

IT Business Plans

Many business organizations are demanding diversified and more up to date services from their IT departments. These organizations are finding their IT systems, or sometimes the lack of them, to be the main bottleneck in improving and developing the products and services they offer. Funds availability is somewhat limited and will always be a problem in developing economies. IT departments are basically required to increase the level and quality of services for equal or slightly more money. This is typical of service departments in organizations all over the world. Consequently, a business-oriented approach is required in order to deal effectively and efficiently with such conflicting constraints.

IT planning techniques will become increasingly important in the next few years especially with the recent national emphasis on E-business and E-government. In the traditional IT approach, the pressure to find appropriate solutions rests often solely on the IT Managers. This is an unfair and incorrect approach. IT departments are service departments. The strategic and policy decisions on the type of services that need to be provided and the method by which scarce resources will be allocated should be made by the Business Managers of the organization in co-operation with the IT Manager. This requires a joint planning exercise between the IT and Business Managers to which they should all positively contribute and for which they should all feel responsible and be held accountable.

The main factors leading to the successful development and implementation of any IT Business Plan are:

- Timely preparation
- Realistic time scale and targets
- Prompt implementation
- Regular follow-up and updates

Without the above, the best of IT Business Plans will not be worth the paper (or CDs as the case may be) they are written on.