

# **INTRODUCTION TO THE PARTNERSHIP IN ACTION**

## **IMPLEMENTATION METHODOLOGY**

### **About the FACTS Implementation Methodology**

The Implementation Methodology is a structured process for implementing and installing FACTS software. It provides a framework, which can be tailored specifically for each customer, ensuring that the implementation is successful. The methodology has two primary goals:

- To provide a unified approach for implementing FACTS that will be used consistently throughout the local FACTS offices.
- To increase Customer satisfaction. Successful implementations produce higher customer satisfaction, which in turn lead to more Customer referrals.

The methodology is not a magic formula — it's simply a framework for ensuring that implementations are conducted in a consistent, thorough manner. It helps the FACTS team collect the necessary information, thoroughly and accurately, at each step in the process. The methodology is used to set goals and objectives and to identify the tasks required to meet those goals. A timeline is established at the beginning of the project and tracked to completion.

The methodology also helps set realistic customer expectations during the sales cycle, and again before the implementation project begins. It assists in determining the scope of the project up front so that an accurate proposal can be presented to the Customer. Each step of the project can be tracked in detail until the implementation is complete. After the installation, periodic reviews may be conducted to insure that the Customer has a solid understanding of the functionality and flexibility of the system, and that the system is being utilized to its maximum.

### **What Is In It For You?**

Why should you take the time to use the methodology and apply it to your business?

The methodology will:

- Provide a means to bid projects more accurately by determining the scope of the project up front
- Hand-off information smoothly between the local FACTS office and the Customer
- Set realistic goals and Customer expectations
- Eliminate surprises
- Make more effective and efficient use of the local FACTS office and the Customer's resources
- Provide tangible tools to the Customer

# THE FACTS IMPLEMENTATION METHODOLOGY

The Implementation Methodology consists of a series of steps, which must be completed for a successful implementation. While the steps themselves are essential, the way in which the steps are completed (their order, the time spent on each step, etc.) varies for each implementation. The Implementation Consultant will act as the guide through the process, tailoring the steps to the Customer's needs. This Partnership in Action methodology will help familiarize the Customer with the methodology and guide the Customer through the process.

## The FACTS Implementation Methodology Phases

The Implementation Methodology has four phases:

- Planning
- Installing the System
- Training and Testing
- After the Installation

Within each of these phases, there are individual steps, which must be completed for a successful implementation.

### Phase 1 Planning

The Planning phase is the foundation for the rest of the project. The time you invest here will save you time later. There are four steps in the Planning phase: Project Definition, Project Strategy, Project Plan and Operations Analysis.

#### Project Definition

The primary purpose of the Project Definition step is for a smooth transfer of information from the sales representative to the local office Implementation Team, so that the team may gain an understanding of the Customer's business, needs, and expectations, based on information gathered during the sales process. This step takes place internally and does not involve the Customer directly. This review is done in preparation for the Project Strategy meeting, the first meeting with the Customer.

#### Project Strategy Meeting

In this kick-off meeting for the project, the local Implementation Team meets with key members of the Customer's staff. This meeting sets realistic expectations for the project including project goals and objectives, scope, resources, constraints and time frames. The Implementation Project Team and the Customer's implementation team are finalized and major responsibilities and commitments are defined.

#### The Project Plan

The Project Plan is the backbone to the entire project. During this step all project tasks and the associated resources are identified on the Detail Task Worksheets. Time frames and milestones are established. The resulting work plan is the baseline used during the implementation. It can be updated on a regular basis to reflect changes in resources, dates and milestones. A Project Plan Template is provided to give the team the option of developing and maintaining the Project Plan with project management software.

#### Operations Analysis

This step provides the Project Team with a concise, detailed analysis of the Customer's current operations and business practices. Although some of this information was gathered during the sales process, further detail is needed to customize to the customer's business environment. During the analysis, the Implementation Consultant and the Customer's Project Leader complete a detailed questionnaire with each major functional area of the Customer's business. The consultant and Customer gather business examples, sample reports, transaction sets, forms and other information.

## **Phase 2      Installing the System**

In this phase the system is set up and prepared for the implementation. The steps in this phase include Delivery and Setup, Software Modifications and Data Conversion. Delivery and setup of the Customer's hardware and network are functions not handled by Software Solutions Inc.'s personnel. The Customer is ultimately responsible for the hardware installation and their internal network connectivity.

### **Delivery and Setup**

This step includes setting up the computer hardware, network and software. All cabling, peripherals and communications equipment are installed and tested by the customer or third party vendor, including the operating system, language(s) and certain third party software. The Implementation Consultant loads the FACTS and Providex software. Initial software testing, system tuning and operations training are completed.

### **Modifications**

This step may be required if the Customer's business has very specific needs. The Implementation Consultant and Customer define and develop any custom modifications and/or special programming required to tailor the system for the Customer's environment. This process includes development of software modification design specifications, development of the custom modification, testing, documentation, packaging, delivery, installation assistance, training and initial support of the modification. This step is completed once approval from the customer for the modifications is obtained.

### **Data Conversion**

Data Conversion includes identifying existing files of data that need to be converted to FACTS, either manually or electronically. Custom conversion programming is provided upon Customer approval. Multiple passes are made to fine-tune the results. The Customer is responsible for validating the data converted.

## **Phase 3      Training and Testing**

This phase begins the final preparations before going live on the system. It includes two steps: Training and Testing, in preparation for going live.

### **Training**

Adequate training is vital to the success of the implementation. Three types of training are provided: Project Leader Training, System Administration Training and User Training. Different training methods may be used including formal classroom training, on-site one-on-one training and Train the Trainer. The amount and type of training recommended varies based on the Customer's specific needs, the number of users, level of enhancements, data conversion performed and budget. One-on-one training is provided as needed in the various phases of implementation. In addition, you should assess the need for additional training three months, six months and one year after the Customer goes live on the system.

### **Testing**

This step is the final test of the complete system prior to going live and putting FACTS into production use. Both the integration testing and readiness assessments are designed to ensure that modifications provide the functionality specified, conversion was completed accurately and user training was thorough.

This testing offers invaluable training and also uncovers potential problem areas prior to going live. Any problems uncovered are corrected in this step, prior to final acceptance of the system.

## **Phase 4     After the Installation**

This phase consists of the ongoing support required after the system goes into production. It includes the First 30 Days and Ongoing Assistance.

### **First 30 Days**

Support from the local office is critical during the first monthly processing cycle. This support ensures that the Customer has a clear understanding of the daily business operations and procedures and the weekly and monthly execution of business cycles, reporting and period closing procedures. During this period the local office may also perform any additional system tuning required.

### **Ongoing Assistance**

It is important to periodically review how the system is being used. This ensures that the Project Leader has a solid understanding of the functionality and flexibility of the system, and that the users are utilizing FACTS features to their maximum. These periodic checks also can be a good time to review system usage and any other software requirements.

## **Checkpoints for Success**

Each of the four implementation methodology phases includes a formal Checkpoint feedback document. These Checkpoints give the local office and the Customer an opportunity to evaluate the implementation process and progress.

At each checkpoint, the local office and the Customer review the steps in that phase to ensure that they have been completed successfully before moving to the next phase. Look for areas that need improvement and make any adjustments needed to the Project Plan to meet the project goals and schedule.

These tools work together to ensure that the Customer's and local office's expectations for the project are met.

# **PARTNERSHIP IN ACTION**

## **IMPLEMENTATION METHODOLOGY**

### **Components (Phase / Step / Deliverable)**

#### **1 Planning**

##### **1.1 Project Definition**

- 1.1.1 Sales to Implementation Transition Checklist
- 1.1.2 Sample Welcome Letter

##### **1.2 Project Strategy**

- 1.2.1 Project Strategy Meeting Agenda
- 1.2.2 Local Office Goals and Commitments Worksheet
- 1.2.3 Customers Goals and Expectations
- 1.2.4 Organizing Your Project Team
- 1.2.5 Forms Planning Guide

##### **1.3 Project Plan**

- 1.3.1 Project Plan Template
- 1.3.2 MS Project Plan Template
- 1.3.3 Project Plan Detail Task Worksheets

##### **1.4 Operations Analysis**

- 1.4.1 Sample Operations Analysis Letter and Sample Agenda
- 1.4.2 Operations Analysis Survey

##### **1.5 Checkpoint # 1 – Planning Phase**

#### **2 Installing The System**

##### **2.1 Modifications**

- 2.1.1 Software Modification Design Form
- 2.1.2 Modification Tracking Form
- 2.1.3 Modification Delivery and Acceptance Form

##### **2.2 Data Conversion**

- 2.2.1 Electronic Data Conversion Checklist
- 2.2.2 Electronic Conversion Mapping Procedure
- 2.2.3 Electronic Data Conversion Testing Checklist and Acceptance Form

##### **2.3 Checkpoint # 2 – Installing the System**

## **3 Training and Testing**

### **3.1 Training**

- 3.1.1 Education Class Information
- 3.1.2 Sample Training Outlines
- 3.1.3 Training Schedule and Acceptance Form

### **3.2 Testing**

- 3.1.1 Policies and Procedures Manual Guidelines
- 3.1.2 Test Plan and Approval Form
- 3.1.3 Going Live Checklist
- 3.1.4 Open Issues List

### **3.2 Checkpoint # 3 – Training and Testing**

## **4 After The Installation**

### **4.1 First 30 days**

- 4.1.1 First 30 Days Checklist Implementation to Support Transition Document
- 4.1.2 Implementation to Support Transition Checklist
- 4.1.3 Project Review Meeting Checklist and PIA Feedback Form

### **4.2 Ongoing Assistance**

- 4.2.1 Ongoing Assistance Checklist
- 4.2.2 Problem Report & Enhancement Request Forms

### **4.3 Checkpoint # 3 – After the Installation**

# A SUCCESSFUL FACTS IMPLEMENTATION: PARTNERSHIP IN ACTION

To implement FACTS, the Customer and the local FACTS office will form a partnership. Together you will develop a FACTS Implementation Project Team, made up of key people from the local office personnel (the Local Office Implementation Team) and the Customer's staff (the Customer Implementation Team). The makeup of the team will vary for different implementation projects, based on the resources available and the requirements of the project. A typical team is described below.

## Implementation Project Team

### Customer Implementation Team The Players:

#### Executive Management

Executive commitment is key to success.  
Provides overall leadership.

#### Project Leader

The in-house project coordinator. Requires a full-time employee. Becomes System Manager when the system goes live.

#### Project Leader Backup

Cross-trained on the new system to backup the Project Leader, when absent.

#### System Administrator

Responsible for site preparation, assists with the physical setup of the system and continued support of the hardware and software.

#### Training Coordinator

Coordinates, attends and provides training to all key employees. Develops the Policies and Procedures Manual.

### Local Office Implementation Team The Players:

#### Implementation Consultant

Guides the Customer through the implementation process, tailoring it to their needs. Provides overall project management. Performs some system administration duties and training of the Customer's System Administrator

#### Customer Account Representative (CAR)

Handles and sales and overall account management, usually upon completion of the implementation project.

#### Training and Mods Administrator

Handles the registration, materials and logistics of all education classes. Handles administrative responsibilities for custom modification processing.

#### Administration

Handles the administrative aspects of the project with overall management responsibility for the Customer and the project. Provides account management functions during the project.

#### Programmer Analyst

Responsible for customizing the software (if requested) and any special custom programming required.

# **SUCCESSFUL IMPLEMENTATIONS TAKE TIME!**

A number of factors affect the time required to implement a system successfully. These factors include the number of users, their experience level, available resources, applications purchased and other technical services required. Please refer to the Project Scope Assessment for further details on estimating the time needed for a successful implementation project.

The number of hours required for individual steps will be affected by various factors. For example, Delivery and Setup hours vary based on the type of hardware, network and third party software setup required and the number of locations and terminals. Training hours required depend on the number of users, their experience level and the method of training. Training, testing and readiness assessment hours are dependent on the complexity of software modifications and the data conversions required.

The local office can give the Customer a detailed recommendation, tailored to their situation, before starting the implementation.

## **USING THE PARTNERSHIP IN ACTION IMPLEMENTATION METHODOLOGY**

The Partnership in Action Implementation Methodology is organized around the four Implementation Phases. A set of tools (worksheets, guidelines, checklists, approval forms, etc.) is provided for each phase in the Implementation Methodology. On the second page of each tool, you will find information on how to use that tool.

The methodology includes a detailed project plan, either using Task Worksheets or an MS Project Template, for each implementation step. These worksheets provide a format for tracking the project, which is easy for the customer to understand. They are also useful for tracking your time and reporting to your customer which steps have been completed. A Project Plan Template is provided to give you the option of developing and maintaining your Project Plan with project management software.

You may want to tailor some of the implementation tools for your business. To make this easy for you, documents that can be edited are posted on Software Solutions' extranet, The Nexus. They are provided as self-extracting zipped Microsoft Word files. The file names of the documents that can be edited are listed on the second page for each document.

### **Improving on Success**

A great deal of time and resources have been invested in developing the Implementation Methodology. We're proud of the results and confident that the methodology will help you provide successful implementations and increase customer satisfaction.

The key to the success of the Implementation Methodology is continuous improvement, both in your implementations and in the methodology itself. The methodology is a flexible framework for implementations, rather than a fixed set of rules. It provides tools, including the Checkpoints, designed to help you continually evaluate and improve on your processes and procedures.

As you use the methodology, you will undoubtedly have ideas on how it can be improved. We ask that you share your ideas with us. If you are looking for a specific tool that is not on the Nexus or if you would like to suggest changes to these documents, send us an e-mail or use the PIA Feedback Form. Your feedback is vital to helping us continually improve the methodology.