



To Buy or to Build?

A Low Budget Answer to the Faculty Credentials Question

Presented by:
Cheryl Fogle, Applications Analyst,
Lloyd Dawe, Director of IE
Ginger Beady, Assessment Coordinator
University of South Carolina Aiken



Notes page

- FACDAT, the USC Aiken Faculty Data Interface is a comprehensive multi-semester datamart that serves three primary purposes: to provide information on Faculty Credentials for accreditation purposes, to provide operational support documentation for the Academic Affairs and Human Resources Offices, and to provide credit hour production and faculty load information. This session will discuss how the USC Aiken Office of Institutional Effectiveness arrived at the decision to build this tool rather than buy something off the shelf to meet various reporting and operational needs. The analysis, design, development, implementation, and evaluation phases of this project will be reviewed, and will include project ups and downs, technical specifications, and the importance of user feedback.



The Method to the Madness

- ADDIE
 - Analysis
 - Design
 - Development
 - Implementation
 - Evaluation



Analysis

- Determine what needs the project should meet.
- Determine the audience. Get input from potential users now. What would work best for them?
- Look around.
- Buy or Build?



Data Mart?

- Not synonymous with Data Warehouse or database.
- A step in the right direction with the outcome being a Data Warehouse.
- Think of it as a data storage closet.



The usefulness of Data Marts in Institutional Effectiveness

- A Proactive, instead of Reactive, approach to data requests.
- Particularly useful for small IE/IR offices with frequent and/or routine data requests.
- Information at the users' fingertips



“Knowledge is Power”

- Know who to talk to
- Know what the users really want
- Know where the data should come from
 - Data reliability, data clean up
- Know when to set deadlines



Design

- Stay focused on the purpose and scope of the project.
- Consider navigation and organization of the database.
- Outline security and access levels.

Beware of becoming a nay-sayer



Technology Needs

- Place to live: Windows Server 2008 backend
- Security: IIS7
- Database: MS SQL Server 2008
- Languages: HTML, ASP, VBScript, and SQL



Development

- Most important part of development is not what you might think
- Documentation
 - Not just what you did
 - Why you did it

Beware of project fade or project explosion. Everyone wants a piece. Look for security loopholes.



Implementation

- A data mart is only useful if it's being used.
- Never ending process
- Promote from the top down
- Training should be provided on how to "ask" the interface the right questions



Demonstration

- FacDat
 - Faculty Credentials
 - Operational Support
 - Credit Hour Production



Evaluation

- Maintain communication with the users
- Show off your work
- Monitor usage