

A Strategic Delivery Framework Sets the Stage for Success

By Andrew Cadwell

When you establish a repeatable process, you build a framework that enables best practices that add to the business benefits of the process itself.

Adopt 21st Century Success Measurements

21st century success measurements say that its not enough anymore to have a project delivered “OTOB”--or on time and on budget. These are the traditional measurements in any technology-centric services organization. The problem is, even by these *simple* measures, most technology projects are a failure. SDF builds in mechanisms to deliver projects OTOB, and these assurances lower risk by all accounts. But to truly raise the bar and to assure CUSTOMER success, the following must also be measured:

1. **Delivery within project constraints** – This is the traditional OTOB measurement. Good for the customer, and good for the Solution Provider.
2. **Smooth deployment and ongoing system management** – In a customer’s eyes, a smooth deployment is indicative of good technology. Conversely, a poor deployment not only puts the Solution Provider in a bad light, but the customer begins to suspect the technology itself.
3. **Delivery to specifications based on user requirements** – User adoption is critical to the success of a solution. It seems obvious, but many technology vendors and channel partners ignore this basic truth and focus on IT. Ignoring the *customers* of IT can be a big mistake and can lead to perception of a poor solution
4. **Deployment after knowing and addressing all issues** – Advanced technology can be full of bugs. To *not* address these bugs honestly and up-front can lead to project failure. Set correct expectations when the problem appears. Don’t worry if you can’t solve every problem today. Be honest and have a path to solving the issue.
5. **Referenceability** – Surprisingly, most solution providers and vendors don’t get the reference until they need it for another client, a marketing initiative or whatever. Get the reference immediately after you have implemented the solution. This is the best time—customers’ memories fade, people change, environments change, solutions can break.
6. **Demonstration of business value to the customer** – In the late 90s, speculation was enough to fuel demand for advanced technology. Today’s market is much more difficult. You **MUST** be able to demonstrate and deliver business value, or you will not survive. This should be a key success measurement in your business. Go back in after the fact and personally assure that your customer is satisfied in this area.
7. **Profitability based on management objectives** – We’ve all experienced a customer who will beat you up on price, even if what you are offering is demonstrable to *their* success. Decide what your profit metric should be to define success or failure. You can still make a profit but be considered a failure if the next customer would have paid a fair

price, gained the same amount of value and taken your resource the same amount of time. This is opportunity cost.

Create a Belief System of Superior Execution

Finally, in an organization that has accomplished differentiation, a belief system will mature from a traditional “trades” mentality (such as plumbers, electricians etc.) into a true “professional services organization (PSO)” mentality. Information is currency in today’s market. Whether you choose to place monetary value on information, it has intrinsic value to your organization. SDF allows organizations a very fast transformation to a PSO model. A pure PSO model places value on all information exchanges, and you can charge accordingly for knowledge and execution. Examples of pure PSO’s are law, accounting and engineering firms. Can you imagine if your sales resources were able to bill for their time at a customer? SDF gives you a mechanism for this and customers readily accept this if they see you as a PSO.

There are many business benefits of SDF (see [Position “Process” as a Competitive Advantage](#) and [A Framework That Works for Delivering Services](#)). Creating differentiation and value through process creates compelling competitive advantages in today’s very tough market. The ultimate business benefit of these competitive advantages is to survive and then thrive.

For more information:

Contact Andrew Cadwell at andyc@kickstartall.com or (503) 803-2692 if you would like to differentiate your business or gain more business benefits as a result of process or creating your own Strategic Delivery Framework.

About the author:

Andrew Cadwell is a contributing member and principal consultant affiliate of KickStart Alliance, a marketing and sales consulting consortium that helps businesses of all sizes with business agility. Andy is a serial entrepreneur with 20 plus years of experience in rapid growth companies and markets. Andy has owned, managed and spun out several successful businesses, most recently in the technology industry. Since he has started his consulting practice, has provided strategy, leadership, sales and operations consulting services to both early stage and mature companies in the technology industry. His clients range from start-up companies to distinguished members of the Fortune 50.