



Administrative Systems Management Constituent Group Meeting Minutes

Sessions: Wednesday, November 5, 12:40 – 2:10 p.m. (45 participants)
Thursday, November 6, 4:55 – 6:10 p.m. (30 participants)

Facilitators: **Eric Bird**, SIS Project Manager,
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Below are the minutes from the two ASM constituent group meetings

FIRST SESSION: Wednesday, November 5
Selection of New Systems

Discussions:

Contract Negotiation: One attendee suggested that the price in the contract is usually not negotiable, while what is offered is—you can negotiate for more offerings, but cannot sacrifice offerings for a lower price. Be sure to haggle on maintenance cost. Contract negotiation can take 2 weeks – 18 months; include lawyers in this.

Consulting: Consultants can be better than the vendor for implementation. Review the résumés of actual consultant, not just general qualifications of consulting firm. Do consultants work regular hours? Some do. One school had to fly in consultants every week. Think about when and where you need consulting. You can fire a consultant. Negotiate on travel expenses (can force firm to eat travel costs or find someone local). Consider locking in maximum rate for additional unknown purpose hours, which will be needed later.

Needs assessment tools: One used Advantiv successfully

Consultants can prove very helpful during selection phase of process/negotiation of contract.

Bearing Point has gap assessment software, which one school found useful.

Time Frame: Two different approaches given –

- 1) first module comes up in *X* months, second module *Y* months after that, third module *Z* months after that, and so on
- 2) big bang, where everything comes up at once, in *X* years.

Backfilling can be done with temporary help to free up time to work on project. Be sure to focus on retaining staff that will be learning how new system works, and thus be best prepared to run system in the future.

Post Implementation Costs: Both technical and functional staffing either increases in number or salary; realize that functionality increases as well.

Business Process Reengineering: It is best to understand and streamline processes, don't just implement the same old (poor) process in the new system. Part of the reason for purchasing software is to purchase new processes as well (presumably these are better than your current processes). Struggle to keep new system unmodified, as this will both minimize maintenance costs (which can grow enormously with modifications) and improve processes (new software's processes are better than current processes).

Do you get more or less functionality with new system? Mostly you get different functionality. It can be better viability, better access to students, better reporting, accompanied by some loss in functionality, and some new functionality.

SECOND SESSION Thursday, November 6
Post-implementation issues

The session consisted largely of individuals posing questions and then some discussion following each:

Q: When you converted, what data did you bring over?

- Hard to decide; be forewarned that you may find badly converted data MUCH LATER (like when you close a fiscal year). Keep old data available (perhaps as an image).
- Financial data is often left behind.

Q: Is anyone handling integration with library systems?

- Nothing off-the-shelf, need to build your own, but not typically very hard (library systems typically support batch import/export).

Q: Did you backfill staff when implementing a new system?

- Do it if you have the money.
- Some senior staff are likely to leave, so the backfilling staff will likely get permanent jobs if they want them.

Q: Business Process Reengineering: is it worth the time and money to go through a formal process? [Particularly if you implement vanilla product, do you need to?]

- If you buy a system, you are buying their process—so keep that in mind.
- BPR can work, but focus the discussions carefully and limit the duration of discussion.
- Alternative: GAP ANALYSIS—what are you doing today, where do you want to go? Do this with every module user group, and with consultants from the vendor present.
- Remember: help the business understand that the system is configurable, but in order to do so they need to articulate their needs.

Q: Anyone use 3rd party add-on products for SCT?

- Yes—and by and large they're good, work well.

Q: Is it hard to do Oracle application upgrades?

- Be forewarned that Oracle's patch cycle is a serious time investment—need to invest appropriate resources. It's very time intensive and ongoing. Accept it as a part of your necessary daily operations.
- The fewer mods you do the better!

Q: How do people handle faculty workload management?

- Typically using ERP system

Q: Disaster Recovery suggestions?

- Use multiple campuses to replicate servers
- Include DR with EVERY PROJECT. If you don't get funding for the DR piece, don't do the project.

Q: Integration across systems?

- Use a data warehouse; some have had good experiences with SAS tools.

Q: Which reporting tools are commonly used?

- Oracle Reports/ Oracle Discoverer; can build self-service, parameter-driven reports.

Submitted by:

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