

Training Your Users

Is this one of your top objectives?

If you want your project to be successful, make training a priority in your implementation by dedicating resources to only that task and expect an integrated training program from that resource. This will give you the overall implementation results everyone strives to achieve. Your success and failure as an implementation team is actually not based on the code working exactly to plan, but in the ability for the operations team to utilize the software correctly and ship product.

When you start a new systems project, is training one of your top objectives? Although choosing the right functionality and getting it working in the system is important, what is even more important is that the users actually know how to use the new functionality.

Unfortunately most software is not easy for users to figure out on their own, unlike AOL and the Internet Explorer. Warehouse Management software certainly falls into this category. Regardless of whether you implement the point-and-click kind, or the tried and true green screen, there is nothing self-explanatory about it. Therefore, training has to be at the top of your objectives list. It is vital to understand what it takes to make training a priority, what kind of training you should expect, and what benefit training will bring to your implementation.

How does training become a priority in an implementation?

Simply speaking, you must have a dedicated training resource. If you think that someone can split his or her time between testing and training, or between project management and training, or between managing the floor and creating training, you are not making training a high priority. You shouldn't expect someone to stop troubleshooting a broken piece of code and instead go create or conduct training. The thought of training does not give most people the adrenaline rush that troubleshooting does, and it goes against human nature to walk away from a "right-now" issue to go work on a seemingly "down-the-road" issue like training.



So, don't put your resources in that conflicting role. Instead dedicate someone to create training. When you make it someone's only job to create training material, it will get done.

Finding the right trainer.

Creating training can be a long, tedious task, so you need to find a resource who will not walk away until the training material is 100 percent. You need to find someone who will not get tired of the writing and data preparation, but instead will see that creating a training program is an exciting endeavor, because this will be the first time that the system is put into production, albeit on paper.

So where can you find this type of resource? It is difficult for an operational person, new to the system, to achieve this type of program because he or she may not be able to configure a system's training environment with real data and executables. It is also rarely delivered by software vendors, as they typically draw the line when it comes to integrating the course with your operational processes. Therefore, a third-party systems integrator will most likely be your best choice. You can

Lead Your Project Team to Success: Train Your Users



link one of your operational resources with a systems integrator and assign her or him specifically to complete the integrated training program. This will give you the results you are expecting. Anything less will most likely not get you to your goal.

What to expect from the training program.

Once you find this resource, you will need to have an idea of what to expect from your training program. Training material created for a new system implementation cannot be focused only around the system steps. System-oriented courses may seem reasonable to the implementation team, but users find them completely disjointed with their actual daily work, and may learn very little from that type of training course. You must expect that your

training resource will deliver training courses that encompass both the system steps and the operational wrapper that goes with each step. When writing the material, the resource must pretend that he or she is the user, and ask questions like: How will I gain access to the container's barcode? Where will I find the BOL number? How will I manage my RF device? Where will I take the containers once I pick them up on my forks?

All of these questions should be answered for the operator at the same time, during a single training course. In addition, you should expect to see training on exceptions. What will the users do if they get a certain error on their RF device and what does it mean? This type of training material will lead you to a tightly integrated and highly effective program.

Focusing on the benefits.

If you reach your goal, what benefits will this bring to your overall implementation? The benefits are what directly justify the expense of the dedicated resource. The benefits include a knowledgeable and capable operations team, which means fewer user errors and less time and money spent on troubleshooting the users' errors. On average, at least 60 percent of the issues reported after go-live can be attributed to users who have made mistakes executing the designed processes. This leads to weeks and weeks of post-go-live support, which can rack up a tremendous expense from the implementation team. The old saying "an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure," is very applicable in this situation. Also, you and your implementation team will directly benefit because a well-trained team will have positive comments about the new system and your team will look great in front of senior management. Otherwise, you could implement the exact same software functionality for untrained users, and you will

see the negative feelings towards the software and the implementers. In the end, the success of any implementation begins with an integrated training program.

For more information, contact enVista at 877-684-7700 or at inforequest@envistacorp.com.