should have a checkpoint to confirm that both the benefits and the complexity and hence cost still support the project proceeding.



The Author

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Iain is one of Leading Resolution's consultants; he is an International Business Change and IT Project and Programme Management leader within Infrastructure and Service Management. He delivers results oriented projects and programmes and is experienced at interacting with stakeholders at all levels of the organisation including the Board.

A strong track record of building and managing teams consisting of direct reports, virtual global teams and third parties to deliver successful projects, of managing supplier and operational budgets, and of communicating effectively with all key stakeholders, makes Iain the perfect leader to comment on metrics and measurement.

Proof of Concept (PoC)

Where possible deliver a proof of concept. If the project is an improvement project, select a small subset of clients, transactions, products and other relevant information to measure the improvement against. Use the dashboards that were built in the analysis to show the improvements that are being delivered against the PoC scope.

If in delivering the PoC your calculations change as a result of a greater understanding, be transparent on this and explain the reasons why. An improved understanding of how to measure things is a success from the project.

As with the analysis phase, at the end of the PoC a checkpoint should be in place to confirm that the PoC has managed to deliver the expected benefits.



Delivery

The delivery of the project extends the PoC approach. The dashboards should be developed and expanded to demonstrate the success of the project. It is key that these dashboards at least show the measures that were used in the business case, the reason that the project was created. These measures should be used in progress and steering meetings. If they are not as expected, the project should be reviewed to confirm that it is still viable and worth continuing.

The production of dashboards should be as automated as much as possible because they may continue to be used after the project completes to ensure that the benefits produced are maintained.

End of the project

At the end of the project the dashboards should show the success of the project, demonstrate that the measures that were claimed would be delivered were actually delivered. If the benefits were exaggerated at the start this will now be visible.

Moving into Business As Usual

Once a project has been delivered, especially where there are improvements, it is important to ensure that the benefits are maintained. This is where dashboards that have been produced during the project should be regularly updated and reviewed by the users who operate the processes or are responsible for the product, to ensure that the actions which were taken do not start to degrade. Acceptable tolerances should be agreed for these reviews.

An independent but interested party should review the dashboards to ensure that they are being used and that the measures are in line with the agreed tolerances. If measures start to go outside the agreed tolerances, they should raise this with the relevant team and help try to resolve any issues. Escalation should only take place if the issues cannot be addressed.

This role is not to try and drive for further improvements through the operational team, however if improvements can be identified that require a project, if the project has been successfully delivered and the dashboards are showing the benefits can be maintained that is a good start for the next business case!

How we can help

At Leading Resolutions, we work with customers for whom change must be measurable. We use measurements and metrics to ensure that your project stays on time and on target.

We enable businesses to make technology as flexible as possible; many have adopted Agile and Scrum Methodologies at a significant pace, and our bespoke reporting systems are designed to show you change at the pace it is happening.

We would love to talk to you about how our consultants, supported by an expert headquarters team, measure every aspect of a project so that you are assured through and after the process.

Talk to us about how we can help your business grow through change.

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