

Project Implementation Methodology

PROJECT MANAGEMENT

PQIS

Castle uses their proven PQIS (Professional Quality Implementation Services) methodology, which is based upon Prince 2, for the implementation of software application systems.

PQIS is tailored to suit the exact requirements of the project, which is documented and agreed to at the outset.

This approach ensures all areas of the implementation process are discussed and addressed and realistic expectations are set. An implementation framework reflecting respective Castle and Client roles and responsibilities can then be agreed in an informed manner through a clear understanding of the project scope, objectives, stages and resource requirements.

This structured and proven approach enables Clients to control the process and understand the direction of the project and requirements at all times.

Castle's approach to software implementation ensures we achieve the most efficient, effective and economic utilisation of resources. This will be achieved in the minimum time possible and to maximise return on investment.

The PQIS methodology includes two major components, which are detailed in the following sections:

- Project Approach, and
- Project Management

The approach Castle utilises is based on the ten step approach outlined in detail in the following sections:

- Step 1** - Project Initiation
- Step 2** - Software Installation
- Step 3** - Project Team Training
- Step 4** - Business Mapping & System Design
- Step 5** - System Build
- Step 6** - User Training
- Step 7** - Data Migration
- Step 8** - Acceptance Testing
- Step 9** - Live Operation
- Step 10** - Post Implementation Review

Project Management

Castle Computer Services' Project Management will be used throughout the project to plan the project thoroughly, manage Castle project resources evaluate progress and to take the necessary action to ensure the project is on course.

Project Initiation

The aim of the Project Initiation Step is to confirm the project requirements in terms of scope, timescales, participants and to agree an implementation framework that reflects the respective Castle and Client roles and responsibilities. This involves setting realistic expectations to ensure the success of the project and lays the foundation for everything that follows. This critical step of the project includes:

- Identification and agreement of project scope and objectives.
- Clearly defining the scope of Castle's and our Client's efforts and responsibilities.
- Identification and agreement of project management and quality control procedures including project reporting mechanisms and frequency.
- Approval of project approach, plan, deliverables and budget.
- Approval of these finalise Terms of Reference document which reflects all of the above.

The key to the successful implementation of the project within desired timescales is the careful identification of resources at this early stage. Castle is always sympathetic to the need to keep existing systems running during any implementation and recommends that certain key players are identified who will be able to concentrate on the project, over and above day-to-day duties. Adequate resources must be allocated at the outset to deal with all of the activities in the new project without starving other areas of the business required to continue existing operations.

Software Installation

This step will involve the installation of the application on the hardware platform by Castle's Technical Consultants, and the installation of the "Client" software on the appropriate PC's identified by the Client. The Hardware supplier will prepare the server environment, ensuring that the operating system and databases are set up correctly prior to the software installation date. The installation process will involve loading software, initiating databases and basic testing to ensure that the installation has worked properly. Basic Systems Administration training will also be provided during this step.

Project Team Training

In order to ensure that the system designers can make a full contribution to the decision making process in the third step (System Design) high level overview training is performed. This training covers the mechanics and features of the software, explores the scope of the software, and design and parameterisation issues. It is not exhaustive and is not an appropriate end user forum. Project Team Training is split into functional areas (such as management accounting, order processing etc. for a Finance System implementation) in order to be as relevant as possible to the attendees. Ideally there should be a maximum of six attendees at each session.

System Design

System Design will follow on immediately from the Project Team Training. This process involves making decisions as to how each of the application areas is best configured to meet the Client's stated requirements. This step will take the form of a workshop and interview activity. Also agreed will be the interfaces with other systems and the area where manual systems or business process will need to be changed to accommodate a complete working solution.

System Build

The key objective of this step is to configure the application and deliver in accordance with the signed off System Design document. Interfaces should also be developed at this Step, concurrently with the application's configuration (as defined and agreed in the System Design document). Each application will be set-up and

parameterised according to the criteria defined in the design specifications. This entails configuration of working directories and databases, establishing database definitions, defining transactions and associated journals and implementing basic security.

At the end of this process a skeleton system will be available for User Acceptance Testing and End User Training. Whilst the full data set will not be loaded, the system will include a limited amount of reference data, sufficient to undertake system test activities. It is envisaged that three copies of the final system will be provided as part of this activity for training and test purposes.

User Training

The purpose of this step is to introduce and train users on the new system, its scope and functionality, and how to use the application in their work. The training agenda and required training materials will have been identified as part of the detailed planning and scoping as agreed during Step 1 - Project Initiation.

Typically a two or three stage approach is adapted to such training.

- Stage one is delivered by the Client project team. It is high level and designed to give an overall view of how the whole system has been designed to operate for the business. Often all users and managers attend this session to achieve a broad understanding of the overall system and the interdependency of the departments involved.
- Stage two is delivered by Castle. Standard user profiles are developed and mapped to each of the application areas of the system and detailed job-function related training sessions delivered. Here Castle will be training the day to day users of the system in job specific tasks that involve the new systems. Generic training courses may also be delivered instead of a more tailored approach.
- Stage three (if applicable) is the roll out of the stage two training to other end users by the identified Client's trainers who attended the stage two training.

Training Evaluation Forms will be used to assess the success of the training. If some attendees are still uncomfortable with the system after the training, additional work will be identified to address this, typically additional training or some 'hand-holding' during the go-live period.

Data Migration

An initial planning activity will have been undertaken as part of the System Design step and the scope and method of data transfer determined.

This early planning will have identified any interfaces to be developed for the purpose of data transfer, any clean up tasks necessary whether manual data entry is required and by whom. Migration Programs will have been developed as part of the System Build step. In a Financial System implementation, for example, the data conversion cycle should include the transfer of year to date or period balances across from the current general ledger package to the application and in addition, all creditors and debtors master file and outstanding balance details should be transferred into the application.

Manual data entry is often usefully assigned to users on completion of their end user training as a further system familiarisation exercise and may be appropriate for some areas of data transfer.

Acceptance Testing

Acceptance testing is the verification process that ensures that the delivered system has been built correctly in accordance with the agreed System Design Document. The Client's project team members will own and drive this activity and may elect to involve other users to ensure the new systems work for them in an environment that imitates real life. Under the guidance of Castle, the Client operates the system on a pre-agreed set of data making sure that the system responds in a way that enables them to complete their normal functions. There will be testing for completeness and suitability as well as accuracy of results.

During this step, change control should be rigorously applied to ensure that the system does not grow outside its original scope or that changes aren't applied which could have an unpredicted knock on effect in other areas of the application.

Live Operation

A full parallel run is not normally required. The system will be using tried and tested products and user acceptance will have proven their ability to address the user requirements and operational procedures. Provided that controls and checks have been built into the data migration exercise, then both Castle and the Client will know that the new systems will have commenced from a stable and accurate base. The most likely area for data errors to occur will be from incorrect operation of the system in the early days, although some minor problems that were not picked up during Acceptance Testing may arise and specific user requirements that were not specified during System Design are also likely to be identified.

A pre-defined live running step should therefore be agreed where careful monitoring of the system and its operation is undertaken and resulting feedback and suggestions noted. These documented notes will provide the basis of the Post Implementation Review. It is important that responsibility is assigned within the Client's project team for the monitoring, collation and documenting of all live running issues.

Post Implementation Review

The purpose of the Post Implementation Review is to provide a forum for assessing and addressing all resulting feedback from the live running Steps. This may include a revisiting of certain set up or operational decisions and also additional requirements previously unidentified or outside the original scope of this project.

Whenever new systems of any type are installed it generally becomes apparent that new functionality could bring additional business benefit to the organisation and where this could be provided, seemingly free of charge, by the standard package, it is natural to want to implement this extra functionality. All too often the desire to implement added functionality becomes a reason for losing focus on the original objective to urgently replace an old system and projects start to overrun in terms of time and budget without immediate tangible benefit.

The Post Implementation Review then becomes the opportunity to totally appraise the new system in light of everything that has been learned to date. The findings of the Post Implementation Review should then be presented to the Client with recommendations for any further work and sign off for the completed application.

By closely managing the project on behalf of the Client, Castle will keep the original project objectives clearly in sight at all times and no changes to the project scope will be allowed without Client authorisation. As areas for potential new functionality arise

we will document the concept and log for inclusion in the Post Implementation Review. Only major strategic benefit issues would be raised to the Client for approval in the initial project stage.

The Post Implementation Review then becomes the opportunity to totally appraise the new system in light of everything that has been learned to date. The process will:

- Appraise the ability of the new system in meeting the original objectives
- Raise for further discussion all of the good ideas that arose during the implementation process
- Seek the views of the project teams regarding areas where improvement could be made, both by increased functionality and cutting redundant systems and requirements
- Conduct a further training needs analysis
- Document the success of the new systems and recommend improvements or changes that would add business benefit

The findings of the Post Implementation Review will be presented to the Client with recommendations for any further work and sign off for the completed application

Project Management

Project Management is the vital ingredient in all successful software implementations. Thorough research of the users' requirements, the resources available to the project and the potential complexities and risks that might affect the project provide a strong foundation and a benchmark against which the project's progress can be evaluated.

As well as providing the expertise required to perform a thorough Project Initiation step and the associated Terms of Reference Castle Project Manager will in conjunction with the Client's Project Manager, perform additional planning activities, conduct regular project progress reviews and will proactively manage issues that arise throughout the project.

The Castle Project Manager will also prepare quality benchmarks and reviews to ensure that all deliverables pass appropriate quality controls.

A project plan will be produced reflecting the work breakdown required to meet the Client's project objectives. Having reviewed resource availability and skill levels with you, each task in the project plan will be allocated to the appropriate individuals. This Plan will be maintained throughout the project to reflect actual performance against the plan and any modifications that have been agreed to keep the project on course.

Project Reviews and Project Status reporting will be as defined by the Project Manager. As a minimum, project meetings will be required at the completion of Step 4, Step 6 and Step 8. The outcomes of these meetings will be Step Sign-Off's, Minutes and any Change Request Forms that are required.

The Castle Project Manager will ensure that all project administration is performed according Castle quality standards; in particular that timesheets, service reports, and invoices are prepared and reconciled on a regular basis.

In addition the Project Manager will provide the Client with a single contact for all project related matters such as resource, administrative or technology matters.

