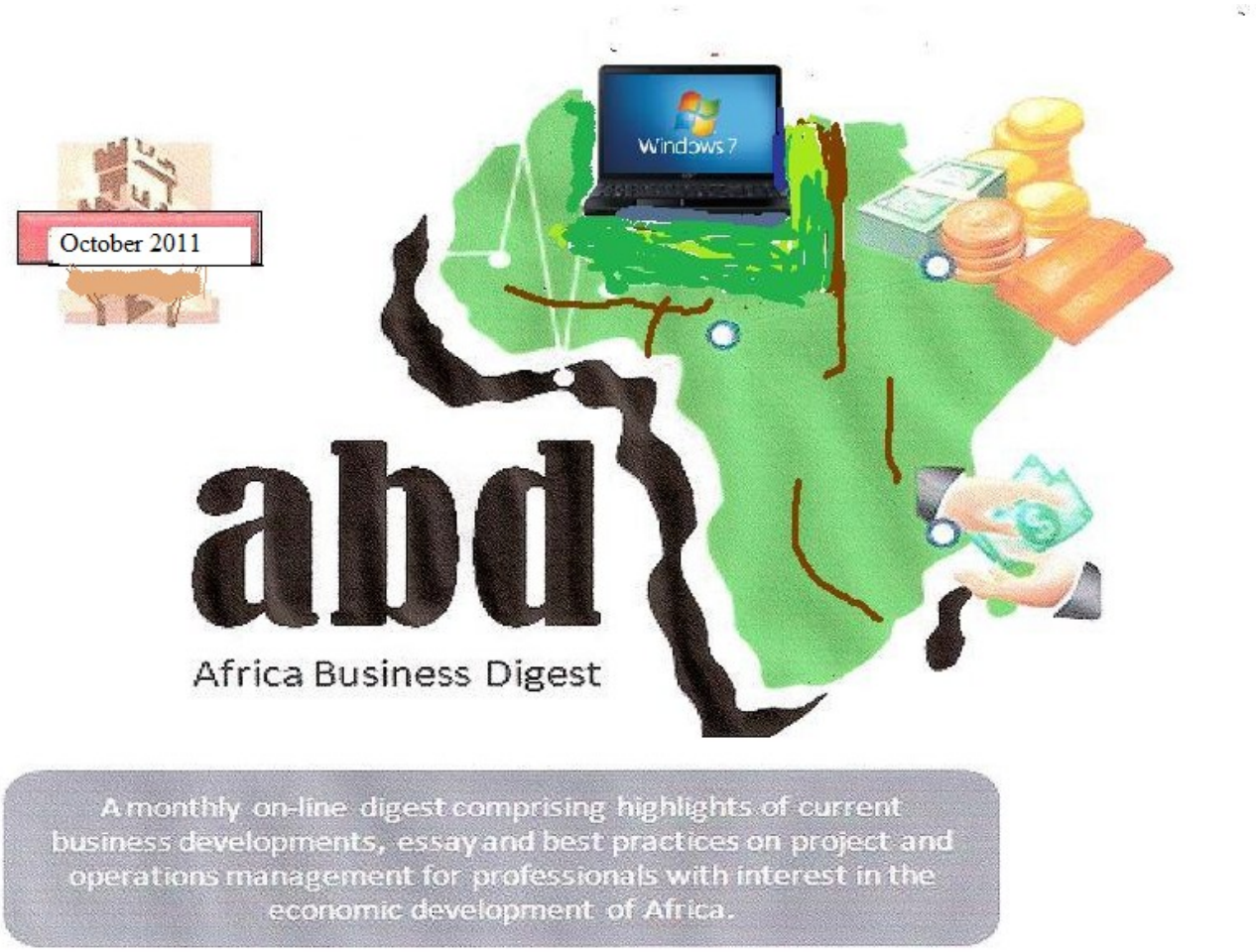

Contents

Courses

Training dates for Oracle Primavera Project Management Courses

- For Basic course: November 2nd - 4th, 21st -23rd , 28th - 30th
- For Advanced Course: November 7th - 9th

Venue: Total Technology Consultants Limited, Training Room,

Flat 4 God's Grace Estate, 5 Waterworks Road, Rumuola, Port Harcourt.

Phone: +234(0)8037100284

1. Facilitating Professional and National Industrial Development.

In this issue, our focus is on topics that facilitate personal professional and national industrial development. It takes dedicated professionals to achieve the industrialisation of their nation. Therefore, personal professional development is not only important but has to be greatly encouraged as dedicated and well informed professionals are necessary to lead and direct the nation in continual national industrial development.

We first introduce a series on national industrial development. It is entitled: "Problems Militating Against the Success of Nigeria's Vision 2020". We intend to write on in subsequent issues. We then return to one of our choice topics, that is Cloud Computing. Our desire is to discuss its relevance, and stress the importance for businesses to adopt it in order to continue with IT applications both in the short and long term. Others are two excellent and practical articles on goals of a project manager, and project finance. We trust that you will find this issue professionally rewarding.

2. An introduction to the series: Problems Militating Against the Success of Nigeria's Vision 2020.

Successive Nigerian leaders at different times expressed their determination to develop our nation industrially. This has been true of both military and civilian administration. There is no claim here that our leaders have been without their faults. Nevertheless, they have made varying degrees of efforts to work for our economic development. These efforts notwithstanding, Nigeria remains underdeveloped and we are still saddled with our multiplicity of problems.

Vision 2020 programme describes the current national initiatives by the Federal Government for the industrialisation of the country by the Year 2020. We need to encourage the zeal and the efforts to succeed. However, the failures experienced by previous administration could not have been due to lack of the zeal to succeed. Projects succeed not because of sentiments or zeal but because of faithful application of structured project management methodologies.

In a series of articles, we intend to explore current and recurring national problems and suggest solutions that could contribute to their solution. Until we find solutions to these recurrent national problems, the attainment of the desired remarkable level of industrialisation at 2020 remains a mirage.

Arguably, our major topical national problems include the following:

- Perennial inadequate power supply.
- Poor and non-sustained development of national industrial infrastructure
- Poor development and utilisation of human resources and infrastructure in the oil and gas industry
- Institutionalised human failings and and retrogressive national habits

In the next issue, we shall write on "Perennial Inadequate Power Supply and Suggestions for its Solution".

3. Cloud Computing, an Inevitable Future Investment

Cloud Computing has been seen as the evolutionary trend for IT, a natural next-step following the widespread adoption of virtualization and the profusion of high-speed bandwidth. Others see it as another word for (web) host-based computing, in effect, a return full-circle to the fifty-year old model of input/output (I/O) devices connected to a shared mainframe. But this time, there is a wide variety of useful, even fun I/O devices like smart phones and tablets, and the connection to the shared cloud is wireless. Both schools of thought

(evolution and full-circle) are true. It is also reasonable to recognize that the paradigms shifting are natural and unstoppable phenomena — to be embraced or be sacrificed to. Start using cloud or be damaged by it if you do not use it! This message in many forms is finding its way to all corners of the IT ecosystem. IT careers and businesses that do not involve the cloud are expected to have short lifetimes.

Whether you are framing an IT career, or contemplating building your own cloud(s), or comparing the cloud offering of one vendor to the competition, it is imperative that your decisions are based on reason and research. Do not invest based on fear, uncertainty, or the latest marketing pitch you heard on how well a particular vendor's cloud solution matches their definition of 'the cloud'. What would help is a definition-based standard, to which you can compare a particular cloud-based opportunity or offering.

However, there is an independent scientific authority that has published a draft definition of cloud computing: the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST). By comparing the characteristics of a solution under evaluation to the vendor-neutral NIST cloud computing model, you can validate that the solution meets the minimum standards of architecture and workflow to be called a cloud solution and just how "cloudy" the solution really is! In point of fact, **this task of evaluating the propriety of a Cloud solution should belong to consultants.** .They have to search for Cloud solutions that have all the essential characteristics, and are deployed with the appropriate cloud and service delivery models to meet your requirements. Such solutions will have the highest chance of success in the marketplace and in your business.

Clouds have five (5) essential characteristics, regardless of deployment or service model.

Essential characteristics of cloud service models

Regardless of the type of cloud deployment model used, a cloud solution needs to deliver value based on one of three recognized service models: Infrastructure, Platform, or Software as a Service (IaaS, PaaS, or SaaS). These models make clear the demarcation line of responsibility for various components between the cloud provider and the user. The user has the most involvement in the IaaS model, and the least in the SaaS model.

- In the Software as a Service (SaaS) model, software is used in the operations such as running a web-mail client. Examples include Google's Gmail or Microsoft's Hotmail.
- In the Infrastructure as a Service (IaaS) model, the user needs to assemble and maintain the cloud-hosted infrastructure components such as virtual machines, storage pools, and firewalls, sometimes called the *cloud fabric*.
- The intermediate model, Platform as a Service (PaaS), enables users to deploy their application on a cloud provider platform without managing the infrastructure.

Once you have checked out the cloud deployment and service models employed by a given solution, it is equally necessary to ensure that the cloud exhibits all the essential characteristics defined by the NIST. They include the following:

- On-Demand Self Service: Users provision capabilities as needed and/or automatically, without human interaction by a service provider.
- Broad Network Access: Standard network/Internet access mechanisms promote location-independent use by diverse platforms such as smart phones.

- Resource Pooling: The service provider hosts compute, network, and storage resources in a model that supports multi-tenancy, with dynamic assignment and reassignment of resources according to demand.
- Rapid Elasticity: Rapid scale out and scale back of resources; from the user's point of view, there are unlimited resources that are paid for based on the quantities actually consumed.
- Measured Service: Resources are optimized and controlled with a metering capability, with transparent reports on consumption shared with the user.

As mentioned at the beginning of the article, there are many different versions of what cloud computing is or can become. Often these are influenced by individuals and organizations that have a lot of investment in a particular component of the cloud ecosystem, such as virtualization or networking. Someone trying to sell a cloud solution should be able to describe the deployment and service model for it, as well as match up the solution's features to the essential characteristics of the NIST cloud definition.

You might consider avoiding proposed cloud solutions with unclear deployment or service models, as well as those missing one or more essential characteristics. Cloud solutions that pass the definition test can be considered fairly on their price-performance value.

Acknowledgement: This write-up has been culled from an article by John Joyner. He is a senior IT architect at ClearPointe, a US IT managed services company, and co-author of the Operations Manager; unleashed book series.

4. Five Suggested Goals of a Project Manager

These goals are generic to all industries and all types of projects. Regardless of our level of experience in project management, it is advisable that we set these goals for every project we manage.

Goal 1: To Complete on time

This is the oldest but trickiest goal in the book. It is the most difficult because the requirements often change during the project and the schedule was probably optimistic in the first place.

To succeed, we need to manage our scope very carefully. Implement a change control process so that any changes to the scope are properly managed. We should always keep our plan up to date, recording actual versus planned progress. Identify any deviations from plan and fix them quickly.

Goal 2: To finish under budget

To make sure that our project costs do not spiral, we need to set a project budget at the start to compare against. We should include in this budget, all of the types of project costs that will accrue, whether they are to do with people, equipment, suppliers or materials. Then work out how much each task in our plan is going to cost to complete and track any deviations from this plan. We need to ensure that if we over-spend on some tasks, that we under-spend on others. In this way, we can control our spending and deliver under budget.

Goal 3: To meet the requirements

The goal here is to meet the requirements that were set for the project at the start. Whether the requirements were to install a new IT system, build a bridge or implement new processes, our project needs to produce solutions which meet these requirements 100%.

The trick here is to make sure that we have a detailed enough set of requirements at the beginning. If they are ambiguous in any way, then what was initially seen as a small piece of work could become huge, taking up valuable time and resources to complete.

Goal 4: To satisfy customers' expectations

We could finish our project on time, under budget and have met 100% of the requirements—but still have unhappy customers. This is usually because their expectations have changed since the project started and have not been properly managed.

To ensure that our project sponsor, customer and other stakeholders are happy at the end of our project, we need to manage their expectations carefully. We ensure always to keep them properly informed of progress. "Keep it real" by giving them a crystal clear view of progress to date. Let them voice their concerns or ideas regularly. Tell them upfront when we cannot deliver on time, or when a change needs to be made. Openness and honesty are always the best tools for setting customer expectations.

Goal 5: To ensure a happy team

If we can do all of these with a happy team, then we will be more than willing to do it all again for the next project. And that is how our staff will feel also. Staff satisfaction is critical to our project's success.

We need to keep your team happy by rewarding and recognizing them for their successes. Assign them work that complements their strengths and conduct team building exercises to boost morale. With a happy motivated team, we can achieve our goals.

Note: It is advisable to work ***smart*** to achieve these goals, using appropriate software products.

5. How to Manage our Project Finances

Every project needs to be delivered "under budget". However, when we have to oversee people, contractors, equipment and materials on a daily basis, we need to be able to track the cost of all of this easily. How? Please read the following suggestions.

Step 1: Set the Budget

The first step towards managing our project finances is to set a budget. This is not as easy as it sounds. We need to forecast the total amount of people, equipment, materials and other expenses, needed to deliver the project. We then need to work out when in the project plan, these expenses will take place. By doing this, we can get a picture of our "project cashflow" which tells us the amount of money we need for every week in the project.

Step 2: Backup Funding

Before we need it, we should find backup funding in the business. This is additional funding that can be used to deliver our project, if we need it. Few project managers actually do this in advance, but if we have almost completed a major deliverable and we suddenly run out of money, then that backup funding might "make or break" the project. We are always in a better position to get backup funding before we need it, rather than asking for more cash when we have already overspent. If we get backup funding as early in the Project Life Cycle as possible, it will be sure to reduce our stress.

Step 3: Weekly Tracking

The next step after setting our budget and securing backup funding is to start tracking our daily spend on the project. We need to track every expense that occurs. We direct our team to complete expense forms and submit them for approval. If we can get our team to wait until we have approved an expense before it is incurred, then we can more easily control expenditure on the project. Next, we need to track our people expenses. This is easily achieved with an appropriate software package because every person is assigned an hourly rate. The total cost of the hours undertaken by those people is automatically shown on the project dashboard, so that we can see whether our people cost is under or over budget.

Step 4: Realignment

When we start spending more than our budget, we have 3 options available to help us stay within budget:

- Re-forecast our expenses and present a new budget to our sponsor for approval.
- Start reducing costs immediately. This means spending less to get the same job done. Or alternatively, see if our Sponsor will agree to a reduced scope, so that we have less to produce for them.
- Start using our backup funding to get us through the crux of the project.

Step 5: Cashflow Management

Make sure we always have enough funds available to cover our spending over the months ahead. Cashflow management is about managing the cash needed to deliver our project. So we need to ensure our sponsor has approved the next 1-2 months of work ahead of time, and that the funds needed to manage the project have been made available. Then track the spending of that funding every week.

6. Total Technology Consultants Limited (TTC): Representing **Oracle Primavera and Oracle University.**

We are the Premier Oracle Primavera Project Management Training and Software Solutions Provider In Nigeria. We provide you with Oracle Primavera Project Management training and software solutions at our offices or at your facilities if and when requested.

Who we are: Since 2003, we have been working with Primavera, initially as the only Primavera Authorised Representative in Nigeria until 2009. With the takeover of Primavera by Oracle, we have become a Gold Level Reseller of Oracle University for Primavera courses and of Oracle Primavera Global Business Unit.

Our offices

In Nigeria: Our training facilities are located at our office in Port Harcourt at 4 God's Grace Estate, 5 Waterworks Road, Rumuola. **Contact phone no.: 08037100284**

In the UK: Our office is at Fairview, Duke Street, Withington, Hereford. From this office, we are able to guarantee timely delivery because we not only propose and order but we also follow up on your requirements to ensure that we deliver on our promises.

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