

Technology Plan & Report

Prepared by
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This Technology plan presented to The Sinecure Organization (Sinecure) will provide a short-term strategy for stabilizing the organization's technology infrastructure, and a plan for the relocation of Sinecure's office. For the long term, it will include provisional estimates for future implementations of mission-enhancing technology, as well as for replacement of computers at the end of their lifecycles. These estimates will be used for multi-year technology budgeting.

Plan Outline: Major Milestones

Year One: 2004

- Move to new office
 - Upgrade network
 - Upgrade phone system
- Launch first-generation Web site (static brochure)

Year Two: 2005

- Implement MIS system; track work, show outcomes, etc.
- Launch second-generation Web site (dynamic, content management system)

Year Three: 2006

- Evaluation
- Continuation

Workstations

The analysis of the workstations was based on the age and lifecycle of the machines, not performance or security.

Baseline and Problems

- Some workstations have exceeded their useful lifespan and need to be replaced.
- Workstation OS is not standardized for the organization, making security policies, software standardization, and general stability difficult to achieve.

Assumptions

- Oldest workstations will be replaced
- All workstations will be standardized to Windows XP Professional.
- Where cost effective, workstations will be upgraded with new RAM to meet the minimum system requirements for Windows XP Professional.
- Sinecure will require eight new workstations for the computer lab in the new facility.

- Sinecure will purchase all Microsoft software licenses at once through the eOpen licensing available to nonprofits.¹
- Sinecure will implement a practice of replacing one third of their workstations every year beginning in year two.

Server

Baseline and Problems

There are three computers serving three different functions: File sharing, printer sharing, and a third unknown function.

The main problems with the servers are:

- **Age and quality of the equipment**
The servers appear to be older computers, perhaps former workstations. The components are not likely intended to perform with the same reliability and lifespan as a computer intended to be a server.
- **Reliability and availability of support**
The resource you are using for support has proven to be unreliable. That reason alone is sufficient to recommend a change. Furthermore, at least one of these servers is running Linux as the operation system. While there are many advantages to running Linux on a network (cost, stability, performance), for small organizations the overriding disadvantage is the high cost of support. I have not been able to identify a vendor in the region that is as affordable as the vendors who support Microsoft operating systems. Furthermore, the deep discounts to nonprofits for Microsoft software eliminates any cost advantage to Linux.

Assumptions

- Switching to a better network support provider²
- Reengineer the network
- Replacement of existing servers
- Migration to a Windows server
- Purchase an uninterruptible power supply (UPS) for the server, to keep the server running in the event of power loss. Preferably the UPS should have software that will shut the server down in the event of an extended power outage, so the server would not lose power suddenly when the battery life of the UPS was expended.
- Existing network peripherals are adequate.

Unknowns

- Whether any or all of the machines now being employed as servers could be cost effectively redeployed as workstations.

¹ This licensing is deeply discounted, but requires the nonprofit to make all their software purchases for two years at one time. Any subsequent purchase are not available at the eOpen pricing.

² The estimates in the budget will be based on discounted services for nonprofits, however this shall not be considered as a price quote.

Phone System

Baseline and Problems

Sinecure currently has a basic phone system, but with no auto-attendant capability, and no bilingual capability (other than the users leaving outgoing messages in both languages.)

Assumptions

Sinecure will require a new phone system with the capability for a bilingual phone tree and an auto attendant. The cost used in the budget is based on a system specified for another I client with many standard features as well as a bilingual auto attendant.

Unknowns

- The exact phone system requirements for Sinecure
- The new location has a phone system installed already. It was unclear whether this will convey with the property. If so, its features need to be evaluated to see if Sinecure can use it instead of purchasing a new phone system.

Web Site

Baseline and Problems

Sinecure is currently in transition from a one-page "place holder" Web page to a static Web site being developed in Microsoft FrontPage for a nominal fee. The main contribution of this process will be a site design, and a minimal amount of content. However, the ambitions of Sinecure for its Web site exceed the practical limitations of a site built and managed in such a way.

Assumptions³

- Sinecure will concentrate on the graphic design of the site, and only publish a minimal amount of content
- An appropriate Content Management System will be identified and implemented.
- The graphic design will be applied and adapted to the CMS.
- The prices used for budgeting are based on an entry-level content management system with some customized functionality.

Unknowns

- The full functional requirements of for the Sinecure Web site.
- The hosting costs and requirements of a future Web site

Management Information System (MIS)

Baseline and Problems

Sinecure currently has no comprehensive system for capturing program efforts and reporting on progress and ultimate outcomes. Such systems are commonly referred to as Management Information Systems (MIS)⁴.

³ Based on my conversation with your board member who is overseeing the Web site.

Assumptions

- Sinecure managers and staff would benefit from implementation of an MIS system
- The ability to show outcomes systematically and efficiently would be beneficial for fundraising.
- A Web-based system would be preferable so that users can access the system from various locations outside of the office.

Unknowns

The exact MIS requirements of Sinecure have not been documented, so it is not possible to know whether Sinecure would need to buy, build, or rent an MIS system. The budget will use an estimate for a typical implementation of Efforts to Outcomes Software for a member organization of Technology Works for Good.⁵

Attachments

- **Draft Budget**
 - A summary with the costs for the major categories
 - A summary with the individual line items
 - A detail view showing line items, quantities and unit costs
- **Asset Metrix Reports**
 - MS Office License Compliancy
 - Office XP Migration
 - Windows License Compliancy
 - Windows XP Migration Cost
- **Project Plan for Network and Phone installation**

This plan shows the sequence and dependencies of the major tasks involved in the tech upgrade, however the dates and durations should be ignored.

⁴ Webopedia.com Definition: "MIS refers broadly to a computer-based system that provides managers with the tools for organizing, evaluating and efficiently running their departments. In order to provide past, present and prediction information, an MIS can include software that helps in decision making, data resources such as databases, the hardware resources of a system, decision support systems, people management and project management applications, and any computerized processes that enable the department to run efficiently."

⁵ We can arrange a demonstration of ETO Software if you are interested.