

Software Design Consulting Group Implementation Process

INTRODUCTION

SDCG implementation process is dedicated to ensuring a successful and speedy installation, configuration and transition of its clients from previous systems to Visual Dolphin solutions. Its time-proven procedures aim to meet client expectations and achieve milestones on schedule.

SDCG implementation process adopts a systematically structured approach to effectively integrate its Visual Dolphin ERP solutions into the workflow of an organizational structure or an individual end-user.

This blueprint, that gets users and organizations running successfully on its solutions, uses a set of rules and views coping with the most common issues & concerns that occur during the implementation of Visual Dolphin solutions: Business alignment from the organizational view and user acceptance from the human point of view.

SDCG implementation process is the challenge considering the complexity of implementing an ERP solution, which differs on several issues: the readiness of the end users aiming to operate the software products, the effects that the implementation brings on changes of tasks, habits and responsibilities, the readiness of the organization in term of having procedures in place – well defined- or in term of availability of proper staff resources and structure, the culture and the integrity of the business where the software is going to be used. It adds to these challenges, a compromise in the budget for acquiring software products.

The implementation requires in-depth insights on the architecture of the organization as well as of the product itself, before it can be aligned. Next, the usage of Visual Dolphin involves much more dedication of the end users as new tasks and responsibilities will never be created or will be shifted.

Software Customization and Business Process Redesign

SDCG Process modeling is to align Visual Dolphin and organizational structures. When these later do not align well enough for the solutions to be fully deployed, two alternatives are possible: Customizations within Visual Dolphin or Redesign of the organizational structure & procedures, thus the business processes.

Customizing results in a situation where the organizational integrity is not adjusted, which puts less pressure on the end users, as less changes or shifts in workflows are required. This fact positively adds to the acceptance of the new applications and decreases the implementation time and budget on the soft side of the implementation budget.

Redesigning business processes is more sensible for causing resistance in the use of the software solutions, as altered business processes will alter habits, tasks and responsibilities for the end users of these solutions. This requires more intensive support, better training, right psychology of approaching the users and high levels of service & assistance.

The Guiding Principle of SDCG Implementation Method

SDCG implementation method used as a guiding principle, serves about how the implementation phase of any project should run. This choice leaves more room for situational factors that are not taken into account in the chosen method, while guidance avoids ambiguity when questions arise in the execution of the implementation process.

IMPLEMENTATION FRAMEWORKS

Apart from the implementation method serving as a set of fundamental rules, implementation frameworks serve as the project management basis to define the implementation phase in time, budget and quality.

Several project management methods can serve as a basis to perform the implementation method. Since this entry focuses on the implementation of Visual Dolphin, the best project management methods suitable for supporting the implementation phase are project management methods that focus on software and information systems itself as well. The applicability of a framework for implementation methods is by SDCG adopting the use of DSDM and Prince2 as project management method frameworks.

DSDM

The power of DSDM is that it uses the principles of iteration and spiral approach, meaning that projects are carried out in repeating phases where each phase adds value to the previous one. In this way implementation phases can be carried out incrementally, adding value to for example the user's awareness and skills within each new increment.

Such spiral approach can align process models of business architectures and Visual Dolphin ERP solutions as adding more detail in every increment of the phase draws both models closer. The DSDM also has room for phased training, documentation and reviewing. This project management methodology is indispensable for the large size projects when a large number of users are involved and positioned at different levels of the organization.

Prince2

In return, Prince2 is a structured approach to project management within a clearly defined framework. It aims in setting up the adequate approach for coordinating people and activities in a project, for designing and supervising the project, and considering incidentals if the project has to be adjusted, as it doesn't develop as planned.

Being a structured methodology, Prince2 provides a common language for all participants in the project. It consists of a set of processes, out of which 3 are especially meant to be detailed with factors as time and quality: The processes of controlling a stage, the one for managing product delivery and the one for controlling stage boundaries. SDCG carries out Prince2 method for exclusively large size projects; it is handled iteratively rather than straight execution of the processes.

Iterative, Incremental Approach

As explained, the possibility to execute different phases of the implementation process iteratively enables the process to be executed by incrementally aligning the product to be implemented with the end-user (organization).

Generic implementation methods are not meant for a specific software product (such as AIM for Oracle Business suite or ARIS for SAP) but for common usage in implementing any software product. Its process involves the following eight stages:

- Stage 1 - Project initiation
- Stage 2 - Customizations
- Stage 3 - System settings parameters, security
- Stage 4 - Training
- Stage 5 - Product roll out
- Stage 6 - Deliverables & Testing
- Stage 7 - Deployment
- Stage 8 - Support and maintenance

Stage 1 - Project Initiation:

Before project technical and design work begins, the team organizes the project to mutually understand the process and functional requirements to provide the most transparent and successful implementation possible.

- Team introduction and role explanation
- Outlining of required Visual Dolphin elements (features and benefits)
- Review Change Management Process
- Rephrasing of scope of work
- Review Gap analysis
- Generate and review Project Plan and Milestones

Stage 2 - Customizations

Any functional customization requirements may be developed on Visual Dolphin and stored in a segmented area of your installation and implemented via customization hooks which are built into the software. This enables SDCG to provide the users with unlimited upgrades without customization obstacles. Other customizations can include integration with third party systems. Parts of the regular customizations are reports layouts and forms such as invoices, quotations, purchase orders...

Stage 3 – System settings, configuration, parameters, user security setup

SDCG teaches the users and recommends Visual Dolphin configuration and security settings based on client processes, procedures and structure in the manner intended for the design and functional requirements.

Stage 4 - Training

Visual Dolphin training personnel will tutor individuals and groups designated by you with the responsibility for operating Visual Dolphin. Training will provide hands-on experience in all major aspects of the ERP solutions. Users' training is always initiated by collective training sessions held at SDCG premises, including hands on sessions, and then completed & deepened at the client site. In case of large organizations, training is given to key people in the management and MIS personnel, who in return will contribute jointly with SDCG team to provide the training the remaining branches of the organization.

Stage 5 - Product roll out

Setting up, configuring and gaining full understanding of Visual Dolphin solutions is critical to the on-line/go life operation. Depending on the client cases, this stage covers:

- Implement or migrate product data
- Setting up the master tables
- Review and navigation logic and ergonomics
- Rehearsal of real data, with additional user training and assistance
- Exploring additional features available in VD
- Implementing processes and full operation cycles designed for each project specifically
- Reports review
- Certifying the integration with the financial modules
- System integration with other modules (if any)

Stage 6 – Deliverables & testing

Commenting the simulated customer experience and transactions. In this Stage, SDCG makes the final adjustments to the setting and provides a final knowledge transfer of any methods or means that have been used to facilitate your functionality and design options. Prior to deploying your site live all operations and processes in the company must have been verified on a limited sample of real data and real transactions. It often includes a formal test check list & verification to be approved by the users.

Stage 7 - Deployment

The team is ready to go live, a detailed deployment plan involving all trained users is set, a new database is initialized and final data migration on official cut of date will be repeated again, user/security setting and parameters, master tables defined. The organization is now ready to hit the road with almost negligible un-expectations!

Stage 8 - Support & Maintenance

While Visual Dolphin is fully operational, SDCG implementation team carries on assisting the users during the startup phase, deepening their knowledge in VD systems and providing the organization with all levels of support by the time the MIS department handles the 1st level. This is not necessarily the end of the spiral approach to the implementation process. This phase – as essential as the previous ones – considers discussions and additional requirements formulated by the users, focusing on their use experience and leading to endless enhancements in VD systems.



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