

Miriona's Message – no. 13 – Jan 10

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Introduction

Miriona is expanding...

And not due to a bountiful Christmas feast! Miriona can now provide additional people with skills and expertise that could benefit you. This expanded team offers supplementary specialist skills such as:

- Documentation of systems, processes, procedures and so on including any required business analysis
- Extensive senior management expertise (at Managing Director level); this could meet needs for a high-level interim general manager or for specific needs such as looking for business improvements, assisting with re-structures, review/audit of an organisation etc

If you would like a no obligation chat or meeting to discuss how we could help you, please do call on 07766 948470 or email Jacquie@miriona.co.uk.

Hot Topic

Getting more from Social Networking

The survey mentioned in the previous newsletter had found that 81% of charities are doing at least something with social networking. A recent BCS article covered this topic with 5 tips for getting the most from this growing phenomenon:

- 1) **Build an online reputation** – look at social media as a way of building your organisation's online image. These tools can let you interact directly with individuals and communities, to provide a service, support and help build relationships. They can be a quick and cost-effective communication method.
- 2) **Keep content fresh** – to some extent this has been true for a long time but the need for content to be dynamic is becoming even more essential to keep people's interest. Make sure your site is regularly updated to keep people coming back to it.
- 3) **Choose your forum carefully** – social networks are starting to cross over into business but do make sure you pick one that sends the right message about what your organisation is all about.
- 4) **Use video** – it can be an overused concept but video is emerging as a 'killer' feature for marketing purposes. The online video market is growing 195% year-on-year. A BT survey showed that people do spend more time, on average, on a page with video content.
- 5) **Search engine optimisation** – like dynamic content, this has been a key factor some many years. Social media can help with rankings, which helps improve your online presence.

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

Working Smarter

Using a Project Mandate and Brief

These documents are used before a project really kicks off; they are valuable in capturing the early information on the 'what and why' of a project.

A Project Mandate is used to document the initial 'bright idea' and generally contains brief information about the background, objectives and an outline business case (ie why the project should be done). Additional information on scope, constraints, interfaces and stakeholders can also be included. It tends to be a short document, maybe a page (often only an email). A Mandate is a trigger to start a project and can help the initiating person communicate what they want more clearly.

A Project Brief builds on the Mandate to provide more of a foundation for full project initiation. It contains the same sort of information as a full Mandate but in more depth (it's usually a few pages long) and is likely to also have some information around quality, acceptance criteria and possible risks. The Brief should provide sufficient information to enable relevant managers to authorise the project to start.

It can seem rather an overhead to start formal documentation at this early stage. However (and especially for a large project) the earlier you can start to write things down the better; it forces people to clarify their thoughts and makes sure that everyone is talking about the same thing. This can save a lot of heated discussions further down the line!

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

Hints & Tips

Using the Windows Key

The Windows Key (WK) typically found at the bottom left hand corner, can be found on most keyboards, and has a number of different uses:

To open the Start menu: WK

To minimise all windows: WK+ D (reminder – think 'Desktop')

To open all windows again: WK+ shift + M

To open Windows Explorer: WK + E

To move across the Task Bar: WK + tab (this allows you to scroll through your open windows and the desktop)

To open the Search window: WK + F (reminder - think 'Find')

To open the Run dialogue box: WK + R

The Lighter Side of IT!

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

"I think there is a world market for maybe five computers." --Thomas Watson, chairman of IBM, 1943

"There is no reason anyone would want a computer in their home." --Ken Olson, president, chairman and founder of Digital Equipment Corp., 1977

"The wireless music box has no imaginable commercial value. Who would pay for a message sent to nobody in particular?" --David Sarnoff's associates in response to his urgings for investment in the radio in the 1920s

"Stocks have reached what looks like a permanently high plateau." --Irving Fisher, Professor of Economics, Yale University, 1929.

"Everything that can be invented has been invented." --Charles H. Duell, Commissioner, U.S. Office of Patents, 1899.

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.

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