The life of a project

The paper " Lifecycle of a Project for Designing a High-Tech Website" is an excellent example of a research proposal on management. This essay describes the lifecycle of a project that involves designing a high tech website for your business. The document details the overview of such a project from the SDLC (Software Development Lifecycle) perspective as well as the Project Management framework. The objectives of the project can be summarized as:

- Technical: To design a high tech website for your organization,

- Business: To generate more revenue for the company through increased traffic to the website and consequent sales of products,

- Marketing: To enhance the brand image and identity of your company in the marketplace.

It is assumed that your business does not have the requisite technical expertise to design a website and hence the consultant has been called in to submit a bid for the same. Further, it is assumed that there would be an external vendor associated with the project once the bid is finalized.

The requirements of the project can be divided into:

Technical

The project needs dedicated web servers and necessary software that includes the design and programming software as well as any tools that may be required to assist the programmers.

Human Resources

The project needs highly skilled technical personnel well versed in the

technologies concerned (. NET etc). As listed in the assumptions above, since the business does not have the expertise, the resources for the same have to be hired either on a permanent basis or for short term under contract. It is advised to hire 80% of the resources on a contract basis and 20% for long term duration as these resources can be used for maintaining the website once it is complete.

Stakeholders

A project of this nature requires the coordination of various departments within your company. The business objectives have to be set by the marketing and sales functions whereas the cost of the project should be approved by the finance function. Similarly, there should be a technical person or someone who has an adequate grasp of technology to validate the work being done by the contractors. These stakeholders should be identified upfront and periodic status reporting of the progress of the project should be done to all these stakeholders.

Time, Cost and Quality

Time, Cost and Quality are known as the " Triple Constraints". Any change in one variable affects the other two variables. In this context, the time taken to build the website and the cost involved should be quoted upfront. Also, the quality specifications in terms of the testing criteria and the key success factors for the same should be identified upfront.

The scope of the project in terms of the features of the website, layout and design and a number of web pages with content should be frozen in advance. If for any reason, this is not possible, the changes to the scope

must be reviewed and approved by all the stakeholders in consultation with the vendor.

Risk Management

A risk management plan has to be drawn up before the project starts and should be reviewed periodically. The following are some of the risks that are associated with this project:

- Scope: The scope of the project must be defined upfront and any changes to scope approved by all the stakeholders and with due benefit to the consultant so that no one takes a financial hit.

- Business objectives: The business objectives must be articulated clearly so that your company does not end up with something that they did not want or needed.

- Technical: Lack of technical know-how can impact the project.

- Human resources: Attrition among the staff can result in an adverse impact on the project.

- Co-ordination: Improper co-ordination and vaguely defined roles and responsibilities is another risk.

- Software and technology risk Apart from the lack of technical know-how there is a marginal risk associated with the technology and software in terms of compatibility and interoperability.

Vendor Management

Once the project is finalized and approved, an external vendor would be hired to execute the project. Due diligence must be done from both your side and the vendor's side. There should be a formal mechanism for vendor

management involving all the stakeholders.

Phases of the Project

A project is deemed to be a software project if it follows the Software Development Lifecycle and includes the phases listed below.

Requirements

The first phase of the project is for requirements and functional specification gathering and validation. This phase involves the consultant and the marketing, sales, and finance divisions of your company. In this phase, the scope in terms of the functional specifications is frozen and approved.

Design

High-Level technical design is prepared in this phase covering the database design and front end requirements.

Build phase

The actual construction and unit testing of the website is done in this phase.

Deploy Phase

The system testing and the regression testing are carried out in this phase.

Conclusion

This proposal outlines the various aspects of the project for building a website. Once this proposal is accepted, there should be a detailed report prepared by the consultant and reviewed by your company before signing off on the project. The various aspects dealt above should be detailed at length and a suitable framework evolved.