Productively Implementing Technology Tools
How to choose the tools that are most important and make use of them.

Julie Sig
Professional Service Manager
FirstTech, Inc.

Who am I?

Why am I here?

Agenda
- When is a new tool needed
- How should it be selected
- How does workflow mapping help
- How can experts help you
- How to measure the success of a new tool
**Productivity**

The amount of output that can be produced with a given amount of input.

**Mission:**

Speed things up!

**Out with the old...**

...in with the new

Buy a new computer, server or application and I will experience a productivity gain. (Or am I just speeding up my inefficient process?)

**We own it so we must use it.**

Ineffective technology is still ineffective whether it is used or not.
The Corporate Standard

Someone I don’t even know somehow knew enough about what I do to select a tool for me without even talking to me. (Hmm...)

We need training!

Myth: Training will create a significant increase in productivity ONLY if the workflow is at least good.

What do YOU recommend?

- Document Construction - Quark or InDesign
- Color Correction - RIPs or spectrophotometer
- Asset Management - Mediabeacon or Portfolio
- Forms Generation - Acrobat or Filemaker
- Web Design - GoLive or Dreamweaver
- Database Development - Oracle or MySQL
STOP!

What do you NEED?

Where does it hurt the most?

Are you willing to be involved in the process of determining the best solution?
Create a Success Criteria Document

- List the items that must be improved as a result of the effort (Be specific)
- List them in priority order
- Determine how they will be measured
- Determine which resources will be used

Map the Workflow

With the proper expert resource that can apply best practices and industry standard input.

- Measure the technology tools in place
- Measure production processes and structures
- Measure production settings

Map the Workflow
Map the Workflow

Map the Workflow

Summary

- Identified 16 areas for improvement
- Provided a prioritized approach
- Included budget and timelines

The Bonus

One recommendation communicated in a two hour meeting resulted in a savings of 3000 hours.

(Nothing to buy, just the proper use of an existing tool.)
Custom Development

When should you engage in custom software development, modifications to existing solutions or scripting to automate repetitive tasks?

STOP!

If the workflow isn’t right...

It has to change MANUALLY in procedures and best practices before tools will help.
If everyone has their own way for doing the same task, no tool will truly help.

The Development Process

Step 1: Orientation Meeting
This is the first step in the discovery process to determine the fit of our skills for your project. By learning more about your project and sharing our process, abilities and our expertise, we can make an initial determination of whether we are the best resource to meet the needs you have expressed. (No Fee)

Step 2: Estimate of Project Scope
Interviews with key staff members, FirstTech will study your business processes as related to this project and generate an Estimate of Project Scope document. This overview will provide both you and FirstTech with an initial understanding of the size and scope of your project. We will provide you with a qualified response regarding the file structure, core feature set, general timelines and estimated costs for the design and development of the complete system. The documented summary of your needs and requirements is a valuable tool for internal use as well as for use in the next step of this process. (Fee: TBD)
Step 3: Project Definition

This phase involves an in-depth breakdown of all database components to develop a comprehensive blueprint of your proposed project. Complete with a database map, sample screen layouts, sample report layouts, a list of all database fields and a breakdown of access privileges by user, the Project Definition will provide a clear picture of your final development project. In addition, an analysis of existing hardware and software requirements or updates will be provided in preparation for smooth implementation. Finally, an outline will be provided to address installations, training, documentation, support, updates and maintenance recommendations. (Fee: TBD)

Step 4: Project Development

With a comprehensive Project Definition, the Project Development phase is completed independently. All development adheres strictly to the guidelines provided within the Project Definition. Initial user-testing is an important part of this phase. (Fee: TBD)
Step 5: Integration and Final Sign-off

This phase begins with the installation of your completed solution. Integration includes the creation of documentation, user and administrative level training, and establishing a process to address technical support and maintenance needs. (Fee: TBD)

Measure the finished product against the success criteria. (Estimate of Project Scope)

When NOT to hire an expert

- If you have not checked multiple references
- There is no documentation
- There is no timeline
- Project starts BEFORE scope is documented. (don’t hire the builder before the architect.)
- There are no industry certifications

It’s About Productivity

- Product-related and Process-related factors account for approximately the same amount (~33%) of productivity variance.
- You can distinguish productivity factors that can be controlled (process-related) from those that cannot (product-related).
Q & A

Julie Sig
Professional Service Manager
FirstTech, Inc.
jsig@firsttech.com
612-374-8086