

Miriona's Message – no. 12

In this edition

Introduction: End of the Conference season...

Hot Topic: Survey Highlights

Working Smarter: System Definition

Hints & Tips: Locking your Workstation, MS Word 07 – Converting to Footnotes

The Lighter Side of IT: to brighten your day!

Introduction

End of the Conference season...

Late summer and autumn always seem to be packed with loads of interesting conferences and one is forced to pick and choose the most interesting and appropriate.

Two excellent charity-oriented ones were the CCitDG (Charities Consortium IT Directors Group) conference in early October, which focussed on 'how to make a difference in interesting times' and the Civil Society Charity IT conference a couple of weeks ago, which included a great keynote about trends for the Internet. As ever, the best part of these is the networking – a chance to catch up with old friends as well as making some new contacts. And next, we will all have Christmas events to look forward to?!

Hot Topic

Survey Highlights

At the Charity IT conference, Robin Fisk of ASI Europe reported back the results of a survey they had conducted on the Charity IT sector through Plaza Publishing (now Civil Society) in early 2009. Here are some of the highlights:

Key challenges for 2009 (for organisations > 100 employees):

- 1) System Integration
- 2) Limited budget
- 3) Availability of skilled employees
- 4) Data Security
- 5) PCI Compliance

Smaller organisations had the same top 3 though 1) and 2) were the other way around.

Social Networking

81% used at least one social networking tool. The top three (with those finding it the most useful in brackets):

- 1) Facebook (28%)
- 2) Twitter (none! So why are we using it?)
- 3) YouTube (27%)

Top 5 Most Trusted Brands

- 1) Microsoft (with more than twice the votes of #2)
- 2) HP
- 3) Dell
- 4) Google
- 5) Apple

IT Opportunities for 2010

- 1) Web content management (69%)
- 2) Cloud computing (48%)
- 3) Mobile web applications (48%)
- 4) Use of public social media (46%)
- 5) SMS (38%)
- 6) Virtualisation (37%)

If you want to hear the full presentation, you can access it here

http://www.civilsociety.co.uk/events/conferences/content/5036/charity_it_conference#/events/conferences/content/5036/charity_it_conference/tab/2

For more information, you can call Miriona on 07766 948470 or email

newsletter@miriona.co.uk.

Working Smarter

System Definition

When someone comes to you and asks for a new application, it's not always clear what they are really asking for. It can be useful to work with them to develop a definition for the system to help them clarify their thoughts. Here is a systems technique that may help:

'CATWOE' – this technique is to build a definition using the CATWOE mnemonic, as follows:

First, work out each element:

Aspect	Description	Example
C = Customer	Who actually wants this application?	Major Donor Team
A = Actor	Who will use the application?	Fundraising staff
T = Transformation	What change takes place as a result of the application?	Unorganised information -> information that provides a good view of the donor relationship and interests
W = 'Weltanschauung'	The world view that gives the transformation its context and meaning	That a major donor will give even more if the relationship is better
O = owner(s)	Who owns the application?	Major Donor Manager
E = environmental constraints	Elements outside the application that constrain it	Needs to interface with main fundraising system to avoid duplication

Then, pull it all together into a whole definition. This example could be: 'A system owned by the Major Donor Manager and used by all fundraising staff to improve the relationship of the Major Donor Team with major donors by providing a good view of their relationship and interests, whilst interfacing with the main fundraising system to avoid duplicates.'

This could probably be refined further! But hopefully you can see that just working through the development would force the business to think through what they need.

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

Hints & Tips

Locking your Workstation

When you leave your workstation unattended, it's safest to lock it to prevent any unauthorised access. For a quick way to lock it, press the **Windows key + L** (L for Lock). The Windows key is marked with the Windows logo and is on the space bar row next to the ALT key.

MS Word 07 – Converting to Footnotes

You can quickly and simply convert all your notes to footnotes or endnotes in a Word 2007 document. On the References tab, click the Footnote & Endnote Dialog Box Launcher. Click Convert. Choose the option that you want, and then click OK. Click Close.

The Lighter Side of IT!

Some Classics: People who just got it wrong...

"Computers in the future may weigh no more than 1.5 tons." - Popular Mechanics, forecasting the relentless march of science, 1949

"I have traveled the length and breadth of this country and talked with the best people, and I can assure you that data processing is a fad that won't last out the year." - The editor in charge of business books for Prentice Hall, 1957

"This 'telephone' has too many shortcomings to be seriously considered as a means of communication. The device is inherently of no value to us." - Western Union internal memo, 1876

"The concept is interesting and well-formed, but in order to earn better than a 'C,' the idea must be feasible." - A Yale University management professor in response to Fred Smith's paper proposing reliable overnight delivery service. (Smith went on to found Federal Express Corp.)

"Who the hell wants to hear actors talk?" - H.M. Warner, Warner Brothers, 1927

Thank you for reading!

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

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www.miriona.co.uk.

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