

COLLEGE OF INFORMATION

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY PROPOSAL

TALLAHASSEE WEB DESIGN'S BEST
OPPORTUNITY FOR ENHANCING
KNOWLEDGE SHARING AND DECISION
MAKING AMONG PROJECT TEAMS

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PROPOSAL

TALLAHASSEE WEB DESIGN'S BEST OPPORTUNITY FOR ENHANCING
KNOWLEDGE SHARING AND DECISION MAKING BETWEEN PROJECT TEAMS

BRIEF SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

**** Using technology effectively will enhance communication ****

With the use of technologies recommended by our staff, your project teams will have increased productivity due to the ease of communication between them. In addition, the technologies will need to be studied and actually used by staff members in order for them to work. You will need to invest money in new products, but doing so will allow you to bring in more money than it currently does by increasing productivity.

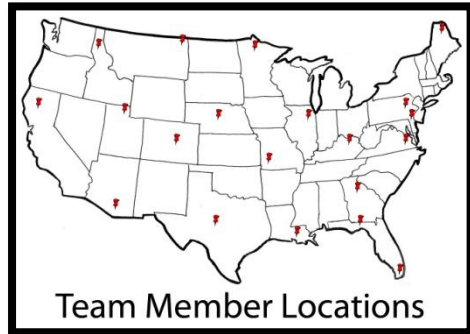
INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

This report was written to inform you of different, effective ways of bringing your project teams closer to each other, despite the physical distances between them. We have conducted research over the past few months, per your request, and found some information that we would like to share with you. Some slight changes will need to be made by your employees, but it will be for the best for your company in the long run.

You presented us with a problem that is very real. Many companies have the same kind of issues with communication that you are having. Even though your company is technology oriented, we believe that you could use technology in ways that you are currently looking over. Our goal is to help your project teams communicate better with each other through the use of technology. There are four main parts within your company that will be factored in; People, Organization, Hardware & Software, & Connectivity Package.

FINDINGS & ANALYSIS

Our team conducted research using its members' extensive knowledge of, and experience with, group communication. After looking over the company profile that you provided us, we had each member look into different aspects that would provide enhanced communication between your geographically dispersed project teams as



shown on the map to the right. We then collaborated together this information in order for you to visualize the big picture... **** Using technology effectively will enhance communication ****

People

Knowing how to manage employees is a vital part of running a business. It covers hiring and firing along with everything in between like motivating, directing and reprimanding. The first component of communication an employee will encounter once they become a member of the company is the employee handbook. In the handbook, there must be an unambiguous and concise protocol listed as to what is expected from any employee in order to remain with this company. Not only is this where the employees formally learn what is expected of them, they also learn what it is that they can expect from the company. If any problems shall arise, a hardcopy of expectations from both parties involved is always accessible.

With the highly competitive business climate, it is absolutely imperative that the employer and their employees understand and know how to use advanced technologies. Technology is the enabler that will allow this company to improve its efficiencies and even allow operations to expand. Employees must have a thorough knowledge of the technology they are using in order to complete their job at the highest potential. Successful, productive employees are those with the most extensive training and are vital to the company's future. By training the employees, they are not only being equipped with the technical skills needed to perform their job, but investment in your employees, is one of the best places to put your money. According to EnterpriseMedia, a company with 30 employees can expect to spend \$895 for a training video or \$29.84 per person, which is a drop in the

bucket for what you can expect to profit this year. The American Society for Training and Development reports that a company will spend less than \$2000 per employee for training. There are a few tips the employer can follow before taking on the task of training the whole company:

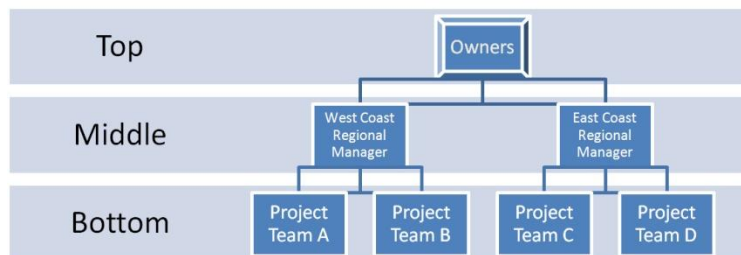
- (1) Training is an investment not an expense
- (2) Focus on your most pertinent needs
- (3) Stress a nonstop learning environment
- (4) Attain the support of management
- (5) Start training on a small scale
- (6) Make quality a priority
- (7) Choose a good learning environment
- (8) Clarify relevance
- (9) Making training continuous
- (10) See how the stats stack up.

Organization

For any job that is to be done, proper planning is essential. With planning, come role responsibilities for each member of the team, deadlines for when each portion of the project is to be done, and the structure of authority. This is the organization of the project. We recommend making a blend of small groups based on regions in the Tallahassee and surrounding areas that work together and report back to a select individual, who then relays the information to you.

At the top of the hierarchal structure (shown to the right), you hold the throne and oversee the entire operation. Having all the vested interest in the company and the ability to make critical de-

Proposed Organizational Scheme



isions, you have to answer to no individuals within the company infrastructure. Your decision making involves evaluating the possible solutions proposed by the regional managers.

The regional manager's duties are to oversee two teams each. They are the bridge between the gaps from the owners to the project teams. Although the managers are not vested in the corporation, their productivity is a crucial factor when dispensing bonuses and evaluating their yearly progress.

This promotes efficiency and reduces the waste within the project plan. They are also responsible for any decision-making that cannot be resolved among the project teams.

The project teams are the workers in the hierarchical structure. Each team consists of four members that are all assigned specialized duties for the team. By breaking up the group into focused areas, each member will be able to allocate all available resources to a particular job and will also reduce confusion with communicating amongst team members. The first of the four team members is the Project Consultant. His duty is to acquire a complete and accurate description of the goal of the company and the problems they face. He also relays the information given to him from his team to customers and from customers to the project team. The next member of the team is the Solutions Manager. The primary responsibility of the Solutions Manager is to brainstorm solutions and fit them into an available budget that is dictated by the Project Consultant in his reports. The third member of the project is the Budget Accountant who takes the available funds for the project and stretches every penny. The fourth member of the team is the Web Designer. Like his title says, he designs the layout of the webpage and manages the content on the page. He is also responsible for future updates that may be necessary depending on the needs of the customer's page. By working along a developed plan, each member of the team contributes by adding their own elements to the project and working together until the customer is satisfied with the final product.

Hardware & Software

The most significant part of the problem, a lack of efficient centralized data sources, can be solved by setting up a central company server database on which files can be archived and retrieved with ease. Additionally, setting up Wi-Fi wireless internet at company locations and issuing personal wireless devices such as smartphones will smoothen the flow of information by allowing them to access the internet and their e-mail remotely as well as take advantage of personal organizer functions to improve their own performance; this, along with setting up a company e-mail server and properly encouraging its use, can greatly speed up the flow of important information between groups regardless of size and distance. Not only should the company ensure that its existing computer

infrastructure is upgraded or replaced with modern hardware, but providing laptops (with webcams) and cheap storage devices such as USB flash drives to project teams can improve group performance by allowing workers to work more closely and in more varied environments rather than chaining them to their desktops. When paper is still necessary, multifunction laser printers should be used for their versatility and longevity, becoming a simple and easy-to-maintain way to handle everything, from printing and copying to scanning and faxing.

With Windows Mobile as the operating system on smartphones, employees will have access to their e-mail from their phone and be able to stay connected better while away from the office. Windows Mobile will also allow the employee to have access to mobile versions of other Microsoft software including (but not limited to) PowerPoint, Word & Excel. This will enhance the sharing of reports and files on the go. It is strongly suggested that all users have unlimited data transfer on their smartphone plan to avoid extremely expensive data overages.

The possibilities are nearly endless and new programs are being created all the time. You can be confident that you will find a program that will fit your company's needs, whatever they may be.

The extensive address book and calendar function will allow employees to store pertinent contact and reminder information about clients, business partners, etc. so that they will always have the information they need right at their fingertips. Windows Mobile also has map software to allow users to locate new buildings or other meeting locations when meeting a new client. These are only some of the main features of the Windows Mobile operating system that is found on some of today's smartphones. The possibilities are nearly endless and new programs are being created all the time. You can be confident that you will find a program that will fit your company's needs, whatever they may be.

Connectivity Package

To make communication of your business run efficient we recommend that you purchase an on-site server because it will give you company many communication advantages. Your business will

have quick access to e-mail and file transfer. The server will make communication between your employees more flexible. Employees will be able to access information from their mobile devices such as smartphones and laptops. The server can give your company the option to let your clients access information.

We also want you to consider the communication techniques. Communicating face-to-face is valuable to the relationship between employees because an e-mail could be interpreted the wrong way. Due to the distance between members and to limit emails and other text communications, we recommend your company have a no email day, where videoconferencing will take place. The no email day will give your business a day that every employee can communicate face-to-face. It will make the relationship of the company better by bringing a personal aspect to their mostly business relationships. The use of the Microsoft Outlook e-mail program (on all computers; office desktop, laptop, smartphone) for e-mail, to-do lists, calendar, contacts will allow you to sync all of your information so you can access it in the manner of your choosing.

CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATION

The information we have put in front of you to better communication between your project teams will only help if you put the tools into action. By using the hardware & software we recommended, along with organizing the people and connecting it all together (with prices shown in the table below), the information will flow better between your workers than it ever has before. Set positions for workers in project teams will allow them to maximize efficiency while the communication devices let them put it all together in a timely fashion.

Proposed Budget	
Laptops	\$600 x 18 = \$10,800
USB drives	\$20 x 20 = \$400
Smartphone	\$400 x 20 = \$8,000
MS Office SB	\$280 x 20 = \$5,600
Training	\$895
On-site server	\$1,000
TOTAL	\$26,695