



Quality Assurance Monthly Report

This plan was independently prepared by Briskin Consulting and its associates in accordance with State of Washington Information Services Board policies governing independent quality assurance of Washington State information technology projects.

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October 14, 2011

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Quality Assurance Assessment

Project Vision

The Shared Services Email Project’s vision is to maximize email capabilities and functionality available to all agencies and to provide email as a shared service, thus reducing cost and risk. The vision includes the following functions:

- Hosted email services
- Vault email retention
- Secure email
- Remote and mobile email access
- Interfaces with state agency applications that use email
- Service level agreements and high customer satisfaction
- Future extensibility

This initiative includes executive branch agencies and will also be available to other state government agencies. The outcome will be a single source solution hosted in the state’s data center.

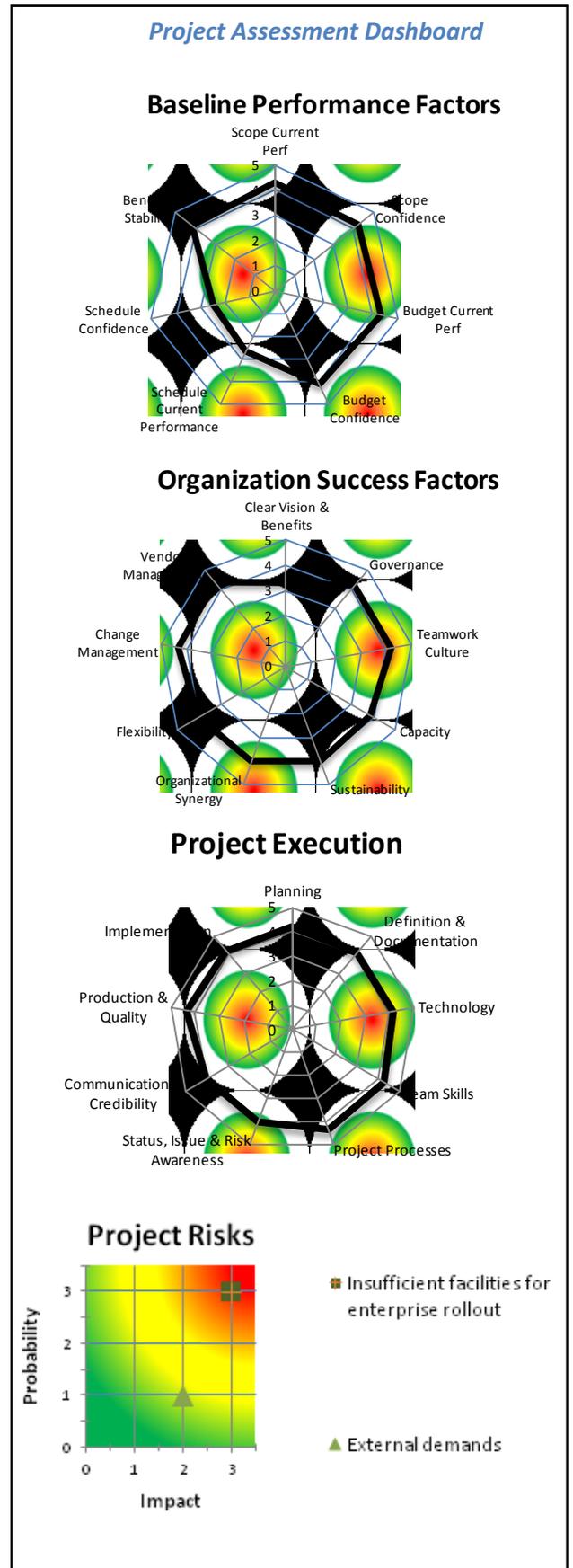
The overall purpose behind the project is to optimize the value of IT by concentrating email services across state agencies to a centralized service to lower costs and improve service.

Status Overview

Overall, the project status is GREEN. Virtually all of the technical issues have been resolved. Agency implementations are ongoing, although there is a variance between planned and actual mailbox migrations. The number of mailbox migrations that occurred in September were low (203), but met expectations based on customer/agency schedules. The Secure Email RFP is back on track, and a vendor will be selected very soon.

Planning for Vault migrations is complete, and technical testing with Exchange 2010 is nearly done. The new Vault environment is configured and complete. Nineteen agencies who are existing Vault/Exchange 2003 users have been migrated to the new version of Vault.

The handoff between the implementation and the maintenance/operations teams is good, although the actual handoff time depends upon each agency’s experience with their migration processes. Consolidated Technology Services



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(CTS) is doing a good job providing support before, during and after migration. Customers are generally happy with the project. They note a significant improvement in communication and interactions in this phase of the project. There are some customer concerns about the service level agreement and costs of hosting, which are addressed later in the report.

Of note is the recent GMAP report indicating that the Shared Services Email Project is “red”, for failing to meet mailbox migration projections. While we understand the rating based on actual versus planned progress, we feel the rating of red is somewhat unwarranted. During the project re-plan in March 2011, the project team created a nearly linear projection of mailbox migrations that showed the project would have over 20,000 mailboxes migrated by the end of September. This initial projection simply split up the 66,000 planned migrations over the course of the project, and did not take into account customer schedules. Currently, all the agencies have committed to an implementation schedule that works best for them. The project is on track based on this new schedule. The new schedule starts out slow, and rapidly ramps up during the fourth quarter of 2011. This, we believe, is not an issue, because it is the same amount of work to migrate 10, 100 or 1000 mailboxes. CTS project staff have the capacity to meet the new projected schedule that better meets customers’ needs.

This is the 2nd QA report for the project. In addition to providing a broad overview of the project, this report focuses on four key areas:

- Customer assessments of project processes
- Migration schedule
- Transition processes from project staff to maintenance and operations staff
- Vault planning and implementation

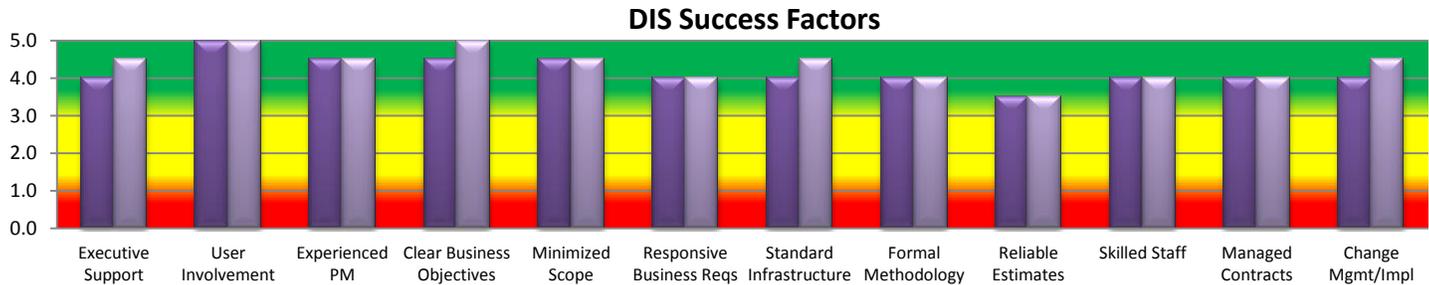
A summary of the recommendations follow:

1. Ensure that communications with clients clearly demonstrate how project objectives are met by the planned scope, schedule, and budget.
 - This will address findings that indicate clients are unsure about what package of services and support levels will ultimately be delivered.
2. Provide greater visibility into:
 - Product and service performance;
 - Actual costs per mailbox; and
 - Plans for system updates and enhancements.
3. Assure that the project has the capacity to stay on schedule, especially around holidays and after intensive implementations.

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DIS Success Factors

The Washington State Information Services Board (ISB) and DIS provide a framework for project management. Through evaluation of hundreds of projects, evaluation and research, ISB has established a concise list of critical success factors that predict project success. See <http://isb.wa.gov/policies/300r.pdf> for more information. This framework provides a quick overall dashboard of the project success potential. The overall QA analysis presented in this report is deeply rooted in this framework, and goes beyond this high level project review.



Department of Information Services Success Factors	Rating	Observation
Executive Management Support	4.5	Support is evident. Project Sponsor is actively involved with the team and with customers.
User Involvement	5.0	Users actively engaged. ActiveSync user group is helping shape policy templates. Agencies provide regular feedback.
Experienced Project Manager	4.5	PM is very strong. Project has good cadence and processes.
Clear Business Objectives	5.0	The project objectives are very clear and concise.
Minimized Scope	4.5	No effort to change scope, outside of planned ActiveSync change order.
Responsive Business Requirements Process	4.0	No change.
Standard Infrastructure	4.5	Industry standard tools and systems are being used for all aspects of the project.
Formal Methodology	4.0	Implementation processes are very strong and consistent.
Reliable Estimates	3.5	There are still some minor challenges with the implementation schedule, particularly involving agency migration dates.
Skilled Staff	4.0	Staff are skilled and capable of handling the work. There is some transition occurring, with new staff onboarding and some staff leaving the project.
Managed Contracts	4.0	Secure Email RFP process complete, vendor announcement imminent.
Change Management/Implementation	4.5	Change management process is robust. Project team is providing policy, technical and other support to agencies to help them in their transition to hosted email services.

QA Findings and Recommendations

This section is organized into four areas:

- Customer Feedback
- Migration Schedule
- Transition to Operations
- Vault Planning and Implementation

Customer Feedback

Purpose: To supplement the quality assurance review, Briskin Consulting interviewed five shared services email clients to see the project from the client’s perspective. The interviews included these feedback topics:

- Project management and communication effectiveness
- Quality of the product and product support experienced or anticipated
- Confidence in project objectives being met from agency and statewide perspectives.

Of the clients interviewed, one was an early adopter, one a recent implementer, two are starting their implementations in October, and one is planning to migrate next year. **All clients interviewed expressed support of the project objectives and creation of a complete and effective enterprise class shared email service.**

Criteria: High level project objectives considered come from the Project Charter and Project Management Plan and include:

The solution includes Microsoft Exchange 2010 for basic Email services, an updated Email vaulting capability, and security through the acquisition of a product(s) that will provide clean email (anti-spam and anti-malware), content filtered outbound Email, and secure encrypted Email. In addition to these basic services, the architecture and subsequent implementation includes:

- *Disaster Recovery*
- *Improved availability*
- *Flexible administration*
- *Increased control over Email integrity*
- *Improved discovery tools for investigations and public records compliance*
- *Reliable, open application interfaces to allow agencies to meet their business needs.*

The system will also include support for Blackberry devices. The proposed solution is complimentary with existing Email systems in the state as nearly all of the existing Email systems are based in Microsoft Exchange.

The system will reduce resource requirements for direct support of Email services in the agencies while continuing to provide the agencies the flexibility to administer the Email environment to meet business needs peculiar to the agency.

Feedback Summary: The following table summarizes customer feedback. Feedback is organized by the topics above, and by customer perceived strengths and weaknesses. **The feedback points included are those that were expressed consistently by all or nearly all of the interviewees.**

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	Feedback Points – Strengths	Feedback Points – Weaknesses
Project Management and Communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good project planning and staffing since the “realignment.” • Supportive client communications that provide guidance and sample plans that are helpful in preparing for the migration. • Good group meetings for administrators are learning and sharing opportunities. • Clear implementation responsibilities between CTS and the agencies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inadequate emphasis on and staffing of project management and communication before the “freeze” and “realignment.” • Insufficient accountability for service costs and rate setting undermines the credibility of CTS’s commitment to a client partnership. • Cancelled steering committee meetings create a perception that CTS is avoiding addressing strategic issues with stakeholder senior management like performance, rates, and delivery of a full package of services.
Product and Support Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CTS appears to be openly seeking input from agencies on how to define services. They are appreciating that many agencies have broader and deeper service delivery experience than they do. When CTS collaborates rather than dictates, agencies are more likely to embrace the new service. • Except for three significant outages, adequate mailbox service levels are being achieved for agencies currently using the service. • CTS is open and communicative in its response to service outages. • Some parts of the service like Web access to email and the Vault are expected to be service improvements over current capabilities for most agencies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An incomplete and poorly integrated service package – secure email isn’t ready, SMTP relay isn’t testable, Blackberry service is managed and governed separately – causes implementation challenges. • Front line support provided by CTS seems understaffed and is often slow to respond. Agencies have to retain more support staff at this time than expected. • Agency support staff have an incomplete set of tools and reports to diagnose problems and track service performance causing them to be slower to respond to customer problems than when the agencies had full control over systems and support. • Management of and communication about system changes from CTS are less proactive and timely than desired. • Concern that service level and support responsiveness will degrade as the client base grows rapidly in the near future.
Confidence in Delivery of Project Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CTS now appears to value the importance of project management in developing and implementing new shared services. • Current project management and project implementation staff are seen as capable of leading the efforts to achieve an enterprise class shared service that will meet the project objectives. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CTS is lacking a roadmap for the future product and service improvements needed to fulfill project objectives. Agencies are not sure if finalization of all promised services is part of the project’s scope. • Agencies are concerned that budget cuts and lack of CTS commitment will result in the service falling short of an “enterprise class” package that provides the full set of reliable, integrated, and supported services expected. • Agencies are concerned that levels of usage achieved will be less than targeted resulting in user agencies bearing higher costs.

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Recommendations:

Overall, customer feedback is very complimentary of CTS efforts to increase transparency and accountability through improved project management, and is critical of areas where accountability and transparency gaps appear to persist. The following recommendations consider how project strengths can be applied to perceived project weaknesses:

Ensure that communications with clients clearly demonstrate how project objectives are met by the planned scope, schedule, and budget.

- This will address findings that indicate clients are unsure about what package of services and support levels will ultimately be delivered.

Provide greater visibility into:

- Product and service performance;
- Actual costs per mailbox; and
- Plans for system updates and enhancements.

Migration Schedule

During the re-plan in March 2011, project staff prepared a nearly linear projection showing when the agency mailboxes would be migrated. This initial projection simply split up the 66,000 planned migrations over the course of the project, and did not take into account agency schedules. Currently, all the agencies have committed to an implementation schedule that works best for them. The project is on track based on this new schedule. The new schedule starts out slow, and rapidly ramps up during the fourth quarter of 2011. This, we believe, is not an issue, because it is the same amount of work to migrate 10, 100 or 1000 mailboxes. CTS project staff have the capacity to meet the new projected schedule that better meets customers' needs.

Recommendations:

Assure that the project has the capacity to stay on schedule, especially around holidays and after intensive implementations.

Transition to Operations

CTS has developed a plan to migrate support from project staff to operations staff once the migration process is complete. Leaders from both the project and operations are meeting regularly to address transitions, process improvements, and supports necessary to ensure that service level agreements are being met.

The project is developing a service metrics report that should be implemented soon. It shows all the factors identified in the service level agreement. This report will be shared with customer agencies.

There is some minor uncertainty regarding the exact timing of when an agency transitions from project support to operations support, but the general understanding and agreement is that the transition occurs after the agency has been migrated and is stabilized.

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Recommendations:

None noted.

Vault Planning and Implementation

Vault implementations depend heavily on whether or not the agency is currently using a previous version of Vault, if they have already converted to Exchange 2010, or if they have never used this service. The implementations are staged based on these factors. Nineteen agencies who currently use Vault and who have not yet migrated to Exchange 2010 were converted to the new system in late September. There were no issues with the implementation. Testing is virtually complete for the Exchange 2010 environment and rollout will start very soon for this group of users.

Regular, customized training sessions are offered to agency technical and policy staff who have responsibility for implementing Vault in their organizations. CTS partnered with an experienced vendor to design the Vault environment, and who will evaluate the implementation after it is complete.

Recommendations:

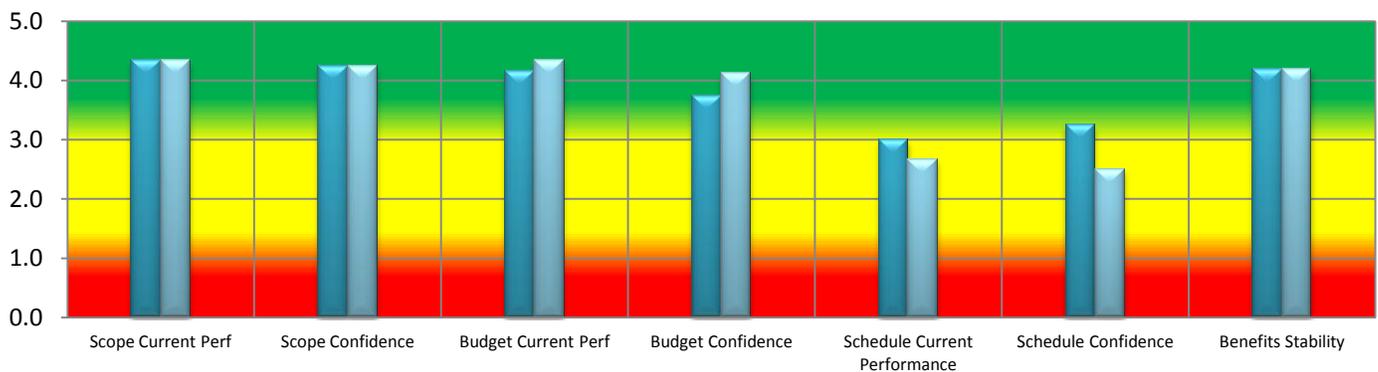
Briskin Consulting has no findings or recommendations related to Vault planning and implementation.

Baseline Performance Assessment

Will the approved investment of money and time to complete the scope deliver the benefits and outcomes as promised?

Success Factors	QA Observations – Strengths and Challenges
Scope Stability – Scope is well defined and baselined, churn is low, and changes are managed.	<p>Strengths: The scope is clear, well documented and understood by all. It appears likely that the scope will be delivered as planned.</p> <p>The budget is well-defined. Costs are trending slightly below projections. The cost proposals for the Secure Email RFP were within original estimates. It appears likely that the budget will be expended as planned.</p> <p>Agencies have made commitments regarding their migration dates.</p> <p>Challenges: At this point, while agencies have made commitments regarding their migration dates, the potential exists for those dates to move, based on circumstances impacting the external agencies.</p>
Scope Confidence – Looking ahead, it is likely that the scope will be delivered as planned.	
Budget Stability – Budget is well defined and baselined, churn is low, and changes are managed.	
Budget Current Performance – Current baseline spending is consistent with plan and value delivered; estimates have been realistic.	
Budget Confidence – Looking ahead, it is likely that the budget will be expended as planned.	
Schedule Stability – Schedule is well defined and baselined, churn is low, and changes are managed.	
Schedule Current Performance – Milestones in recent months have been completed on schedule and estimates have been realistic.	
Schedule Confidence – Looking ahead, it is likely that milestones will be met as planned.	
Benefits Stability – Benefits are well defined, churn is low, and any changes consider impact on benefit.	
Benefits Confidence – Benefits expected of the project are likely to be delivered as a result of project efforts.	

Baseline Performance Success Factors

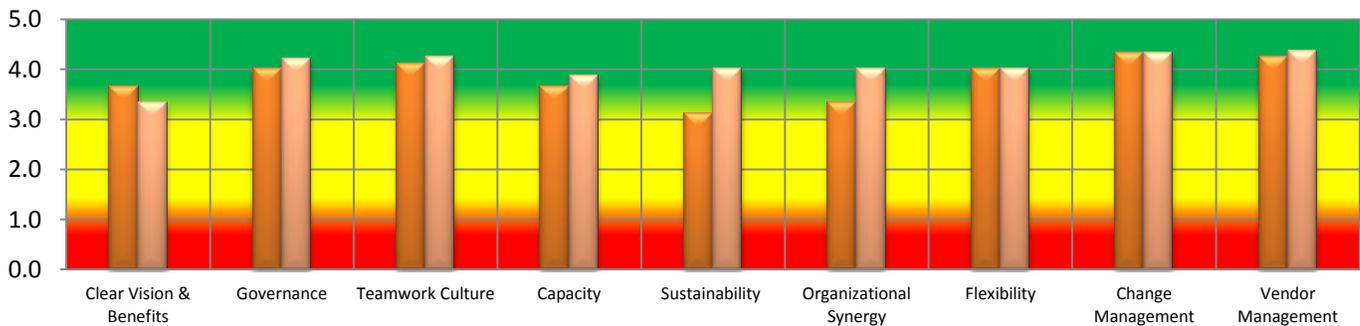


Organization Support Success Factors Assessment

Is the organization environment the project is part of supporting its success?

Success Factors	QA Observations – Strengths and Challenges
Clear Vision and Benefits – <i>The organization and stakeholders have a clear shared vision of the business outcomes, priorities, and benefits</i>	<p>Strengths: Customers are actively involved in project success, and are helping shape the outcomes through collaborative work.</p> <p>The project is thriving even in the face of significant reorganization within DIS/CTS.</p> <p>There is strong evidence of team expertise, particularly with the Vault implementations and agency migration planning.</p> <p>Evidence shows, and customers acknowledge they are receiving strong support before, during and after mailbox migration.</p> <p>Challenges: Some users have expressed a desire for more frequent updates on project status, and regular communications about the proposed benefits and how they will be implemented.</p> <p>A key staff member just left the project. On a positive note, the project is hiring additional staff as necessary.</p>
Governance – <i>There are complementary governance and project structures that prioritize resources, make decisions, and solve problems</i>	
Teamwork – <i>Trust, problem solving, commitment, accountability, and collaboration are supported by the organization and in evidence on the project</i>	
Capacity – <i>The organization has and provides the leadership, resources, skills, and experience to address the work and risk of the project</i>	
Sustainability – <i>There is a long term view of achieving benefits and supporting the changes and new operations resulting from the project</i>	
Organizational Synergy – <i>The organizational units involved work together to support one another’s needs and ensure project success</i>	
Flexibility – <i>Projects are allowed to learn and adjust scope or approach to address changes, risks, and opportunities to improve results</i>	
Change Management – <i>There is recognition and support of needed change to policy, practices, or attitudes to achieve business benefits</i>	
Vendor Management – <i>There are functions and skills to procure, contract, and manage productive vendor relationships</i>	

Organization Success Factors

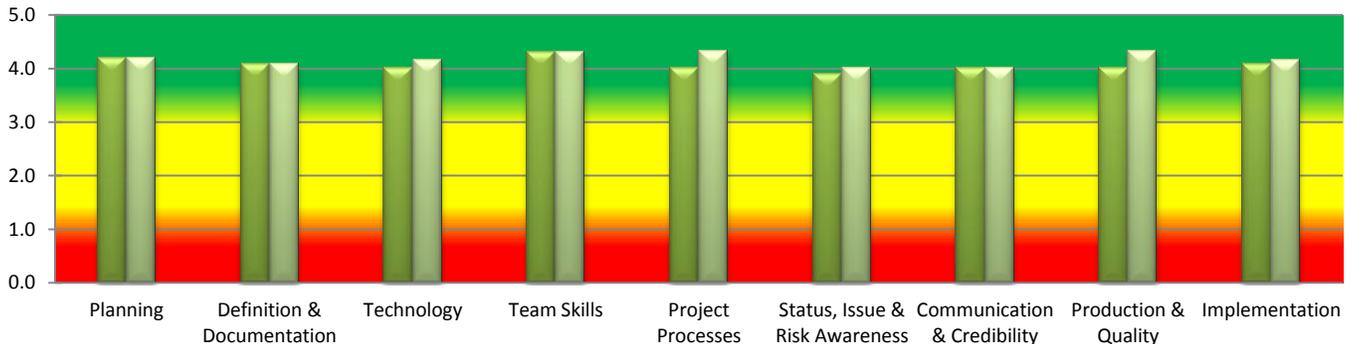


Project Execution Success Factors Assessment

Is the project performing effectively in managing resources and risk, and delivering value?

Success Factors	QA Observations – Strengths and Challenges
Planning – Tasks, estimates, dependencies, and resources form a realistic plan that allows collaboration, tracking, and adjustments.	<p>Strengths: Planning involves input from implementation coordinators and the rest of the project team. The current implementation schedule is far more realistic than initial linear estimates.</p> <p>The project continues to emphasize using industry standard best practices for all aspects of the project, including mailbox hosting, secure email and vault services. The technical staff understand and follow standards. There is strong evidence of appropriate, vetted and sustainable solutions.</p> <p>Challenges Project status meetings have been somewhat variable in the past couple of months.</p> <p>Project documentation is present, but sometimes it takes a bit of searching to find it. This issue is being addressed.</p>
Definition and Documentation – Deliverables, requirements, designs, decisions, and standards are well defined and accessible when needed.	
Technology – Technology applied reflects appropriate application and validation of tools, infrastructure, architecture, and methodologies.	
Team Skills – Business, technical, management, and leadership skills are available as needed and mesh effectively.	
Project Processes – Processes appropriate to the work bring together participants in consistent, organized, and productive collaboration.	
Status, Issue, and Risk Awareness – Timely and objective assessments of status, issues, and risks lead to effective action and decisions.	
Communications and Credibility – Honest consistent communication builds trust, confidence, integrity of actions, and stakeholder support.	
Momentum and Velocity – The project persistently builds momentum and velocity toward clear and achievable milestones.	
Production and Quality – Project work is completed in a predictable high quality manner including technical and business driven testing.	

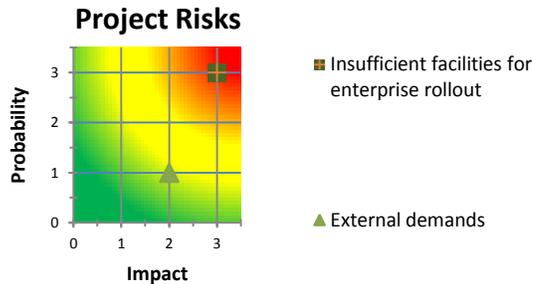
Project Execution Success Factors



Risk Tracking

What could happen that could affect the project’s level of performance and outcomes?

This section reports critical risks to project success that are or should be under management by the project’s management team, based on QA analysis. Not all risks identified by the project are reported here.



Risk/Impact	Probability Level (1=Low, 3=High)	Impact Level (1=Low, 3=High)	Mitigation Status/Comments
<p>Risk: Insufficient facilities for enterprise rollout The Spokane data center is at maximum capacity for existing power, space and HVAC systems. The infrastructure needs to be built out in order to accommodate the equipment necessary for the project to be fully redundant.</p> <p>Impact: The system currently resides at a single data center in Olympia, offering no business continuity or disaster recovery functions in the event of a catastrophic event.</p>	3	3	Work is being done to expand the capacity of the Spokane data center. It is likely this risk will be completely addressed within a month or two.
<p>Risk: External demands External demands can pull resources away from project activities.</p> <p>Impact: Schedule and quality could be impacted.</p>	1	2	This risk is being actively managed. As much as possible, project resources are assigned full time to the project, and are physically relocated to new project workspace.

Risk scoring is applied to impact and probability levels. Impact represents how much realization of a risk might affect achieving project objectives. For example, on this project, if a subproject exceeds its allotted time, overall the project may have to cut scope which would undermine delivering on its objectives. Probability level represents the present estimation of how likely the risk is to occur. A high probability score would indicate a high likelihood – say greater than 80% - that the risk will turn into a real problem for the project.

Quality Assurance Monthly Assessment – CTS Shared Services Email Project

Issue Tracking

What has happened that is affecting the project's level of performance and outcomes?

This section reports issues that impact project success that are or should be under management by the project's management team, based on QA analysis. Not all issues identified by the project are reported here.

Issue/Description	Status	QA Analysis
Secure Email RFP needs to be re-issued, which is causing a delay in that part of the project, but is not impacting the core migration activities.	Closed 10/5	The project team is actively managing this issue. All the vendors who previously submitted a response asked for a debriefing conference, which has been completed. The RFP will be re-issued, probably in September, with clearer instructions.
Application Integrations: Approximately 8 agencies have not submitted information regarding their integrated applications.	Active	Most agencies have one or more applications that integrate with their email system in some way. The project team is working with the remaining agencies to obtain information about the integrated applications. QA will follow up with selected specific agencies next cycle if this issue remains active.
Outside outage issues (data center, network) have impact on SSEP SLA and customer perceptions.	Active	SSEP has been impacted twice by external events that have caused down-time in the past two months. Both of these events have been unrelated to the project, but for the most part, end users do not understand that distinction. Establishing a complete failover site in Spokane will help reduce the likelihood that this will occur again.
Meeting the implementation schedule depends upon agency readiness.	Active	Agencies have made initial commitments regarding their planned implementation dates. They retain control over the actual migration timelines, however, CTS is evaluated based on how well they meet the current implementation schedule. CTS has no authority to enforce plan dates with the external agencies.

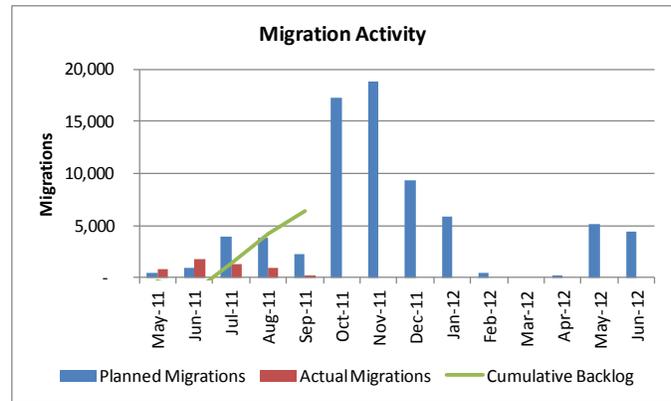
Appendix 1: Baselines and Recommendations History

Scope and Schedule Baselines

The table below itemizes the scope of work and shows the schedule from the project which can be considered to be the current schedule baseline.

Key Milestone/Deliverable	Planned Finish Date	Actual Finish Date	Finish Variance (work days)
Blackberry Ready for 1 st Agency	2/1/2011	2/1/2011	0
Exchange 2010 Ready for 1 st Agency	5/16/2011	5/16/2011	0
Phase 1 CTS Readiness Complete	5/23/2011	5/23/2011	0
Service Level Agreement Finalized	5/27/2011	7/13/2011	34
Secure Email Ready for 1 st Agency	8/22/2011		
Vault System Ready for New Customers	9/28/2011	9/28/2011	0
Agency Implementations 25% Done (16,500 mailboxes)	10/30/2011		
Agency Implementations 50% Done (33,000 mailboxes)	11/30/2011		
Agency Implementations 75% Done (49,500 mailboxes)	12/30/2011		
Agency Implementations 100% Done (66,000 mailboxes)	6/30/2011		
Project Close	7/30/2012		

Implementation Activity	Planned Migrations	Actual Migrations	Cumulative Variance
May-11	497	859	(362)
Jun-11	916	1826	(1,272)
Jul-11	3,949	1308	1,369
Aug-11	3,876	973	4,272
Sep-11	2,310	203	6379
Oct-11	17,301		
Nov-11	18,868		
Dec-11	9,399		
Jan-12	5,835		
Feb-12	523		
Mar-12	-		
Apr-12	232		
May-12	5,100		
Jun-12	4,412		



Quality Assurance Monthly Assessment – CTS Shared Services Email Project

Benefits Baseline

What business benefits and objectives are sought, and is the project on track to achieve them?

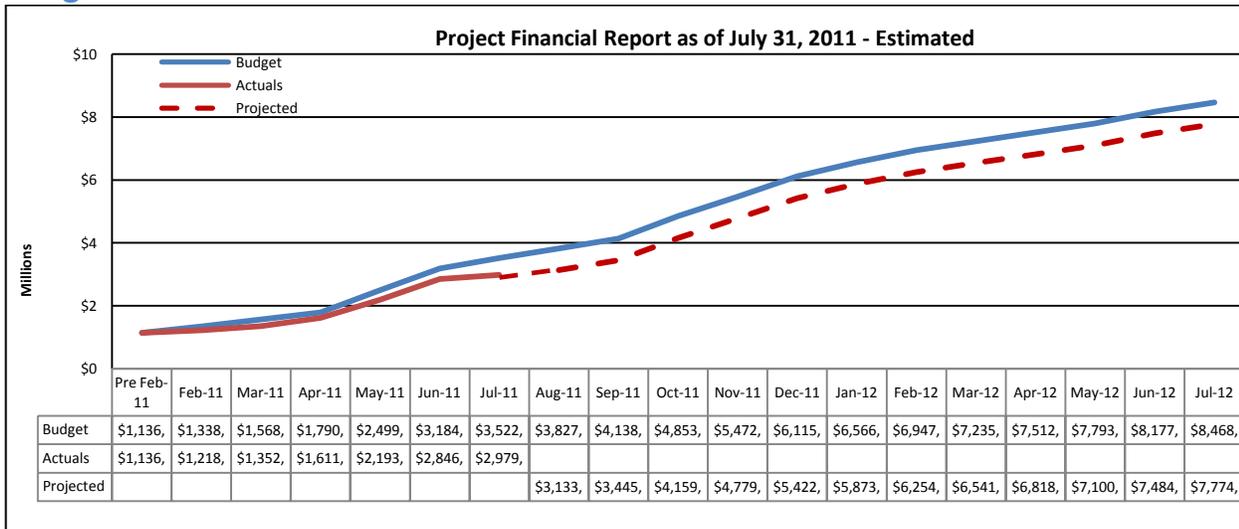
The table below itemizes the business benefits and objectives expected from the project as described by the project charter. This can be considered to be the current benefits baseline.

Proposed Business Benefit/ Objective	Current Status
1. Provide a standard service level agreement that will be developed prior to hosting any agency on the new system.	In scope
2. Provide access to more efficient, cost effective, secure storage for every user.	In scope
3. Provide improved records management, search capability and compliance with records management statutes for file retention and public disclosure.	In scope
4. Provide the capability to protect the confidentiality and integrity of sensitive data.	In scope
5. Provide reliable, open application interfaces to allow agencies to meet their business needs.	In scope
6. Provide a transition strategy for agencies to minimize risks and impacts.	In scope
7. Provide new opportunities to enhance multi-agency workflows and processes through a single platform and application interfaces.	In scope
8. Provide a single statewide solution which guards against spam, email viruses, malware and inappropriate language that poses a risk to agency operations.	In scope
9. Provide a single, secure remote access method to the state email system for authorized users.	In scope
10. Provide secure access to the state email system for authorized devices, while accounting for the differences in agency capability and infrastructure.	In scope
11. Provide a solution that complies with all ISB policies and standards.	In scope
12. Identify agency requirements for the system interface prior to deployment, and assess customer satisfaction following implementation to ensure a good fit between agency needs and the project solution.	In scope
13. Provide an email system that is available 100% ¹ of the time, given limitations to infrastructure.	In scope
14. Provide the opportunity to refocus agency resources on core business functions, instead of on email maintenance.	In scope
15. Provide a competitive rate that delivers a return on investment for the state within 5 years.	In scope
16. Implement the solution in all executive branch agencies, and make it available to other state agencies based on the approved project plan.	In scope
17. Provide a single-source solution hosted in the state data center.	In scope

¹ While the current project charter indicates 100% uptime, the service level agreements negotiated with the agencies show 99.5% uptime, which is more realistic. We recommend that the project charter be revised to bring the uptime goals in line with the SLAs.

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Budget Baseline



Findings and Recommendations History

How can the performance of the project be improved?

#	Date Created	F/R	Finding/Recommendation	Current Status* and Comments
1.	9/1/2011	R	Carefully monitor migration progress, especially in September and October to ensure that the project meets projections. Ensure the project team has a good understanding of the impact of any delays in one part of the schedule on commitments to agencies. Provide adequate buffers, to the extent possible, to avoid schedule disruptions.	In progress
2.	9/1/2011	R	Update the project charter to clarify project benefits and bring into alignment with Service Level Agreement.	In progress
3.	9/1/2011	R	Ensure that sufficient knowledge transfer is occurring between contracted vendors and CTS.	Done
4.	9/1/2011	R	Recommend that Maintenance and Operations staff gather, monitor and address service metrics as identified in the Service Level Agreement on a regular basis to ensure that their capacity for support is sufficient, given the high volume of planned mailbox migrations in the next four months.	Done
5.	9/1/2011	R	Initiate periodic formal risk and issue assessment meetings.	Done
6.	10/5/2011	R	Ensure that communications with clients clearly demonstrate how project objectives are met by the planned scope, schedule, and budget.	New
7.	10/5/2011	R	Provide greater visibility into product and service performance, actual costs per mailbox, and plans for system updates/enhancements.	New
8.	10/5/2011	R	Assure that the project has the capacity to stay on schedule, especially around holidays and after intensive implementations.	New
9.				
10.				

* Status: New, In Progress, Delayed, or Done