

Addison Behavioral Care Inc.
Student Consultants - Animesh Kejriwal, Urs Keller
Community Partner - Bernard Ott, Jeffrey Williams

I The Consulting Situation

About the Organization

The Addison Behavioral Care, Incorporated (ABC, Inc.) envision a time when the community is sober and healthy for all its residents. Their vision statement is to empower all individuals to become stable, self-reliant people who have spiritual values and enjoy a sense of happiness, hope and pride: “...*Addison Behavioral Care, Inc.’s mission is to provide the highest quality behavioral health services with a specialty in substance abuse prevention, intervention and treatment. We deliver our services in culturally sensitive ways and improve the community in collaboration with individuals, groups and institutions within Allegheny and surrounding counties...*”

Addison has 23 paid staff along with 7 youth work employees, 3 college interns and some volunteers. The people served are mostly low income families and kids. The Organizational layout is given in the staff section. Their budget size is about 1.3 million and most of the funds are raised from public grants. Income from service yields less than 10% of the budget. Since Addison is a Non Profit Organization most of the funds it receives are meant specifically for programs. About 10% of these funds are usable for administrative purposes. Less than 25% of the budget is used to cover administrative costs. Unfortunately technology expenditures are not included in their current program budget, which makes mobilizing funds for technology extremely difficult.

There are two offices - one at East Liberty, which handles most of the administrative, and the other at Elmore Square in the Hill District (referred to as the Hill office) that interacts with kids in the neighborhood and houses the New Image/Schools Department. The two sites together have an area that is less than 5000 sq. ft, with the Elmore Square Office having only 400 sq. ft. Space is very cramped - especially at the hill office. A lot of the computers, that had been setup for the kids, were pulled down due to lack of space and are now in storage at the hill site. The lack of space at the hill site is a major concern as far as organizing programs for the children is concerned. One of the future plans is considering a central office, a smaller office in the community will be maintained, but not occupied full time, such that Addison keeps its roots in the community.

The organization has a large number of programs to offer. However, technology is not very widely used in any of the programs except for administrative purposes (and the Playstation at the Hill site!). Setting up a computer lab for the children at the hill site was an opportunity mentioned by Jeffrey (see Staff section). Here is an outline of Addison’s programs. A more detailed description of their programs can be found at their website: <http://www.atlccenter.org>:

Youth Services

New Image Program

Student Assistance Program

Youth On The Road To Success

Community Activities:

- Summer Camp
- Community Day
- Spelling Bee
- Kwanzaa Celebration

- United way Day of Caring
- African American history competition

Adult And Family Services
 Family Empowerment Program
 Respite Care Networks
 In Home Services Program

Other Services
 Outpatient Treatment Program
 Co-Dependency Interventive Support Group
 Educational Workshops / Seminars
 Referral and Resources

The staff uses their computers for office applications – mostly Word for word-processing, creating banners and flyers. A lot of the word processing required is for grant applications, reports and in-house management. There is no in-house training for staff, where they learn how-to use applications they have. Though most of the staff is moderately computer literate and can handle daily tasks. Most of the applications the staff uses are Microsoft Office, some financial applications and some special purpose applications to do reporting to the government.

Staff worked with during the consulting phase: (CPs are emphasized)

| | |
|--|---|
| Executive Director: | Bernard Ott |
| Chief Fiscal/ Operations Officer: | Sylvia Nanji |
| Program Director and Outpatient treatment department Supervisor: | Cynthia Henley |
| In-Home Service Department Supervisor | Bill Boyce |
| Youth and Adolescent Department Supervisor | Jeffrey Williams |
| Family Empowerment / Respite Program / Food Bank Supervisor | Reggie Herring |
| Billing Specialist | Victoria Pratt |
| IT Responsible | William Lowers (referred to as Bill in this document) |

In the East Liberty office the PCs are connected to the Internet over a DSL connection. The office at Elmore Square has a connection to the Internet on one computer only. Not all of the computers have a Virus Scanner, newer ones have. Personal Firewalls are not necessary on the East Liberty office's computers, because the network itself is protected by one on its gateway to the Internet. None of the computers have backups for their local hard drive furthermore most of the staff saves their documents on the local hard drive. Bill wants to get the people in the East liberty office to use the file shares on the server, which is backed up. There doesn't seem to be a backup strategy, yet. There are no plans to introduce backup or innovate in the Hill office, because they are planning to move both offices together, so new investments for the Hill office are put on ice for now, which causes some troubles at the Hill office.

There is no real technology plan in the organization. They just react if there is a need for something or something doesn't work anymore. The other fact about the technology planning is the absence of an IT budget. They allocate money for technical equipment from other projects. Bill, who is not a full time

employee, does reporting, fixing and logging of problems - the maintenance work. It took him the first six months to get things more or less stable and he is now starting on making things nicer.

They used to have a Technical position in the organization but a couple of years back the position was scrapped because the yield from that position was quite inadequate. One of the problems with the Technological management is that Bill is the only technician in the organization. However, he visits the site usually on Mondays only. He comes in about twice a month generally, and therefore the progress of any kind of technical activity in the organization is rather slow.

There is a committee for "technology planning". The committee is quite unofficial as such and it is mostly Bernard and Bill that discuss ideas and their feasibility, though Bill is not always consulted. However, there is no technical plan as such. The 3-year strategic plan (2002 - 2005) has a couple of brief clauses mentioning use of technology in the organization. However, there is a definite need for a technological plan in the near future.

The internal communication is handled by phone, fax and regular staff meetings. Addison has its own E-mail domain, but most of the employees use Hotmail or other web mail systems.

The website was created by a college student a year and a half ago and has not been updated since. Most of the information on the site is organizational – in the sense that it has details about the organization and a description of its programs, but not much really to attract people to visit it or keep them interested in the website for very long. Besides, the website is not linked with any search engines, and therefore its popularity gets highly restricted.

Major Consulting Tasks:

Developing an improved and updated website:

Description of the Work Task: The consulting task is to develop the client's capacity to make web site changes, understanding issues related to web site management, and creating a new and improved website that will serve as a tool to reach out to the community.

The outdated Website doesn't provide any benefit for Addison nor for its clients. A newer and more accurate website could help further Addison's ability to fulfill its mission by increasing their ability to reach out to the community and hand out substance abuse prevention information with an additional medium, also information about youth programs can be distributed on this way.

Approach:

- Understand the needs of the organization to get an overview of the website
- Design a layout for the website and get it criticized by the staff
- Develop the webpage from scratch, where the focus will be on uploading the current website's contents after editing; the brochures, pamphlets and tests Addison uses – which are in paper form. (There is a lot of material and this cannot be accomplished in the given period – but I hope to initiate the process and let the staff member continue it)
- Include updated information about the organization, a meet the staff section, a billboard for posts on new programs and a list of the board members and pictures of them.
- Either show the community partner to access and use the web site statistics provided by the hosting service or install a counter on the website to track the number of visitors.
- Identify a staff member who will be capable of maintaining the website

- Introduce the staff member to the web development process from the start
- Let him/her watch the process as it takes place and get familiar with updating and modifying information on the website
- Introduce him/her to downloading current web pages; make changes and upload.
- The goal here is to provide Addison with a model that is easy to use and will become a part of the organization's tasks and planning.
- Hence the focus would be on
 - Using a very simple and easy software for web publishing
 - Drawing out a layout which can be used as a template for adding web pages to the site
 - Ensuring that the staff member is able to upload more information onto the site

Expected Outcomes:

- Addison will have a better and updated website, at no additional maintenance cost or any other expense
- The staff member will become fluent in making changes to the website and hence prevent the data on the website from becoming stagnant
- The staff member will maintain the website fortnightly at the very least
- The technical committee will be able to review the website periodically and analyze whether there further investment in the website might prove beneficial
- With the website being updated periodically, it is expected that the website will be a tool for easier and increased communication between the organization and the clients
- The ability to manage the website internally, should provide Addison with some more confidence and comfort in using technology in the organization.

Expanded capacity:

As a result of these outcomes, the Community Partner will be able to control and direct the changes on the website. This will assist the organization in working towards its mission “to provide the highest quality behavioral health services with a specialty in substance abuse prevention is essential for Addison Behavioral Care. Hence circulating information about substance abuse prevention would further support the cause and mission of the organization”; by providing updated information to the community. The greatest benefit for the organization will be the fact that a staff member will be able to maintain the website, and hence the use of the website can be extended over different areas in the organization.

Improving technological Vision

Because Addison is planning for a move into a new building in the future, Jeffrey wanted to get ideas of what could be realized for future programs, such as a computer literacy program for kids or installing a computer lab. Also he does a lot of reporting and works with office applications. He gets along pretty well, but knows that some of the tasks he does can be achieved more efficient, having a more solid background of today's applications and technological means.

The task entitled here with “Improving technological Vision” will help Jeffrey to broaden his vision of the technological world. This will involve working with office, discuss the organization's website.

This will not only improve his personal skills but also the knowledge within the organization. Jeffrey has a lot of meetings and once he has broader background knowledge in computers, he will be able to bring in ideas in those meetings. This will particularly help the technological planning in the organization.

In order to achieve this goal we follow the following approach:

- Figure out the level of the CP

- Look at some typical tasks the CP has to do on his computer
- Work out ideas what can be improved on those tasks
- Go over the import / export functionality of the different application he uses, to help avoid retyping information, this involves mainly transferring data from applications to others and help to eliminate redundant work.
- Import the useful parts from the Access based Database in an Excel sheet / Outlook / Mail merge
- Help him consolidate his data
- Discuss the current website (with focus on the sections about his programs)
- Work out ideas what could be on that website in the future, and discuss possibilities of realizing the “Youth Program” part of the website.
- Look at examples of good and bad websites and work out criteria for a future section about the “Youth Program”
- Create a documentation on every taught functionality
- Book recommendations for the subjects covered.
- Document the subjects discussed.

Expected outcomes and expanded capacity:

The CP will have a broader vision of how technology can serve his daily work and the ABC’s vision. He will also gain ideas for future projects such as the Computer lab or a computer literacy program for kids. Also it is important for the technology planning of ABC that people, coming to the meetings have ideas and visions about the use and the place of technology within ABC Care in the future. This is particularly important when moving into the new building where lots of ideas can be realized and a lot of planning and thinking has to be done before hand. The broader technological background knowledge envisioned by this task will definitely help to achieve a successful planning for future innovations.

Intermediate solutions and troubleshooting

As mentioned earlier in this document, ABC plans to move into a new building by 2005. Currently the Hill office, being apart from the main office, is a bit discriminated against it in terms of technology. ABC is not willing to invest in new equipment or installations for the Hill office for the reason that most of the equipment that would be bought, is redundant when the two offices are merged. Nevertheless the Hill office has some urgent needs, which will be solved when the offices are moved together, but for which a inexpensive short time solution has to be found or at least identified and documented during the consulting phase.

The idea of this task is to provide for solutions to relieve where it hurts in the Hill office or could hurt when no measures are taken. Imagine a disk crash on Jeffrey’s computer, which contains all the data for the reporting.

Approach:

- Identify most urgent needs in their System, Backup, Virus Scanners
- Teach the CP and Reggie how to use simple solutions such as CD-R for Backup.
- Create an inventory of hard and Software in the Hill office
- Make propositions about alternative programs and solutions such as Open Source software (where applicable) or Shareware Tools
- Workout basic criteria of what material is useful and which can be trashed
- Gather information about non-profit programs from companies such as Organizations Microsoft, IBM, Symantec et cetera.

Expected Outcomes and Expanded capacity:

Hopefully this task will relieve where the “budget freeze” for the Hill office hurts most and will help to bridge the time, until the move. Also this task will make the CP and other staff members aware of current problems and how to fix them with easy solutions. Most of the problems associated with this task will be solved once moved into a new office. E.g. The backup problem will be solved by connecting to the server from the other office. The outcome of this task is really troubleshooting and short time solutions.

II Analysis of Outcomes

During the consulting period scope of work accomplished consisted of four major topics.

1. Enhancing the communication ability of Addison through the development of a new website
2. Training a staff member to be able to maintain and further develop the website
3. Improving technological Vision
4. Intermediate solutions and troubleshooting

These four tasks are delineated in further detail below.

Outcome 1: Enhancing the communication ability of Addison through the development of a new website

ABC Inc maintains a website at <http://www.atlccenter.org/> that was created by a college intern a couple of years ago. None of the staff members have had any Microsoft Front Page experience, and no one knows HTML nor can anyone update anything more than text on the website. The web is a great tool for outreach and contacting people. Currently, ABC Inc uses their website to tell potential and current users about ABC Inc. This includes showing their vision and mission statements, listing and announcing professional development opportunities, offering video streams for viewing and a lot of substance abuse prevention information. Knowledge of how to maintain this website allows ABC Inc to assist their users by providing a source of up to date and accurate information.

Results/Outcomes

- The consultant worked closely with the Community Partner to come up with a basic outline and a design for the website,
- The website was then developed, by the consultant, using Microsoft FrontPage and involved a lot of feedback from the Community Partner at each step
- Much of the previous website’s information content was utilized after significant revising and modification to ensure that the information was current, relevant and useful.
- New features were added such as – the upcoming events section, the volunteer and employment opportunities section, the meet the staff section (a photo gallery), a detailed contact page
- A counter was added too, to be able to keep track of the popularity of the site. However, the counter is accessible by the staff only and remains concealed to visitors.
- The consultant discussed future possibilities for development in the website with the Community Partner and made some provisions in the existing websites for their implementation.
- The consultant also discussed the possibility of acquiring a new domain name for the website since the current one (www.atlccenter.org) is based on the old name of the organization – ‘Addison Terrace Learning Center’.

Outcome Evidence

A new website has been uploaded onto the existing domain name. The website has a new design layout and was created using Microsoft FrontPage. Some of the features of the new website are:

- A more energetic feel and look to attract young clients
- A Meet the staff section – that consists of a photo gallery, and a detailed contact listing
- Increased interaction of the Addison and the community through email, the meet the staff section will assist in increasing the popularity of the organization

Evidence of Expanded Capacity

Since the website was uploaded at the end of the consulting period – there was no immediate evidence available that could demonstrate expanded capacity. However, as a result of having developed a new website, the Community Partner and Consultant expect that

- The organization will be able to work towards its mission of to provide the highest quality behavioral health services with a specialty in substance abuse prevention, intervention and treatment, by making the website a forum for sharing information with clients and the rest of the community
- The consultant also discussed the possibility of acquiring a new domain name for the website since the current one is based on the old name of the organization – ‘Addison Behavioral Care’
- A new website provides somewhat of a new face for the organization on the technical front. With its professional look, the website will possibly be able to attract some more funding sources as well as a lot of clients, looking for information.
- New features on the website – such as a Volunteer and Employment Opportunities section, increased interaction of the Addison and the community through email, the meet the staff section will assist in increasing the popularity of the organization
- However the most important outcome is that due to the ease of maintaining and developing the website, there are plans to upload a lot more information on substance abuse, ensure that the information on the web remains current and updated.

Previously nobody in the organization was responsible for the website, hence it remained stagnant. Besides, since the staff was not comfortable with working in html, nobody took the initiative.

Hence the rebirth of the website has opened a whole new avenue for the organization to explore. The goal of the consulting task was to develop a website that would be simple and easy to maintain. This would provide for sustenance and thus to help accomplish the mission of providing highest quality behavioral health services with a specialty in substance abuse prevention, intervention and treatment by distributing information in the community effectively.

A word of caution – the clients and community that the organization interacts with our mostly people with very low-incomes or residing in projects. Therefore a lot of them do not have access to the web. Thus, for Addison, the web will remain as a secondary means of communication to their clientele.

Evidence of Sustainability

A better website makes it easier to communicate with visitors, allowing ABC Inc to convey its mission of educating the community about substance abuse. The consultant chose to develop the website using Microsoft FrontPage because of its ease of use – and therefore sustainability. A staff member, Victoria Pratt, was trained to maintain and develop the website.

Victoria was able to perform basic maintenance tasks such as editing/updating information, modifying links, creating new links, and some basic developmental work such as adding new web pages, identifying the parts of the website where expansion and development is possible.

The consultant had a lot of discussions with the Community Partner about future plans for the website. These sessions helped identify a lot more avenues for the website such as

- Adding a new section which would be restricted to the staff only and would involve a bulletin board and access to some important data that is used regularly
- If the website does begin to get a lot of hits then considering the possibility of raising funds by allowing advertisements on the website

- Uploading an interactive game on the web that would provide the clients some educative entertainment
- Increasing interaction with the community online, using feedback forms, self-test exams etc.

With the community partner having seen some of the endless possibilities for the website, Victoria capable of providing the required support for maintenance and further development, and the technical consultant, Bill Lowers, capable of assisting both the community partner and Victoria, when required, the whole model seems sustainable.

Outcome 2: Training a staff member to be able to maintain and update the website

Having spent a great deal of time and energy in creating the website, the Executive Director and the consultant realized the importance of sustaining the website. Hence they identified a staff member who would be assigned the responsibility of maintaining and further developing the website – Victoria Pratt. Victoria works as a Billing Specialist at Addison for one specific department and hence will have enough time available to be able to maintain the website.

Results/Outcomes

- A staff member, Victoria Pratt, was identified and assigned the task of maintaining and further developing the website.
- The fact that Victoria was very comfortable using computers and had worked with Photoshop and PageMaker was recognized as an important skill.
- The staff member was given a basic tutorial allowing her to get familiar with Microsoft FrontPage.
- Victoria was then shown basic maintenance tasks that might come in handy such as changing/updating data, adding new data, creating/modifying links

Outcome Evidence

Initially, Victoria was given a basic tutorial in order to get her acquainted with the website. The tutorial included an overview of the website, a brief introduction to Microsoft FrontPage and examples of the maintenance work required. A couple of weeks later, Victoria learnt how to perform basic tasks in Microsoft FrontPage. She could edit existing information, create new links on the website, modify old links, add a page to the website and upload pictures onto the website. Unfortunately, none of the computers at Addison have Microsoft FrontPage installed on them, so most of the work has been done on the consultant's laptop. Hence Victoria has never had them opportunity to use FrontPage by herself and learn by experimenting and exploring. However, Victoria has successfully performed the above mentioned tasks and hence is capable of using FrontPage.

Evidence of Expanded Capacity

As a result of having achieved these outcomes, the organization will be able to sustain the website. The fact that the website is being maintained internally will make updating and keeping information current easier and at no extra cost. Grooming a staff member for web development would reduce the anxiety some of the staff members have while using computers. Again since the website has not been uploaded and no real maintenance/developmental work has been done as yet, these results are expected by the consultant and the community partner. The primary goal of this task was to provide support and sustenance to the website and hence support the mission of providing highest quality behavioral health services.

Evidence of Sustainability

Victoria is adept at using Microsoft Publisher and is also responsible for her church's newsletter. Hence she is able to use Microsoft FrontPage well enough to be able to maintain the website and keep the

development process on –going. The more interesting ABC Inc can make its website, the more information will be delivered to the community.

Outcome 3: Improving technological Vision

Addison Behavioral Care uses technology in their daily business quite successfully, yet the organization likes to increase its knowledge of where technology is useful an adequate and where not. Also new ideas for future projects can be gained by broadening the technological Vision of key members of the Organization, to further its goal within those projects.

Results/Outcomes

- The community partner and the consultant did some office and windows training together
- The CP imported data between different office applications successfully
- He came up with new ideas such as the consolidation of different reporting systems
- The community partner can produce backups of his personal data and is aware of the need of a backup system covering the other employee's computers.

Outcome Evidence

It is hard to state immediate evidence of the consulting task. It is sure that some of the technologies and ideas discussed with the Community partner will pop up in the future in the context of projects. For example the import and export functionality brought up the idea to develop a common information system for all the reporting needs, the organization has, an intern will probably be hired to investigate on the feasibility of this idea.

Evidence of Expanded Capacity

The organization has a key member with additional knowledge and ideas about technology, which will be very useful in meetings about future projects and in the creation of new programs involving e.g. a computer lab for kids or other programs, which will involve technology.

Evidence of Sustainability

Much evidence indicates that the CP is capable of performing a broad range of tasks relating to managing the computers and related technology.

The community partner has some new general ideas about other use of technology and will be able to use those idea in future projects, given that he doesn't leave the organization in the near future.

Resources

Technical ideas and support for non profits

<http://www.techsoup.org>

Microsoft's support website has well written articles on various technical topics:

<http://support.microsoft.com>

Outcome 4: Intermediate solutions and troubleshooting

The Hill office being a satellite office of Addison often lacks behind in terms of technology. Also a tech person got there less often or only on demand, so not all technological needs at that office could immediately be satisfied. The consultant working at the site spent some time for immediate solutions and troubleshooting on site to ease the daily work of employees in that office.

Results/Outcomes

- The consultant assessed the situation together with the Community partner and the tech person
- Some solutions were provided immediately among those were:
 - Inventory of hardware and software on each staff machine.
 - Installation of Internet connection sharing at the office to allow all employees to access the Internet from their PCs
 - Installation of Antivirus software and new Web Browsers in order to secure the now to the Internet connected PCs.
 - Labeling of all computers and wires in the office to make the network topology easily understandable for an external person
 - Providing a document and instructions on how to backup important data.

Outcome Evidence

Not all of the outcomes are directly visible or might become visible only in the future. Visible evidence is the installation of Virus Scanners on the employee's computers, which helps to protect the office from viruses. Another evidence is the installation of the Internet connection sharing in the office. This produced a big impact among the staff. Some of the employees gave very kind feedback to that novelty.

Evidence of Expanded Capacity

Capacity was expanded in a way that computers in the Hill office are more protected against data loss due to a backup of important data and the installation of a Virus Scanners; this is a step further to secure information and work crucial to the organization. Also the fact that every employee can access the Internet from her desktop to do research and write e-mails to communicate within and outside the organization expands the capacity of the Hill office.

Evidence of Sustainability

The consultant tried to find solutions, which are easy to maintain. Also documentation was provided to allow someone to easily continue the work. Also changes and activities were discussed with the Community partner and he is knowledgeable about the technological landscape in the Hill office.

Recommendation

Rather as a side note than a recommendation the consultant encourages the upgrade of the Internet connection in the Hill office to an at least unlimited hours ISP. Their current ISP offers 150 hours a month after those hours are used the office is not able to connect to the Internet for the rest of the month. The upgrade comes with a very low cost and has the benefit that at the Hill office they don't need to worry about forgetting to bring down the connection and given that they already have a dedicated phone line.

Resources

List of ISPs in Pittsburgh: <http://thelist.internet.com/areacode/412/>

Free Antivirus Scanner: <http://www.free-av.com/>

III Recommendations

Recommendation 1: Website Development in the future

Considering the issue of relative priorities and the consultant feels that

- There are other important technological issues to consider besides the website
- The organization has limited resources such as hardware and funding and hence must be invested carefully

Therefore, the consultant recommends that instead of investing time and funds in further web development, Addison should invest those resources in other technical areas, such as maintaining an updated inventory of software and hardware or even data base management. At this point, it would be best to let the web development be gradual and to observe the activity on the website carefully. Having studied the web activity for a couple of months, the community partner will be in a better position to decide whether further web development will be required.

The community partner suggested that he was planning on hiring a summer intern for further development of the website. The consultant feels that this approach might not be necessary just yet and that there might be other more important tasks on hand.

Rationale and Guidelines for Implementation

The consultant, would like to emphasize again on the fact that the clients and community that the organization interacts with our mostly people with very low-incomes or residing in projects. Therefore a lot of them do not have access to the web. Thus, for Addison, the web will remain as a secondary means of communication to their clientele. Having developed the website to a state that can be updated, maintained and further developed rather easily, hiring an intern for web development might not be required.

Being an organization that deals with substance abuse prevention and intervention, Addison has a lot of information, brochures, and pamphlets and self-tests that could be uploaded onto the web. Most of it would involve making these documents electronic and posting them online. Uploading all of this information onto the web first should be the primary goal for further web development. Since Victoria is trained and capable of developing the website, in her spare time she will be able to handle this task.

Having uploaded all these documents, if there is a significant increase in the number of hits to the website, then investing more time and funds into the website might entail high returns and be a justified approach.

Instead of hiring the intern for web development, he/she could be asked to perform an inventory study of the organization listing the software and hardware used. Currently in Addison, there isn't a clear organization of technical material or technical documents at the company. A complete listing of available resources and capabilities of office equipment would allow easier maintenance of equipment, and give an idea of what needs to be updated and replaced. A file containing current technical problems that need to be updated, or a listing of what capabilities Addison would like to have, would be a great assistance during budget reviews. Having an updated inventory sheet will hasten work and allow tasks to be accomplished quicker.

Resources

As Victoria has other tasks than maintaining the website, she may lose her skill of creating and modifying web pages. Since Victoria will be required to maintain and develop the website, the consultant recommends she refers to her notes on how to use FrontPage and runs through the tutorials presented below in order to maintain her current abilities. "Hands on time" remains the best way to learn things.

This method involves picking up some reading material, be it from the Internet or from a book, and finding out by trial and error how building a web page works.

Each of these sites provides information on using Microsoft FrontPage. They can be used as guidelines for what to learn, as well as providing an opportunity to reinforce skills already learned. They are documents that can be printed out and followed along while using FrontPage.

| Website URL | Description: |
|---|---|
| http://www.outfront.net/ | The Microsoft FrontPage learning community. They have tutorials, tools, designer templates, and a very popular set of discussion forums |
| http://msdn.microsoft.com/library/default.asp?url=/library/en-us/dnfp2ktut/html/003fp.asp | Web Workshop Step-by-step information on how to create web pages using FrontPage |
| http://www.trainingtools.com | Training Tools Provides free online courses for several web applications |

Besides the website, Mr. Lowers can be consulted for advice on development of the website.

Recommendation 2: Creating a Technology Plan

While researching problems and opportunities, one of the areas identified was developing a technology plan. Creating a technology plan was discussed at length with the community partner. The community partner realized the importance of the technology plan, and decided to begin the process by creating a technical committee. Unfortunately the technical committee has not been able to schedule a meeting till date, and hence the technology plan too remains suspended.

As technology becomes a critical piece of non-profit organizations, a technology plan has become a vital aspect of a thriving work environment. Being able to forecast changing technical needs and relevant technological advances can help a non-profit use future technology to expand capacity.

Rationale

The community partner has been making a significant effort to transform the organization into a more technology-oriented one. However, as far as the decision-making is concerned, besides the technical consultant – Bill Lowers – there is no other person. Besides, setting aside funds for technology is another issue since most of the grants received are not usable for this purpose. Hence having a plan, guidelines and a set of goals could prove to be very helpful for the community partner and the organization. In other words, a technology plan could provide a tremendous boost to technology management in the organization and therefore increase the level of efficiency and the quality of service provided by the organization – thus furthering the mission to provide the highest quality behavioral health services with a specialty in substance abuse prevention, intervention and treatment by distributing information in the community effectively.

It is important to note that, if a technology plan is to be useful, it cannot be written and then sit on a desk without any future consideration. The use of a technology plan does not come from its first draft, but rather continually assessing and updating it with regard to current needs.

Implementing the Plan

- It's difficult to get a good sense of direction if one don't know where one is to begin with, so the first step is to look at what one has, how one does things, and proceed from there. There are several different areas that need to be assessed, from the specific hardware and software one has, to the knowledge the staff has, to the understanding of the organization as a whole in terms of how it intends to use technology.
- There are also important questions one needs to ask about how the organization currently functions and what resources it has. One aspect is simply to look at who one communicates with (members, audience, funding sources) and how often, what methods one uses (phone, fax, email) and how efficient one is at using them, and what types of vehicles (newsletters, press releases, announcements) one takes or offers. One would also need to look at such things as: accounting, fundraising, word processing and so on, and what machines they run on, how information is gathered.
 - Goals and objectives need to be set and articulated. The goals should be broad and descriptive, and not focus too heavily on specific solutions, but simply state the issues and what is intended to make happen. Here are some sample goals:
 - "Ensure the entire organization is networked and has access to the Internet."
 - "Develop an effective organizational Web presence."
 - "Utilize training to get all staff to a new level of technology proficiency."

Each of these broad goals there are usually some specific objectives that should be looking at the current state compared with the final and desired state.

- Address programs and services, operations and administration, equipment issues, staff training and support, staff in general, the website, as well as include a timeline, budget, etc. would all form components of the technology plan.
- Consider carefully the goals that have developed -- what parts of the plan are more important than others? There may be areas that are going to require new resources in order to move forward. For example, there's little point in training everyone on a new piece of software if it takes a year to get that software.
- In order to make decisions, some serious investigation of options, possibilities, costs, etc will be required. It's not necessary to specify specific hardware and software solutions, as they may change with time.
- Part of the budgeting process is identifying potential sources of funding. An exceptional tool is the [three-year budget worksheet](#) put together by the San Luis Obispo County Office for Education in Excel format. Whenever possible, look for ways to convey your technology planning process to potential funding sources.

- Finally, implementing new technology will not go as planned, things will generally cost more and take longer than planned, and it will usually take a while to reap the benefits of your changes. But in the long run this document will pay rich dividends

There are a variety of templates for putting a plan together, and all of them look at the elements above, as well as other aspects. The [Star Center has an excellent template](#).

(Reference: www.networkforgood.org)

Resources

- TechSoup's [Technology Planning](#) section will help in thinking through the priorities in order to use technology in a way that directly furthers the mission.
- [Why Your Organization Needs a Technology Plan](#), from Coyote Communications, addresses obtaining staff buy-in and reasons to computerize or upgrade.
- [Technology @ Your Fingertips](#), from the Department of Education, describes the necessary steps to identify technology needs, consider options, acquire technology and implement a technology solution.

Recommendation 3: Managing the technical staff

This is more of a suggestion than a fully developed recommendation.

The consultant recommends that Addison segregates the work of its technical consultant into development and maintenance, so that he is focused on providing Addison with new technology, and the maintenance aspect does not intermingle with his efficiency. This can be achieved by asking the technical consultant to work two days a week, instead of one, where one whole day is used only for developmental work, and the second, which could be only for a few hours, to provide the maintenance required and to troubleshoot with the staff.

There are two areas concerned with this recommendation – the technology consultant's position and the maintenance/development of the website. While looking for problems and opportunities available, one of the problems identified was that the technical growth of the organization is not very steady because the technology consultant, Bill Lowers, comes in once a week irregularly.

Rationale and Guidelines for Implementation

Addison doesn't need a full-time technical consultant because there isn't a whole lot of technical support needed. Currently Mr. Lowers comes in once a week, and is primarily concerned with development of the technical front for Addison such as creating a LAN network, setting up an intranet, uploading video streams onto the web etc. However, much of his time at Addison is used up merely fixing the staff's problems with computers, printers and scanners.

Therefore, the consultant feels that Mr. Lowers time at Addison could be utilized better if he was kept to the task of technical development. Ensuring that Mr. Lowers comes in once a week regularly and focuses on just the development, would result in a steady growth of the technical aspects of the organization – eventually result in more efficiency for the organization as a whole and hence finally allow Addison to provide the highest quality behavioral health services with a specialty in substance abuse prevention, intervention and treatment.

In order to be able to keep Mr. Lowers restricted to the task of development, somebody will have to step in to fill in as a handyman i.e. the maintenance position. For this purpose, the Community partner could ask Mr. Lowers to come in on another day of the week, only to troubleshoot with the staff, which shouldn't take more than 2-3 hours. Hiring another person for maintenance of equipment, and to come in once a week as well, might also be an option, but the consultant feels that since Mr. Lowers is in charge of the development front, he would be the best person to maintain it. This approach would not be very expensive; however, the only concern would be the availability of Mr. Lowers.

Recommendation 4: Power User Approach

Situation:

The Hill office, being a satellite office of Addison, often lags behind the East Liberty office in terms of technology and technological innovation. As they want to find and move into a new building they have decided to freeze the investment in technical equipment in the Hill office. The result is that the Hill office lags behind the East Liberty office in terms of technical equipment and technological innovation. Also there is nobody who is responsible specifically for technology in the Hill office, and the Tech person comes in only in urgent cases or every two weeks, which is not enough to bring the infrastructure in the Hill office to a good level and plan for future improvements.

Rational:

On the other hand having an IT person hired for the Hill office is overkill. The consultant thinks that at least some of the employees are very capable to deal with technological issues and are very interested in technology in general.

Recommendation:

The consultant recommends to choose a technology responsible for the Hill office among the employees and allow him/ her to spend part of his/her time on planning and dealing with technology.

Training:

This person should be someone interested in that task and also be ready to get some training in Windows Professional, Networking, Advanced Office and Computer Hardware, this training can be external training or internal with the Tech person. The training will help the new responsible in the Hill office master most of the situation that can occur and makes the Tech person's expertise available for other projects.

Tasks:

The new technology responsible at the Hill office has the tasks to be the person other employees at the Hill office can talk to, if they have problems.

The technology responsible is also the interface to the other office, in what concerns technology and will be present in the technology planning committee to bring in the needs for the Hill office, which were neglected until now.

The new job also involves deciding about accepting donated computers at the Hill office and which equipment must be replaced and disposed of.

Benefits:

The benefits from this approach are no need for the overkill of a permanent IT person at the Hill office and having someone dealing with technology with a background of social work is a blend, which a IT person very capable in IT only can't keep up with, because it is hard for him to see the situation not only from a purely technical light.

Resources

Collection of resources to self maintain office computers and infrastructure:
<http://www.coyotecom.com/database/support.html>

Inventory and documenting systems:
<http://www.techsoup.org/articlepage.cfm?ArticleId=200&topicid=8>

Resource for computer equipment
<http://www.npware.org/links.html#Computers>

Recommendation 5: Migration plan

Addison is planning to move both offices together under one roof in the near future, probably only a part time occupied satellite office will be kept in the Hill district, which provides services such as food bank to the community. The consultant recommends creating a migration plan within the technology plan for this. The consolidation of both offices to a new common office will be a huge task and also a new chance for Addison. But it comes with a lot of considerations and needs for future projects.

Points to consider for a migration plan:

The migration plan should at least contain the following steps:

- Set the timeline for the migration in to the new office
- Create an inventory of the current technology situation in both offices
- For the given timeline decide what equipment needs to be replaced when moving into the new office, which equipment will be redundant
- What infrastructure will the new facility need, make sure that all the wiring for the corporate network is planned beforehand.
- The smaller office kept in the community doesn't need to be fully equipped. Therefore mobile equipment e.g. Laptops for the staff members working there should be considered. This has the advantages, that less computers need maintenance and less equipment needs to be bought.
- What server infrastructure will be needed, is there a place where servers can be locked in?
- Is there a place where backups and documents can be filed.
- How will the different sections of the organization be organized within that office?
- Are there redundancies within the organization which can be consolidated?
- Think about a corporate information systems, such as a groupware (Exchange server, Lotus Notes)

The new technological environment should be completely budgeted before moving into a new building, this will prevent the organization from moving unnecessary and obsolete equipment into the new facility.

Rational:

The goals of moving the offices into one facility should be a more effective communication within the organization. Also overhead created by having multiple facilities can be avoided. Those goals should also be set for the IT infrastructure and therefore it should be planned before moving into the new facility.

The consultant sees the move into a new facility as a unique chance to start part of the IT infrastructure from scratch and design a more homogeneous organization wide network. Not every organization has this chance to do serious planning for the future, so it should be taken.

References

- www.TechSoup.com
- Andrew Dubois – Final Consulting Report for Rodef Shalom (Outcome 1 and Recommendations)
- Paul Harada - Final Consulting Report for ASSET Inc (Recommendation 1)

- Nathan Ide – Final Consulting Report for BTC Center (Recommendation 2)
- Chi Shen – Final Consulting Report Mon Valley Initiative
- Hiu Yu (Jenny) Lo – Final Consulting report West Pittsburgh Partnership, Communications
- Heather Devine – Final Consulting Report for McKelvy Elementary School (Website creation and management – Outcomes 1 and 2)
- www.networkforgood.org (Technology Plan)