Software selection free tool kit proves integral

Technology Group International's (TGI) Software Selection Process Steps and Timeline paper represents a general process flow which may be tailored to fit any organisation's specific needs. According to Rebecca Gill, vice-president of TGI, "Software selection consists of five individual elements or phases within a much larger, overall process. The entire process itself can span months or even up to a year, depending on the number of internal resources available for the project. Starting the software selection process with the right project plan is critical to choosing and implementing the best software for your organisation's individual needs."

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The five elements detailed include Software Selection Research and Planning, Software Requirements Identification and Request for Proposal Preparation, Software Supplier Evaluation, Software Supplier Selection, and Software Implementation.

Software implementation process
- Form joint project team with supplier
- Define project charter
- Order system hardware
- Install hardware
- Install database and software
- Perform initial user and technical training of project team
- Validate software
- Review current processes and create work flow diagrams
- Perform value stream analysis for required process improvements
- Define system data
    - Populate base tables
    - Cleanse existing data for Conversion
    - Migrate cleansed data to new system
- Define system reports
    - Review reports in existing system
    - Review standard reports in new system
- Prepare customised report listing
- Create customised reports
- Define modifications
    - Review value stream analysis and work flows for required modifications
    - Request and review supplier quotes for modifications
    - Authorise necessary modifications
    - Test completed modifications
- Develop integrated test plan
- Document new policies and procedures for users
- Test system with dual path approach if necessary
- Finalise System Security
- Train remaining users and technical personnel
- Pilot system (Execution of integrated test plan)
- Benchmark system performance at pilot
- System sign off
- Implement remaining locations
- Perform post implementation review
    - Perform additional training if necessary
    - Perform additional modifications if necessary

Software selection tool kit
Gill noted that the development of a comprehensive software selection tool was not simply a marketing tool for their ERP system, Enterprise 21. "Our goal is to produce quality software and deliver it to customers who will benefit from the functionality Enterprise 21 offers. The tool kit allows us to qualify potential customers to ensure a good relationship with our customers for years to come. That being said, the tool kit is open to all manufactures and distributors to utilise regardless of their desire to include TGI in their software selection project. We allow software end users to freely download the documents from our website without any obligation to TGI. We are perfectly happy to provide this tool to ensure that companies select the right software technologies, even if it is not Enterprise 21. We have taken extraordinary care to examine all the variables that should be considered in

technology selection and provide this software selection tool free of charge. TGI wants project managers to select the best technology solutions for their enterprise whether it be Enterprise 21 or another system."

What differentiates the TGI software selection tool from others found on the internet is cost and completeness. TGI offers their software selection tool free of charge. It is the same quality and completeness of tool kits that would cost well over a thousand dollars. Gill noted, "We have purposely provided the tool kit for free to encourage those 'do-it-yourself' managers the option to control the evaluation process in a systematic environment. We are so focused on a great evaluation process; we also offer it to independent consultants for free. I know of no other company that offers this type of goodwill to website visitors."

After reviewing the feedback from both TGI customers and those companies that selected a competitor's product, there was unanimous agreement that the tool kit helped them focus, get on track, and maintain control of the selection process.

Founded in 1990 and headquartered in Toledo, Ohio, Technology Group International (www.tgiltd.com) is a proven technology leader delivering Tier 1 application software functionality at a price performance level that can be readily accepted by wholesale distribution organisations of all sizes. The software selection toolkit may be ordered free of charge at http://tgiltd.com/order_the_software_selection_t.html. **2.0**

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