



Accounting packages and cake

20 September 2017



@AdaptaforNFP



Programme

- 14.00 **Arrival and welcome**
David Membrey – Adapta Consulting
- 14:20 **Update on the state of the market
and the appetite for change**
Adapta Consulting
- 14:45 **Case studies**
Short implementation stories
- 15:45 **Discussion and feedback**
All
A round table discussion and feedback.
- 16.30 - **Review and close**
17.00 David Membrey – Adapta Consulting

Adapta Consulting

We are:

- A specialist information systems consultancy
- We only work with membership organisations, charities, associations, trusts and others in the NfP sector
- We are completely supplier-independent
- Our consultants have held senior positions in a broad range of different organisations
- Our advice and guidance is based on practical experience gained over many years.

Introductions





Accounting Packages & Cake

**enham
trust**
the power of yes

Susan Kent
Director of Finance

Accounting Systems

Required because:

- Growth in size or complexity of organisation
- Improvement in software available
- Better scope for integration with other areas of organisation
- Issues with existing software
- Drive for efficiency
- It's overdue
- For the fun of it

People

- **Roles – understand them**
- **Good Project Manager – completer / finisher**
- **Participation**
- **Protect time**

Plan

- Understand whole process
- Set realistic timelines
- Have a clear vision or what organisation aims to achieve
- Scope creep
- 'Out of Scope'
- Swiss cheese

Manage Expectations

- **Be realistic about market**
- **Communicate with Trustees**
- **Communicate with colleagues**
- **Negotiate priorities**
- **Be corporate**

Risk



Risk

- **Planning**
- **Beware of the 'unusual'**
- **Be cautious about 'innovative'**
- **Rehearsed issues ahead of systems configuration**

Any questions?

FINANCE SYSTEMS FOR CHARITIES

MARIA BADEA

SYSTEMS ACCOUNTANT, AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



1. WHAT FUNCTIONALITY DIFFERENTIATES THE BEST FINANCE SYSTEMS?



FLEXIBILITY AROUND CAPTURING INFORMATION AND PRODUCING REPORTS THAT MEET DIVERSE STAKEHOLDER NEEDS AND STRINGENT CHARITY AND DONOR REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

- Ideally **web based, together with mobile app functionality**
- **User friendly** interfaces, prompts for data input duplication, allowing defaulted data
- **Integration** or **smooth interfacing** between finance systems (ERP ideally)
- **Pre-approval of expenditure** allowing Budget Holders to manage their budgets efficiently
- Flexibility around capturing information and reporting in different **currencies**
- Flexibility around accommodating a large number of **analysis codes** that are needed in order to meet stringent charity reporting requirements
- Strong **suppliers/customers management tools**
- **Reconciliation tools** allowing to manage balance sheet accounts and to action payments promptly and accurately
- **Revaluation tools** for investments and foreign currencies

- User group **access rights control**
- Strong **audit trail**
- Good functionality for rapid **search** and **ad-hoc reporting**
- Good functionality for **uploading bulk data rapidly**
- Functionality for **uploading budget/forecast data**, thus enabling prompt **variance reporting**
- Budget Holder **visibility to real time financial information** (ideally via BI tools)
- Automation solutions for producing and sending out **payment remittances**
- Solutions that achieve **cost savings on stationery, postage and staff administration**
- Systems that can allow **extended cost effective use across multiple branches/entities/business units.**

2. CHALLENGES THAT YOU MIGHT ENCOUNTER WHEN PROMOTING FINANCE SYSTEMS PROJECTS OR FINANCE SYSTEMS USE

USEFUL THINGS TO CONSIDER BEFORE YOU EMBARK ON MAKING FINANCE SYSTEMS CHANGES

- It is notoriously **difficult to obtain user buy in for using any procurement system**, user resistance to change needs to be addressed at all stages, we work closely with our teams in order to understand specific situations and provide solutions that are suitable for them.
- Though we provided in-depth **training** when we released our finance systems, users still contact Finance with a fair number of queries. We addressed the issue by setting up **comprehensive online training (videos, guides, workflows, process diagrams)**. The aim was to make users self-sufficient, however we came to the conclusion that we still need to organise **regular workshops** in order to provide **face to face advice**.
- We are currently working to set up an **e-learning platform** that will make the **training process more interactive** and will also provide valuable information regarding the modules that have been covered by the user.

- Some **financial concepts can be difficult to understand by to non-finance users**, thus explaining them regularly must be a priority in order to increase data accuracy.
- Managing **user expectations** can be difficult nowadays as users expect any system to be extremely easy to use, however Finance Systems present certain inherent limitations, moreover the level of complexity can be considerable.
- We permanently try to **strike the right balance when communicating finance systems information**, in order to avoid overloading users with information, as well as not communicating at all.
- Getting **IT on board when proposing system changes/upgrades** is always a challenge as they tend to set different priorities, so permanent communication is key.

3. FINANCE SYSTEMS STRATEGY AND BUILDING USERS' CONFIDENCE AND CAPABILITY

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

1. Timely and informed **planning and decision making** in relation to finance systems changes
2. Ensuring finance systems **harmonisation** with the current and planned IT infrastructure and external systems
3. Establishing a framework for effective **communication and collaboration** between key stakeholders on finance system matters
4. Promotion of **efficient finance systems use** and good accounting practice across all locations

HELP FOR OUR FINANCE SYSTEMS USERS



1. Basic **'get started' instructions provided in the user set up confirmation email**
2. We ask our teams to **ensure new staff read the Finance Systems literature (available online)** and schedule time to understand the crucial **system workflow stages**, as well as the **tasks** that need to be performed and also **important deadlines**
3. Imperative that all programme staff responsible for system processing work have comprehensive system **handovers/inductions** when staff leave/join.
4. We are now working to set up a strong **user network** to support all users within their own teams
5. We value **constructive feedback from our users, we run regular surveys and involve our stakeholders when planning system changes**

A day in the life of ...

- Save the Children – FOG and SUN
- Maudsley Charity from 1247 to 2017 in one giant leap...

The way we did things way back when...

- Save the Children
 - from whiteboard to computer
 - from 3 sets of numbers to 1 truth
 - From tension to clarity
- 3 key learnings
 - You can't always get what you want..
 - Know thyself..
 - Just do it..

Dreaming of a bright new future

- Maudsley Charity from 1247 to 2017 in one giant leap...
- New tech - Cloud based, off the shelf, Plug and play, intuitive, drill down, tailored dashboards and all for <<<
- Do you know who you are?
- Do you know what you are doing?
- Does your supplier get it?
- Can you hold your nerve????

Discussion and feedback





Review and close