Project Assistants Newsletter
November 2012

View from the Top

Microsoft Is Entering the Cloud Arena and You Need a Strategy

Microsoft is releasing its 2013 suite in the very near future, and there is a consistent theme across all of the software: everything from Office 2013 to Exchange Server 2013 will be fully enabled in the cloud through Office 365 and Windows Intune. Project 2013 is no exception to this, and it will be here in early December, so the effects of these changes are imminent.

For businesses that are standardized on a Microsoft platform, there are three paths you can take: you can make things happen, you can watch what happens, or you can ask "what happened?" Immediate adoption won't necessarily be the right answer for your organization, but it is important for you to decide on the best strategy to prepare for the inevitable changes to the Microsoft landscape. Where do you intend to fall on the continuum of early adopter to late majority?

If you don't make considerations for how and when it is best for you to respond, then it will likely adopt you before you adopt it. For more information on adjusting to a cloud strategy, you can email us at info@projectassistants.com.

Offering Spotlight

Governance and Adoption

The majority of our clients come to us thinking that implementing EPM solutions is primarily a technical issue, since the deep technical skills necessary to implement the software don't exist in their IT team. While this is a real challenge for many organizations, that's actually the easiest part from our perspective. The most important and least heralded component of deriving benefit out of an EPM technology solution is really post-implementation solution adoption.

Governance and change management processes are real processes that need to be implemented and managed, just like with Project Management processes. The third stage of our VIA methodology (Vision, Implement and Adopt) offers a proven approach to defining, developing, implementing and adopting a new solution.

We begin preparations for Adoption throughout the Vision and Implementation steps by planning, designing and developing governance. After the solution is implemented, Adoption takes full effect as this governance is administered and continually improved. All of this planning is a small investment that reaps the valuable return of ensuring that the intended benefits of the EPM solution are realized.

Email us at info@projectassistants.com to learn more about these services.

2012 Webinar Series

Topic: *Ensuring ROI through Effective Project Portfolio Execution*
Date: December 11th, 2012
Time: 3:00 PM EDT

Project Assistants is pleased to announce that registration is now open for the fourth installment of our 2012 Webinar Series. On **Tuesday, December 11 at 3:00 PM**, Project Assistants' CEO, Gus Cicala, and Director of Project Delivery, Jim Colton will lead this webinar on *Ensuring ROI through Effective Project Portfolio Execution*.

In our last newsletter, we discussed how Project Portfolio Management (PPM) allows your organization to keep up with modern pace of business. With the volatility of the economy, the unprecedented speed of technology advancements and the level of competition on an international scale, your organization can no longer afford to assume that a project will achieve the same ROI as expected when the project was selected. Your organization needs to monitor the vital signs that tell you whether the original business case is still viable and respond to ever-changing realities throughout the project lifeline.

In our last webinar, we covered the first four steps of the PPM methodology, but that only covers the planning and approval of what projects to have on the docket. This upcoming webinar will cover the final two steps--the execution stage--which is where the true benefits of adaptability are realized for your organization. We will explore the three strata of an organization:

1) The Project Management level: How to keep control of projects

2) The PPM execution methodology: How you put governance in place that maintains that project control

3) The Execution Support level: How you get the business on board.

News and Announcements

Gus Cicala Selected As Contributing Author for Project Management Advice Book

Project Assistants Owner and CEO, Gus Cicala, has been selected to write a chapter for the upcoming book *The Keys to Our Success: 25 Top Lessons from Our Best Project Managers*. For this book, David Barrett of ProjectTimes.com sought out 25 of the best project managers in North America to each write one chapter based on the most useful piece of advice they've received.

Gus has written and sent his chapter, Leadership Is Taken, Not Given: Establishing, maintaining and regaining control of projects." The project is currently in its editing stages.

Project Assistants Launches Blog

We are thrilled to announce that our blog is up and running at blog.projectassistants.com. This is a resource for our readers where we will discuss and answer many of the most prevalent project management questions--from the basic to the advanced, from technical how-to guides to high-level theory. Be sure to leave a comment on the blog or to send an email to info@projectassistants.com if you have any questions that you would like to see answered.

Topics we've already covered include Optimal Resource Management vs. Using the Gantt Chart, The Central Resource Management Metrics and Concepts, Is Microsoft Project Worth It?, and How to Get Your PPM Dashboard to Provide Valuable Business Intelligence.

From this, we will show how project execution and control integrates with PPM execution and control, with resource management serving as the lynchpin between the two.

Included will be a demonstration on using Microsoft Project 2010 to facilitate effective execution of your project portfolio.

Please contact us with any questions.

Project Assistants' Ongoing PPM-focused Webinar Series

Now in the 5th year of our very successful Webinar Series, we want to remind you that recordings of our previous webinars are available for you to download and review at your convenience. Please visit our website to access these recordings, and don't hesitate to email us at info@projectassistants.com with any questions.

Executive Track

- Burn the Ships: Driving Commitment to Change

- What Keeps a PMO Director Awake at Night: Selling the Value of Project & Portfolio Management (PPM) to your Executive Team

- Evolve or Die: How Organizations Use PPM to Adapt to Change

- Making It Stick: The Project Management Adoption Challenge

- Executive Transformation: What Your Executive Team Needs to Know about PPM

- Resource Management: The Keystone to Successful PPM

PPM Strategy Track

- Which Came First: The Project or the Portfolio?

- Building a Strategy for Integrating Program, Project, and Knowledge Management

- Our Project Management Maturity Assessment is Complete. What Now?

- Acquiring the Best Talent for Crucial Leadership Roles

Microsoft Awards Project Assistants As Certified Services Provider

In advance of the release of Microsoft Project 2013, Microsoft has officially certified Project Assistants to offer consulting services on the online capabilities of their upcoming release. This also allows us to sell hosted services directly or as a services advisor for Microsoft clients on Enterprise Agreements. This allows us to offer privileged services on Dynamics CRM Online, Office 365, Exchange Online, Office Live Meeting and SharePoint Online.

We intend to be on the leading edge of Microsoft Cloud expertise, so if your organization uses (or intends to use) hosted Microsoft services--such as e-mail, SharePoint, and Office--then we have the special skills that can cater to your specific consulting needs.

PPM Technology Track

- Optimizing Portfolio Management: Integrating Portfolio Process with Microsoft Project Server 2010

- Leveraging Business Intelligence: Realize the ROI of your Microsoft Project Server EPM Investment

- Documents, Portals and Dashboards: Using SharePoint Technology to Bring Order to Chaos

- Best Practices for Integrating Portfolio, Project & Knowledge Management by Leveraging the Microsoft EPM & MOSS Solutions

- Enterprise Project Management: Best Practices for Optimizing Resource Management

- Rescuing Your EPM Technology Implementation

At Project Assistants we are THE EXPERTS in Project & Portfolio Management, devoted to effectively creating, enhancing and supporting our clients' project management infrastructures – the people, processes and technology that work together to help you reach your organizational goals.

For more information about Project Assistants, Inc., please go to www.projectassistants.com or call us at 1-800-642-9259.