S^3: plan for IT success

I need a system!

You know that you can improve your business by implementing a software application, but there are many questions to answer.

- How much will it cost?
- How long will it take to implement?
- Who needs to be involved?
- Should be it packaged or bespoke software?
- Is the project feasible?
- What effect will it have on my business?
- What risks will I be taking?
- What exactly does it need to do?
- Will I get a return on my investment?

You need answers before you decide whether to go ahead. We can provide the answers, but we need to do some work first.

What do I need to know?

To work out how much the system will cost, we need to know how it will be designed and built. To design it, we need to know what it will do. We therefore first define the scope of the system (i.e. what it will do) and then design it (i.e. how it will be built).

So the first piece of work in any software development project is to carry out a study to define the requirements and produce the high level system design. Only when this has been done is it possible to estimate costs and timescales.

Scope of Work

The purpose of the **S^3 systems specification study** will be to:

- specify existing and future requirements
- provide the high level system design
- select the best architecture and technology
- estimate the cost and timescales of development.

Deliverables

The outcome of the study will be the following documents:

- Requirements Specification
- outline Design Specification
- Project Plan (including effort and cost estimates).

How does this help me?

The benefit of carrying out an analysis and design study before launching into development is that you minimise the risk of the project going wrong. The cost of failure is much higher than the money spent on the system itself - there is also the wasted time, the loss of credibility and the effect on your business.

It is not possible to plan or cost a project where the requirements are not known. If you accept costings based on incomplete information, it is inevitable that invalid assumptions will have been made. This will lead to major problems with cost and timescale overruns as the project progresses.

We prefer to manage the risk at all stages of development and to ensure that there are no surprises. The result is that long-term costs are substantially reduced.

What will I get from you?

We will carry out a systems analysis exercise which will define:

- scope of the business processes to be supported
- prioritised requirements to be implemented
- future requirements and effect of new technology
- database design
- identification of each category of user
- database maintenance and administration functions
- user interface requirements
- interfaces to other systems
- non-functional requirements (e.g. scalability, robustness)
- technical risk analysis
- analysis of the various architectures available and a recommendation of the best technical solution
- analysis of the various development environments available and a recommendation
- analysis of the technologies which will best meet the business requirements
- estimates of timescale and cost of development
- estimates of infrastructure costs
- if appropriate, an analysis of the potential return on investment.

Normally we use object-oriented design techniques expressed in UML.

How much will it cost?

An **i·teba™ S^3 systems specification study** will typically take 10 to 100 days depending on the Terms of Reference and the size of the system. If you wish, we can carry out the requirements analysis and system design as two separate exercises.

This work represents the first phase of software development.

What do I do now?

Please phone or email us (sales@iteba.com) to discuss your requirements for software development and to arrange an initial consultation about **S^3**.

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