



Market Data / Supplier Selection /
Event Presentations / **Best Practice** /
Template Files / Trends & Innovation



SAMPLE: Web Project Management

Best Practice Guide

Sample only, please download the full report from:



<http://www.e-consultancy.com/publications/web-project-management-best-practice-guidelines/>

SAMPLE: Web Project Management



Published May 2007

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopy, recording or any information storage and retrieval system, without prior permission in writing from the publisher.

Copyright © Econsultancy.com Ltd 2008

Econsultancy
Lemon Studios
2nd Floor
85 Clerkenwell Road
London EC1R 5AR

www.econsultancy.com
help@e-consultancy.com

Telephone:
+44 (0) 20 7681 4052

Contents

1. Executive Summary	1
1.1. Research aims	1
1.2. Top 10 key findings and recommendations	1
1.3. Creating a model which is predictive of success.....	3
2. Introduction	4
2.1. About this report.....	4
2.2. Who is this report for?	4
2.3. About Econsultancy	4
2.4. What is Web Project Management?	5
3. Research Aim	7
4. Methodology	8
4.1. Sample	8
4.2. Questions	8
4.2.1. Step 1. Set E-marketing Objectives:.....	8
4.3. Analysis.....	9
5. Findings and Recommendations.....	11
5.1. The differences between web projects and other projects.....	11
5.2. Biggest challenges facing web project managers.....	11
5.3. Key drivers of success	13
5.4. A few words about agencies and consultancies	21
5.5. Building the right environment for success	24
5.6. Using the right methods and processes.....	36
5.7. Small projects need structure too.....	50
5.8. The essential project managers toolkit.....	54
6. References and further reading.....	56
6.1. Helpful resources	56
6.2. References.....	56
7. Appendix 1 - The state of the nation.....	57
7.1. Quantitative research highlights	57
7.2. Quantitative research results in full	58



8. Appendix 2 – Interview Script.....	66
9. Appendix 3 – Questions used in online survey	67
10. Appendix 4 – Example of in-house adaptation of Prince	73



1. Executive Summary

1.1. Research aims

The purpose of this research is to fill the information gap around web project management by learning from the experiences of organisations who are already out there managing web projects.

We've put this report together on the back of a combination of in-depth interviews and quantitative research.

Specifically this research will...

- Discover what makes some organisations and projects more successful at web projects than others;
- Show what methodologies, tools and techniques are working, and which one's aren't;
- Help you evaluate your own situation and work out the best approach to move forward.

1.2. Top 10 key findings and recommendations

Sample only, please download the full report from:



<http://www.e-consultancy.com/publications/web-project-management-best-practice-guidelines/>

1.3. Creating a model which is predictive of success

A maturity model has been defined to help organisations to benchmark their web project management prowess against other organisations.

It identifies three key groups...

1. **Early experimenters** – Web not part of business strategy, little/no project management structure or skills
2. **Frustrated visionaries** – Projects aligned to business strategy, project management style not suited to web
3. **Slick professionals** – Web projects supported fully by whole company, sophisticated project management

The model is based on a series of behaviours and practices that the research has shown to have the most significant impact on a company's ability to deliver successful projects.



SAMPLE: Web Project Management

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopy, recording or any information storage and retrieval system, without prior permission in writing from the publisher. Copyright © Econsultancy.com Ltd 2008

2. Introduction

2.1. About this report

This report describes the methodology and findings of a significant piece of research conducted into web project management. It makes a number of **recommendations** regarding web project management **best practice** on the basis of these findings, and the experiences of those who have kindly agreed to take part. It also draws on the writing of well respected authorities in the fields of project management, software development and web project management.

The research was carried out in two main phases:

Phase 1 focused on in-depth interviews to identify the characteristics and practices of successful web projects, and the main barriers to success.

Phase 2 was designed to validate the findings of the first phase of research and allow quantitative measurement of the typical success rate of web projects using an online questionnaire.

The interview discussion guide and a copy of the online survey are both published in full in the Appendices of this report.

2.2. Who is this report for?

This report is aimed at **anyone involved in commissioning or delivering web projects** within their organisation, or on the behalf of a client organisation.

The bulk of the report deals with the *infrastructure, culture, practices and processes* required to deliver medium to large web and e-commerce projects, although there are also specific findings and guidance relating to the delivery of smaller projects.

The aim of the report is to enable those involved with web projects to identify the challenges that are specific to them, and **identify best practices and approaches** that will help them overcome these challenges and improve their chances of success on future projects.

It is important to note that this report does not recommend a *specific* approach or set of processes as a 'silver bullet' to resolve all web project management challenges. Rather, our aim is to provide the reader with the framework and information to help them determine for themselves what their future practices should be.

We hope it proves useful to you. We love receiving **feedback, comments** and, all being well, your **testimonials**. Send word to chris@econsultancy.com.

2.3. About Econsultancy

Econsultancy is the leading source of **independent advice and insight on digital marketing and ecommerce**.

Our reports, events, online resources and training programmes help a community of over 75,000 registered marketers make better decisions, build business cases, find the best suppliers, look smart in meetings and accelerate their careers.



Econsultancy is an [award-winning online publisher of reports](#) covering best practice, user experience benchmarking, market data and supplier selection aimed at internet professionals that want practical advice on all aspects of e-business.

Econsultancy also operates a highly popular [training](#) division, used by some of the world's most prominent brands for staff education, both in-house and via public courses. We provide training across all areas of digital marketing and at all levels from one day courses to diplomas to Masters in Digital Marketing.

In addition, we host more than 100 [events](#) a year, such as The Online Marketing Masterclass, regular Supplier Showcases and Roundtables, an annual Future of Digital Marketing event, Digital Cream and a range of social events.

The [Econsultancy site](#) now attracts 175,000 unique users per month where they access research, read the [blog](#) and take part in discussions in the [forums](#). And as a portal to the digital marketing community, Econsultancy members can also link up with other members and digital suppliers through our [directories](#), as well as find a new job or new digital talent using the [job listings](#).

Some of Econsultancy's client-side members include: Google, Yahoo, MSN, MySpace, BBC, BT, Shell, Vodafone, Yell.com, Dell, Oxfam, Virgin Atlantic, TUI, Barclays, Carphone Warehouse, IPC Media, Deloitte and Touche, T-Mobile and Estée Lauder.

[Join Econsultancy](#) today to learn what's happening in digital marketing - and what works.

Call us to find out more on +44 (0)20 7681 4052 or [contact us online](#).

2.4. What is Web Project Management?

What is a project?

In 'A Guide to the Project Management Body of Knowledge' (PMBOK Guide) a project is defined as:

"A temporary endeavour undertaken to create a unique product, service or result"

What is significant about this definition is that it distinguishes projects from the everyday work of running of a business. Projects run alongside business as usual operations and typically deliver a change that needs to be integrated back into the business, at the completion of the project.

What is Project Management?

"Project management is the application of knowledge, skills, tools and techniques to project activities to meet project requirements" [PMBOK, 2005]

Sometimes carried out by a professional *project manager*, at other times project management is an activity carried out by another member of the project team. You don't necessarily have to be a project manager to manage projects.

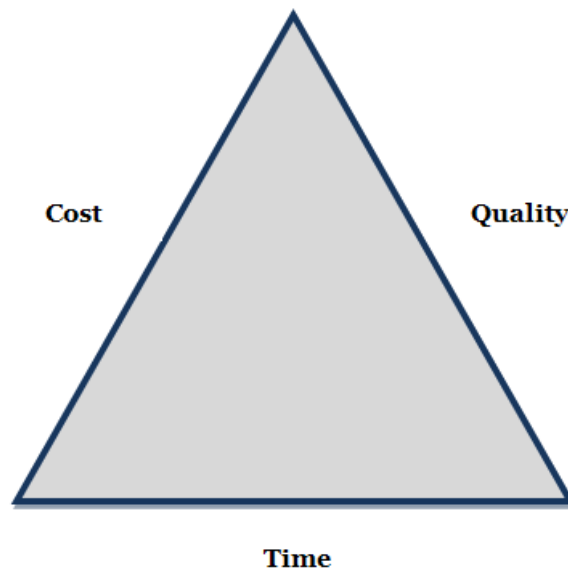
There are a few universal truths for any project which are reflected in every Project Management methodology:

1. There is always a customer, the project is always being delivered for someone;
2. There is always a project team, no matter how big or small;
3. There should always be a goal, otherwise why are you doing the project?
4. It ultimately comes down to managing the iron triangle...



SAMPLE: Web Project Management

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopy, recording or any information storage and retrieval system, without prior permission in writing from the publisher. Copyright © Econsultancy.com Ltd 2008



The iron triangle represents the three key elements of a project: **cost, quality and time**. Altering one of these variables will impact the other two. For instance, if you need to reduce the time to complete a project you will either have to risk reduced quality, or pay more money to ensure the same quality in less time.

Web Project Management

The fundamentals of project management are the same, whatever the project, but there are **a number of challenges inherent to web projects** which often prevent teams from delivering their projects on time, on budget and to the satisfaction of their internal and external customers. These challenges are outlined in more detail in section 5.1.

In the experience of the participants of this research there is **no single approach** that is a perfect fit for web projects.

Many organisations have embarked on journeys of experimentation and adaptation to arrive at processes that work for them. It is from documenting these experiences that we have been able to build a new body of knowledge that supports the notion of web project management as a *separate* activity.

At its most basic level Web Project Management is about **creating the right environment** for the delivery of web projects. One with the following characteristics:

- Just enough structure to help rather than hinder progress;
- The flexibility to work with evolving requirements;
- Focus on and involvement of the end customer;
- Effective collaboration between different skill sets and departments;
- Manages the expectations of multiple stakeholders;
- Enables rapid deployment of priority features.

3. Research Aim

Econsultancy felt that there was a big gap for this sort of research, and so we decided to do something about it. We are experienced in web project management, having created, launched and operated many websites for ourselves and for third parties. Indeed, a thorough revamp of the Econsultancy website has just begun, a project anticipated to take a year before it comes to fruition.

Moreover, this research was undertaken in response to a **growing need for guidance** on web project management best practice from people working at the sharp end of the internet industry.

As ever, our guidance is based on *practical experience* rather than theoretical knowledge of managing web projects. People say that this is where Econsultancy really stands out from the crowd, and we hope this guide will prove to be a valuable addition to the existing research available on at www.e-consultancy.com/research.

Specifically this research aims to...

- Discover what makes some organisations and projects more successful at web projects than others;
- Show what methodologies, tools and techniques are working, and which one's aren't;
- Help subscribers evaluate their own situation and work out the best approach for them.

Our research is not intended as a training manual for any specific project management method or process, but we think it articulates the ideal environment for managing web projects.

It also provides an insight into some of the wide range of project management techniques available.

Sample only, please download the full report from:



<http://www.e-consultancy.com/publications/web-project-management-best-practice-guidelines/>



SAMPLE: Web Project Management

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopy, recording or any information storage and retrieval system, without prior permission in writing from the publisher. Copyright © Econsultancy.com Ltd 2008

4. Methodology

4.1. Sample

Phase 1 of the research comprised of 18 depth interviews with representatives from different organisations, across a wide range of industries including travel, financial services, telecommunications, retail and agency. The respondents were chosen because they are responsible for either commissioning or managing web projects within their organisation.

The purpose of this first phase was to identify the characteristics and practices of successful web projects, and identify the main barriers to success.

Interviews were conducted with senior representatives from the respective internet teams at the likes of: *MyTravel, Sony Ericsson, Sony Business Services, Axa-PPP, Alliance and Leicester, BSI, First Choice, Framfab, Henderson Global Investors, Lloyds, Code, O2, Opodo, P&O and Signet.*

Phase 2 was designed to validate the findings of the first phase of research and allow quantitative measurement of the typical success rate of web projects, and the maturity of UK organisations in their approach to web projects. This phase was conducted via an online survey to the Econsultancy newsletter subscriber base. The survey was completed by 633 individuals (about 5% of our newsletter readers).

4.2. Questions

In order to satisfy the aims of the research it was necessary to evaluate what skills and resources are necessary to run web projects and also how projects are influenced by and interact with the wider organisation.

In order to do this we borrowed a strategic framework already seen in Econsultancy's in-depth study: 'Managing an E-commerce team: Integrating digital marketing into your organisation'.

The structure for his study was based on a strategic framework devised by McKinsey Consultants – The 7S strategic framework. In it each "S" represents a key issue that needs to be addressed. We have applied this framework equally effectively to the practice of managing Web projects, and it has been used in this research to highlight the key issues that need to be managed in order for a company to deliver its projects with a degree of success.

This framework formed a backdrop for the first phase of qualitative research, which then defined the quantitative survey which was used in phase two. The interview discussion guide and a copy of the online survey are both published in full in the Appendices of this report.

4.2.1. Step 1. Set E-marketing Objectives:

In all aspects of business, clear objectives are needed to set goals and assess performance against and the web is no different.

Element of 7S model	Application to Web Project Management	Key issues
Strategy	Annual planning approach, aligning projects with organisational and marketing strategy, gaining appropriate budget and resource, delivering value	Being part of organisation wide planning process Effective prioritisation of web projects to align with business goals – roadmapping Being part of a programme of work In-built flexibility to adapt to fast moving environment



Element of 7S model	Application to Web Project Management	Key issues
		Digital strategy as collaboration between IT / Marketing / Digital / Commercial
Structure	Modification of organisational structure to support digital projects	Cross-functional steering and cross-functional teams Common goals and targets Integration between IT / Marketing / Mgt Where does project/programme mgt function sit? Accountability
Systems	Development of specific processes, procedures and information systems to support digital projects	Adoption of structured approach to PM. Approach communicated and used by whole team/organisation Approach is fit for purpose – speed, quality, flexibility, scale Visibility of the project – timescales, issues, resource Effective process for gathering and refining requirements Role of customer / end user in the process Choosing the right supporting software Effective resource estimation and allocation
Staff	Breakdown of staff in terms of background and characteristics, location, insource/outsourced, part-time vs. dedicated	Senior level sponsorship Diversity of backgrounds, skills and understanding of web technology Dedicated PM function vs. managing projects as a part-time task IT Project Manager vs. Commercial Project manager
Style	The way key managers behave in achieving the organisational goals, and the cultural style of the organisation as a whole	Shared ownership and decision making vs. working in competing silos Organisational culture main driver of process/method Techniques to nurture collaboration across functions Co-location Fear of permanent beta
Skills	Distinctive capabilities of key staff	Breadth of skills required across the project Project management skills, training and experience PM balance between technical, commercial and people skills Experience of working in web projects Availability of expert technical resource Ability to evolve and embrace new technology
Super-ordinate goals	The guiding concepts of the organisation which are part of shared values and culture	Improving the effectiveness of cross-functional teams through education and involvement in the process. Give the organisation understanding so they can embrace the potential of the web channel

4.3. Analysis

The Clicktools analysis tool was used extensively in the quantitative phase of the research and enabled responses to be cross-tabulated and filtered. For example;

- Cross referencing specific attributes and practices against their impact on success



- Analysing the relationship between project management method and
 - Success
 - Culture
 - Challenges
 - Practices
 - Requirements gathering
 - Nature of deadlines
- Cross referencing culture against success
- Filtering to establish the impact on success of the predictive model
- Filtering the model behaviours to quantify the volume of respondents at each stage of the model

Sample only, please download the full report from:



<http://www.e-consultancy.com/publications/web-project-management-best-practice-guidelines/>



SAMPLE: Web Project Management

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopy, recording or any information storage and retrieval system, without prior permission in writing from the publisher. Copyright © Econsultancy.com Ltd 2008

5. Findings and Recommendations

Sample only, please download the full report from:



<http://www.e-consultancy.com/publications/web-project-management-best-practice-guidelines/>



SAMPLE: Web Project Management

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopy, recording or any information storage and retrieval system, without prior permission in writing from the publisher. Copyright © Econsultancy.com Ltd 2008