SUNGARD ONESOLUTION IMPLEMENTATION (2013-2015)

PROJECT YEAR　　　　　　　　　2013-2015

CUSTOMER DEPARTMENT(S)　　　Government-wide (Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP)
Software

PROJECT COST　　　　　　　　　$320,000

PROJECT NEED

Augusta originally contracted with Bi-Tech, Inc. in 1997 to supply Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) software, which manages all the financial, procurement, and human resources processes in the city. Over the years, additional modules have been added to the software through various addendums which have been approved by the Augusta Commission, so Augusta has a significant investment with Sungard.

Sungard is a growing company and has consolidated products that it has acquired and updated them to modern architecture and appearance. The newest version of the product is called "OneSolution", and it replaces the IFAS suite of products that Augusta currently uses.

Additionally, the IFAS software has used the Oracle database platform for several years. Due to consolidation within the hardware and database industry, Oracle will no longer be available on a hardware/database platform that Augusta operates; therefore, part of this project will be to convert the IFAS database from Oracle to Microsoft SQL Server.

With the above facts in mind, the need for this project is two-fold:

1. One of Augusta's stated technology goals is the movement towards consolidation of applications onto a common database (which is Microsoft SQL Server), and this project is part of the ongoing drive to achieve that goal. When Augusta implemented IFAS, SQL Server was in it's infancy, and the actual database of choice was INFORMIX. The transition to Oracle occurred in the early 2000's. SQL Server has been made available for Sungard users more recently, and it has matured to the point where Augusta is amenable to adopting it.

2. Sungard will not be supporting the Oracle platform in the future. This is not necessarily Sungard's decision, but it has been forced upon them since Oracle is moving towards only supporting their database solution on Sun Microsystem platforms, which Augusta does not use and has no intention of using. Until this situation became a certainty, Augusta staff members were watching other local governments as they implemented the SQL-Server-based IFAS / OneSolution software.

PROJECT COST AND FUNDING

The cost of this upgrade is approximately $320,000. The annual maintenance is expected to increase slightly, but over time the anticipated savings in person-hours and the savings from eliminating costly Oracle licenses and higher-end hardware platforms will realize long-term savings for Augusta.

The cost will be funded through IT's SPLOST VI Application Consolidation funds. For an explanation of SPLOST, see http://www.augustaga.gov/1243/SPLOST-Information.

The project breakdown by major category is as follows:

Component	Cost
Software	
OneSolution Upgrade (Oracle to SQL+ IFAS to OneSolution)	$149,956
Professional Development	$23,080
Personnel Action Forms	$17,705
Employee Online	$31,324
Software Total	**$222,065**
Hardware (Servers, SQL Server, and other Licenses)	**$72,000**
Total Cost	**$319,065**

PROJECT RISK

Risk assessment takes place on some level with most IT projects, but the larger, more costly, more resource-intensive projects require special and detailed attention in regard to risk. The upgrade of an ERP system and the migration of data from one database and hardware platform to another is a risky venture. For purposes of this project review, the risks of the project are explored.

What are the Risks of NOT Doing this Project?

What is the Financial Risk of NOT Doing this Project?

This is an expensive project. If we choose not to pursue this project, we will be forced to move to another software/hardware/database platform anyway due to circumstances out of our control.   We would be safe for a short while, but a change would be forced eventually, at an unknown cost. SHORT TERM RISK=LOW, LONG TERM RISK=UNCERTAIN

What is the Political Risk of NOT Doing this Project?

If Augusta does not execute this project, then the IT Department does not move toward its goal of Application Consolidation. This element of risk carries political ramification because SPLOST funds were allocated for this

express purpose. SPLOST is approved by the voters of the city. While this specific project was not voted on, the funds that are being applied to this project were intended for this purpose. RISK=LOW

What is the Database-associated Risk of NOT Doing this Project?

The aforementioned problem related to Oracle and a forced platform change means that in the short term, there would be no change for Augusta. In the longer term, Augusta would be required to change platforms, trumping any short-term benefits. SHORT TERM RISK=LOW, LONG TERM RISK=HIGH

What is the Hardware/Server-associated Risk of NOT Doing this Project?

The uncertainty of the requirements for a future database/platform change would eventually force Augusta from HPUX-based servers to Microsoft Windows Server-base-servers or Sun Microsystems servers. By NOT changing, we are simply deferring a change to a potentially less-than-optimal choice in the future. SHORT TERM RISK=LOW, LONG TERM RISK=MEDIUM

What is the Personnel-associated Risk of NOT Doing this Project (IT personnel)?

In the short term, Augusta IT staff would be able to move on to other projects. In the long term, due to the change being forced on customer by Oracle, the staff would have to deal with the uncertainty of moving to another platform anyway. SHORT TERM RISK=LOW, LONG TERM RISK=MEDIUM

What is the Personnel-associated Risk of NOT Doing this Project (Non-IT personnel)?

There is a higher-risk involved with non-IT personnel since the end users of the existing software are typically change-averse. An upgrade will cause the need for testing, meetings, assistance with conversion, training, etc. SHORT TERM RISK=LOW, LONG TERM RISK=HIGH

What is the Conversion-associated Risk of NOT Doing this Project?

There is no conversion risk associated with NOT doing this project. In the event that we moved to another platform in the future, if it was an Oracle database the risk would be low. Any other platform would be of medium risk. SHORT TERM RISK=LOW, LONG TERM RISK=MEDIUM

What is the Risk of DOING this Project?

What is the Financial Risk of Doing this Project?

This is an expensive project. The alternative to an upgrade; however, is a costly and lengthy project to change software, which would involve an RFP, conversion, etc. The alternative would be much more costly than the amount that will be involved with this upgrade. RISK=LOW

What is the Political Risk of Doing this Project?

There is negligible political-oriented risk associated with this project. RISK=LOW

What is the Database-associated Risk of this Project?

The SQL Server platform is part of Augusta's overall technology strategy. By changing, we're moving to a platform that has been very successful overall, but which has had difficulties with larger systems. The Sungard OneSolution system is the second-largest implementation within Augusta government. RISK=MEDIUM

What is the Hardware/Server-associated Risk of this Project?

The SQL Server platform is part of Augusta's overall technology strategy. The change forces Augusta from HPUX-based servers to Microsoft Windows Server-base-servers. By changing, we're moving to a platform that has been very successful overall, but which has had difficulties with larger systems. The Sungard OneSolution

system is the second-largest implementation within Augusta government. We have encountered server and hardware issues with large system before. RISK=HIGH

What is the Personnel-associated Risk of this Project (IT personnel)?

There is negligible personnel-oriented risk associated with this project. The personnel on IT's team can perform this project, even though workload will be high and it is likely that overtime hours and/or dedicated assistance from other groups in IT may be required. RISK=MEDIUM

What is the Personnel-associated Risk of this Project (Non-IT personnel)?

There is a higher-risk involved with non-IT personnel since the end users of the existing software are typically change-averse. An upgrade will cause the need for testing, meetings, assistance with conversion, training, etc. which would place a great burden on staff that already feels they are working beyond their capacity. RISK=HIGH

What is the Conversion-associated Risk of Doing this Project?

There is some risk associated with the conversion of our existing data. IT staff understand that pitfalls of conversion, and can guide the end users toward a successful conversion. The difficulty lies in testing and validation, which is dependent on end users. RISK=MEDIUM

Conclusion

The change being forced by Oracle (which would require us to utilize a Sun Microsystems platform) has become more of a driving force than the desire to consolidate applications. NOT Doing this project would only be acceptable for a short time; therefore, the risk of NOT doing this project far outweighs the risk of DOING the project.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

There are several components to this project. They are described below in terms of the problems that they are addressing as well as the benefits to be derived from them:

- Database Change: Augusta is moving from an Oracle database to a SQL Server database. This moves one of our major platforms to an easier-to-maintain database architecture and permits us to take advantage of a more diverse set of technological tools (through Microsoft). This change satisfies part of IT's goal of consolidating applications and databases to a smaller number of platforms.

- The contract for the upgrade includes *training* for the new OneSolution application, which will permit Augusta to refresh the knowledge base for all employees that utilize the system and bring everyone to a common level of understanding on the software and its capabilities. This permits Augusta to have a new group of "experts" in the use of the software rather than a group that has been whittled away by attrition.

- The move to OneSolution permits Augusta to take advantage of the additional Human Resources (HR) features that are available in OneSolution:

  - Automated Requests for Personnel Action (RPA): This is currently a paper-driven process that creates a huge administrative burden on the HR Department. Automating RPAs will streamline this procedure, which will eliminate vast amounts of paper that currently are moved manually from department to department. The potential benefit of the automated RPA is *hundreds* of person-hours saved every year.

  - Professional Development: This function is also an HR tool that will permit better tracking of personnel and their various certifications, degrees, and job requirements. Stated another way,

the PD tool allows HR to ensure that the training and certifications of all personnel are tracked, validated, and updated as needed. This is a function that has not been performed in the past, and provides Augusta with a real opportunity to help "shepherd" the careers of employees.

- o Employee Online: This tool will permit employees to log in from home or work in order to update their personal information and/or benefits selections.

- o Enhanced Reporting capabilities for the entire system (using Cognos). IT is currently the department responsible for 90% of report updates. Most end-user departments are "customers" of IT's capabilities in this area. The new system will have a less technical, more user-friendly set of reporting tools.

- The change to OneSolution permits Augusta to put funding into a hardware & software platform (Microsoft) that is more open than the existing Oracle platform and can be easily linked with other systems. Oracle's development path is projected to be more costly and will actually require the purchase of new, large-scale equipment on a different operating system than we currently use for any other application.

- Increase Transparency Opportunities: Augusta has an initiative entitled *BudgetWatch*, which is a project currently underway within the Information Technology Department. BudgetWatch is intended to increase citizen's accessibility to budget, revenue, and expense-related information. One of the major benefits of the OneSolution upgrade is that Sungard has additional tools available from their business partners that will enable a "dashboard" style presentation of information. If Augusta opts to decline the use of one of the business partners, the city will use a mixture of the existing iDashboard product (which is already used for multiple city dashboards) as well as ARCGIS, so that there is a geographic component to city projects. The use of Microsoft SQL Server instead of Oracle eases the path toward the implementation of this project, since there are stronger license-independent and user-friendly tools for making the SQL Server database available for viewing. See http://www.augustaga.gov/DocumentCenter/View/5819 for more information on BudgetWatch.

The project will take place throughout 2014 and into 2015, with an anticipated go-live in the 1st quarter of 2015.

This project will take advantage of Augusta's cloud-based (online) TeamworkPM project management solution in order to provide the maximum opportunity for collaboration among the participants. You can read more about this initiative here: http://www.augustaga.gov/DocumentCenter/View/5835

CONCLUSION

This is one of the more ambitious projects undertaken by IT in recent years. In essence, this project is similar to the implementation of a new ERP solution because of the significant need for testing, conversion, and the migration to a new platform. Augusta will depend on the expertise of the IT Department and the absolutely *critical* participation of end users to ensure that the project is a success.