

Trail Conference Technology Project Plan Meeting – November 19, 2015

Meeting attendees: Chris Connolly, Mary Dooman, Ed Goodell, John Magerlein, Amber Ray

Meeting Summary:

We reviewed a proposed Technology Project Plan to gain a common understanding of where we are, proposed steps, staff and technology concerns, and risks. The impacts on staff time are better understood. CRM functionality will need to be fully understood as it has bearing on how the staff will operate. Front-end usage aspects will need to be defined and designed. Clear risks emerged that would need to be addressed and resolved to ensure Technology Project success.

Mary & John will revise the Project Goals slide for Ed to review, comment on, and approve to submit as a “one pager” to the Board on 12/1.

Ed will also review a proposed charter for the Technology Committee and will work with Mary and John to agree on a final version which can be approved by the Board on 12/1. If the charter is approved, the Board would be asked to approve Mary as the Chair of the committee. A list of potential committee members was reviewed.

Meeting Highlights:

1. Staff impact

- The “Database” (eBase) is used by all staff every day. Ed sees bringing the CRM database online equivalent to the current “Database” functionality as a very significant impact on the staff. With the reorganization yet to be fully implemented, some resistance to the org changes, and strategic planning on everyone’s plates in 2016, Ed wants to separate the website migration from introducing some of the CRM features.
- All valid concerns. Ed is responsible and accountable to the board for staff performance and deliverables.

2. Implementation RFP

- We recommend finishing the Implementation RFP seeking multiple bids to make vendor selection. Our current have estimates from only two vendors are ranges with very different solutions.
- The RFP should be reviewed by the future Technology Committee, which will include staff, and would be reviewed and approved by Ed. The goal is to send out the RFP in early January.
- Implementation RFP should include web site migration and CRM implementation to gain a full picture from both cost and functionality perspectives for best internal decisions. Asking the questions does not commit the TC.
- Response analysis will include looking at phasing, data migration. We want to prototype early to validate assumptions and test designs. Analysis will determine recommendation for what phases/features fit into \$150K, using Ed’s staff impact requirement as a filter.

3. Migration plan to minimize risk

- Current website and eBase continue to be used and updated during migration and testing.
- All migration, setup, configuration, and data work will take place on a physically separate environment.
- From a technical perspective, it is advantageous to design both web and CRM databases as part of the web migration infrastructure work. If the staff impact is too great or if technical issues are found, we can delay bringing the CRM portion on line and can continue using the eBase system as long as necessary.
- Having the CRM infrastructure available early on will allow prototyping and will speed up our ability to introduce CRM features and the benefits offered.

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4. Ed is ready to proceed with the web upgrade working with Singlebrook as soon as board approves the \$150K funding line item
 - Ed would ideally like to have a full time tech person in the office working with Amber, Project Manager, to implement the web upgrade project. Ed has a revised proposal and list of tasks from Singlebrook to proceed with.
 - Ed would like to understand what the Technology Committee can realistically do and how it would interact with the staff to get the best result for the Trail Conference.
5. Technology Committee
 - Expect the Technology Committee to take on finishing Implementation RFP, evaluation, and recommendations for decisions to be made.
 - A draft Technology Committee charter was presented. Ed will review and get back to Mary, John, and Chris. It is critical to get the charter finalized so that the role of the committee is clear. We would like to have an agreed-on charter for the Board to approve on 12/1.
 - Have a potential list of committee members. Everyone on this list still needs to be asked about their interests to serve on the Committee. Also need contact information, backgrounds, for one individual we only have a first name. Ed said he'd be doing this.
6. Board asked for "a one pager" to understand what the \$150K line item would be for
 - The presentation material used for this meeting is a level set for where we think we are, but is too much detail for board use.
 - Mary and John will revise the Project Goals slide for Ed to review and approve for 12/1 Board meeting.

Risks:

1. **Staff Impact:** Need to better understand impact of these changes on staff time, particularly regarding impact of bringing up new CRM and web redesign in same year.
We will mitigate this risk through clear communication with the staff during the design phase, prototyping of the CRM design, and decisions along the way on when to cut over to the new CRM based on potential staff impact.
2. **Project Management and Communication:** Need clear project management structure and good communication between staff and volunteers and with the vendor.
We will mitigate this risk by selecting a staff project manager who will be an integral part of the Technology Committee, manage vendor relationship, with Technology Committee addressing technical questions as appropriate.
3. **Technology Committee:** The role of the Technology Committee needs to be clarified through agreement on its charter. The technology Committee is not yet in place and we're assuming commitments to support implementation.
To mitigate risk, the charter needs to be agreed to quickly and potential members need to be contacted to confirm interest. Long-time volunteers (Walt, John, Doug, and Bill) assumed to be part of committee. First meeting agenda item will be discussing Technology Project Plan to assess level of commitment.
4. **CRM:** The CRM plan and phasing impacts staff the most.
To mitigate risks, the goals, implementation options, trade-offs, and details need to be better understood. Proposed RFP and evaluations would provide opportunity to have these discussions and make informed decisions.

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Next steps:

1. Board approval of budget for technology upgrade
2. Agree on Technology Committee charter and Chair, get Board approval, contact potential members, and get Committee functioning
3. Finalize implementation RFP

Definitions:

Database	Current term used colloquially by all staff to refer to the stand-alone eBase system that holds all member records (membership, volunteer hours, trailU attendance, etc. The data in most cases is taken from the web side on various paper forms and manually re-entered here. Ed mentioned that the eBase records go back to the 70's.
MySQL	Database software platform used by Drupal to store all data. Same platform is used for any software module that needs database services. Multiple databases can be set up for use by various software components.
Drupal Database	The database and data created for website use (trails data)
CRM Database	The database for membership, people and relationships. This information is now in eBase.
Store Database	The database and data created for web store commerce. (products, purchases)
Discovery RFP	RFP issued 7/2014 to find out what would be involved in web site migration. It was a learning RFP.
Implementation RFP	RFP yet to be issued with our requirements, and specific questions about phasing staging, testing, prototyping. We also need to know what task dependencies vendors would have on the Trail Conference, volunteers and/or staff.