

Miriona's Message – no. 11

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Introduction

Miriona celebrates!

It's nearly two years now since Miriona started out – amazing how the time has passed. Apart from celebrating two years of success, Miriona is also making plans for the future... if you have any ideas on what services Miriona could provide to help you even more, your input and comments would be gratefully received!

The next month will bring the annual CCitDG (Charities Consortium IT Directors Group) Conference – always a good chance for networking and catching up (also known as gossip...) as well as excellent sessions and updates. Maybe see you there?!

Hot Topic

Unified Communications (UC)

There are a number of reasons why you may consider moving to UC but a recent study showed that for 72% of businesses the main driver is user productivity. By having only one phone number for each person, and by knowing their status (or 'presence' eg making a call, out of office), contacting someone becomes an easier and less time-consuming process. This study is backed up by a Gartner report on 300 early adopters of UC which shows that the main benefits were productivity and customer service, ahead of cost savings.

A typical UC deployment involves one phone number for each user, one integrated voicemail, presence, instant messaging, one corporate directory and multimedia conferencing.

Deployment is often in three stages:

1. Fixed voice and data convergence: the same network (LAN or WAN) is used to carry business data and telephone calls
2. Fixed mobile convergence: each user has only one phone number (can be mobile or geographic) and one voicemail. All their phones will ring for any incoming call. A corporate directory is also implemented at this stage, usually providing 'click to call' or voice activated dialling.
3. Full UC: a seamless integration of mobile, land-line and the desktop. In general this allows a message to be easily sent on one medium and received on another thus reducing any delay in communication. Collaboration becomes quick and simple, resulting in the desired productivity improvement.

It would be foolish to consider this to be a simple project; as well as the technology there will need to be cultural changes, such as business use of instant messaging. However, use of

UC technology is becoming more pervasive and most organisations should be at least considering it as part of their long-term strategy.

For more information, you can call Miriona on 07766 948470 or email newsletter@miriona.co.uk.

Working Smarter

PEST Analysis

Most of you will be very familiar with using the SWOT analysis but you may not be so familiar with PEST. This is done in much the same way except it has a focus on the wider environment that your organisation operates in.

PEST stands for Political, Economic, Socio-Cultural and Technology. Some examples could be:

- Political: what effect the general election next year could have especially if there is a change in Government, any upcoming legislation, etc
- Economic: the effects of the recent recession, what could happen as we start to come out of it, etc
- Socio-Cultural: the aging population, recent immigration from new EU countries, etc
- Technology: new equipment/software/infrastructure etc or possibly new ways of using it

When doing your business planning, this technique may help you to think about the context of your department and organisation, and how you could mitigate or exploit this.

Want to discuss this further? Contact Miriona on 07766 948470 or email newsletter@miriona.co.uk.

Hints & Tips

Excel (2003 and 2007): Copying a worksheet

Sometimes you want to copy a worksheet with all its data and formatting. An easy way to copy is to hold down the CTRL key and drag the sheet tab to where you want the new sheet to be (the 'small page with a + sign' attached to your cursor shows you are copying a sheet). Release and there it is!

MS Word - Find the right word

Click on a word and hit Shift-F7 to automatically look up a synonym, antonym, or alternative choice, using a thesaurus or other available tools.

The Lighter Side of IT!

Software Development Lifecycle

Software doesn't just appear on the shelves by magic. That program shrink-wrapped inside the box along with the indecipherable manual and 12-paragraph disclaimer notice actually came to you by way of an elaborate path, through the most rigid quality control on the planet. Here are the inside details of the program development cycle. (And yes, Chris, I know open source doesn't work like this!)

1. Programmer produces code he believes is bug-free.
2. Product is tested. 20 bugs are found.
3. Programmer fixes 10 of the bugs and explains to the testing department that the other 10 aren't really bugs.

4. Testing department finds that five of the fixes didn't work and discovers 15 new bugs.
5. See 3.
6. See 4.
7. See 5.
8. See 6.
9. See 7.
10. See 8.
11. Due to marketing pressure and an extremely premature product announcement based on an overly optimistic programming schedule, the product is released.
12. Users find 137 new bugs.
13. Original programmer, having cashed his royalty check, is nowhere to be found.
14. Newly-assembled programming team fixes almost all of the 137 bugs, but introduces 456 new ones.
15. Original programmer sends underpaid testing department a postcard from Fiji. Entire testing department quits.
16. Company is bought in a hostile takeover by competitor using profits from their latest release, which had 783 bugs.
17. New CEO is brought in by board of directors. He hires programmer to redo program from scratch.
18. Programmer produces code he believes is bug-free.

Thank you for reading!

Any comments or ideas for future newsletters are welcomed – please send to newsletter@miriona.co.uk.

More information on Miriona and our services can be found on our website www.miriona.co.uk.

To contact Miriona, please call 07766 948470 or email newsletter@miriona.co.uk.

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