

IT Organizational Change Management Series

Accelerate End-User Adoption with a Strong Organizational Change Capability



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When companies choose to deploy new software to end-users across the enterprise, they are looking to either enhance business performance or minimize IT costs. These goals are often broken down into more discrete objectives such as increasing employee productivity, providing new capabilities, streamlining processes, reducing service desk calls, and so forth. Regardless of whether the software runs “in the cloud” or locally on employees’ machines, the economic business case assumes that some percentage of the end-user population will adopt the new software. The projected return on investment (ROI) as defined by the business case depends on achieving a defined target adoption rate.



The Mathematics of End-User Adoption

It is important for IT leaders to understand the role that organizational change plays in driving successful end-user adoption. The most elegant software solution flawlessly deployed will yield a low adoption rate without effective organizational change management. This point is illustrated in the equation below where the *Technical Capability* is your software and hardware selections, IT project governance, risk management, resource prioritization, and deployment approach; and *Organizational Change Capability* represents communications strategy, vision of the future, case for change, stakeholder engagement, and training.

Technical Capability						
Software, hardware, project governance, risk mitigation, IT resources, deployment approach	X	Organizational Change Capability		=	End-User Adoption Rate	
		Strategic communications, vision, the case for change, stakeholder engagement, and training strategy				

Using a 10-point scale where 10 equals 100% confidence, score your project’s Technical Capability (TC), then score its Organizational Change Capability (OCC). Typically, IT project teams will score higher on TC than on OCC. When this occurs, the team should focus on increasing the OCC rather than TC score. For example, let’s say you scored your project as follows: 8 (TC) x 6 (OCC) = 48. Increasing your TC score by 2 points will yield an overall score of 60. But, increasing your OCC score by 2 points will bump your overall score to 64 – four points higher than if you had focused on the TC score. This simple formula illustrates how Organizational Change Capability serves as a *force multiplier* in driving end-user adoption.



Not surprisingly, IT project teams feel more at-home with the technical aspects of the project and tend to be less comfortable with organizational change. As a result, IT project teams naturally spend a disproportionate amount of time focused on technology instead of people. This point is underscored by the March 2011 Gartner study which found that companies under-invest in organizational change management for their IT implementations.¹ Gartner recommends that IT project teams allocate 15% of their budget to organizational change management activities. A savvy IT leader will acknowledge this weakness and seek out experienced organizational change experts to embed into their project teams.

15% of the IT project budget should be allocated to organizational change management activities
- Gartner

Accelerated End-User Adoption Model

With a strong organizational change capability, IT project teams are prepared to address critical organizational change-related issues such as:

- How do we market the software internally and build awareness of the benefits?
- How do we create demand that overwhelms desire to maintain the status quo?
- How will we manage the end-user impacts and business disruption?
- How do we get buy-in from the business leaders for the changes?
- How do we handle teams that prefer the current system over the new software?
- How do we best use the organization’s early adopters to our advantage?
- How do we determine the level of training and performance support required?
- How do we manage expectations regarding capabilities that may be lost as part of the new software deployment (e.g., third-party plugins)

The *Accelerated End-User Adoption* model (Exhibit A) addresses these issues by helping IT project teams systematically think through the critical elements of an organizational change strategy to drive end-user adoption. This model has aided several companies in successfully designing and implementing an organizational change strategy in support of their software deployment. It assumes fulltime organizational change expertise is embedded in the project team, and that the project team is closely coordinated with the project sponsor, business unit leaders, and key internal partners (e.g., HR Department, Learning Team, and Corporate Communications).

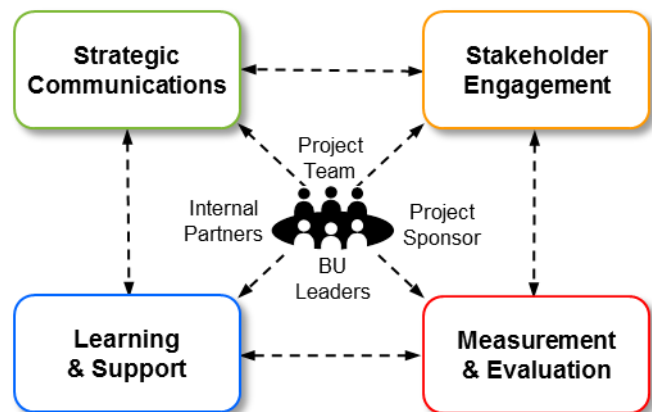



Exhibit A: Accelerated End-User Adoption model



With this governance structure in place, the IT project team can begin systemically mapping out the organizational change strategy across the four components of the *Accelerated End-User Adoption* model:

- *Strategic Communications* – Communications serves as the foundation for the organizational change strategy. It involves branding the software deployment so stakeholders can identify with the vision and rally around it; developing a project site on the company intranet to serve as an authority source for updates and information; creating a core message platform that provides the elevator pitch and articulates “what’s in it for me?” for each stakeholder segment; developing a communications plan that uses a mix of two-way channels and media formats; and maintaining a drumbeat of key messages over the months leading up to, during, and after deployment.
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- *Stakeholder Engagement* – Stakeholder engagement refers to the proactive *involvement* of priority stakeholders in the deployment planning process. This entails developing a network of change agents who can augment the project team; providing hands-on demos and roadshows so that stakeholders can see and touch the software; conducting meetings with key business leaders to gain their buy-in; developing change management toolkits for supervisors and middle managers; and leveraging the organization’s early adopters to test new features and build excitement for the new software.
 - *Learning & Support* – Learning and support is focused on *enabling* stakeholders to perform at a higher level using the new software. It involves deploying third-party performance support tools; providing employees with a personal use/discounted version of the software (this may be part of your corporate license – e.g., Microsoft’s Home Use Program) so that they can acclimate to its user interface and features prior to deploying it across the enterprise; designing or procuring classroom-based training modules as needed; providing support material such as how-to videos, quick reference guides, and frequently asked questions (FAQs).
 - *Measurement & Evaluation* – Every organizational change program should include a robust measurement and evaluation strategy to monitor end-user adoption. This entails generating usage reports from the performance support tools; tracking IT service desk calls/open tickets related to the new software; administering surveys on regular intervals to assess stakeholders’ use and satisfaction with the new software; conducting focus groups with cross-sections of end-users to determine what’s working well and where additional support is required; and collecting anecdotal feedback from face-to-face meetings with divisions/teams, meetings with business unit leaders, and other venues.

The design, sequence, and management of these activities are critically important. A skilled organizational change expert with IT experience will know how to do this well.



Case Example: US-Based Transportation Company

The illustration below (Exhibit B) depicts how Emergent helped a US-based transportation company apply the *Accelerated End-User Adoption* model to deploy Office 2010 and new collaboration tools to 10,000+ employees. Many of these employees migrated from Office 2003, and changes in the user interface – specifically the introduction of Microsoft’s “ribbon” toolbar in Outlook, Word, PowerPoint and Excel – presented a significant learning curve. Additionally, integrating the collaboration tools into existing business processes required buy-in from the business units as well as leaders’ participation in the solution design process.

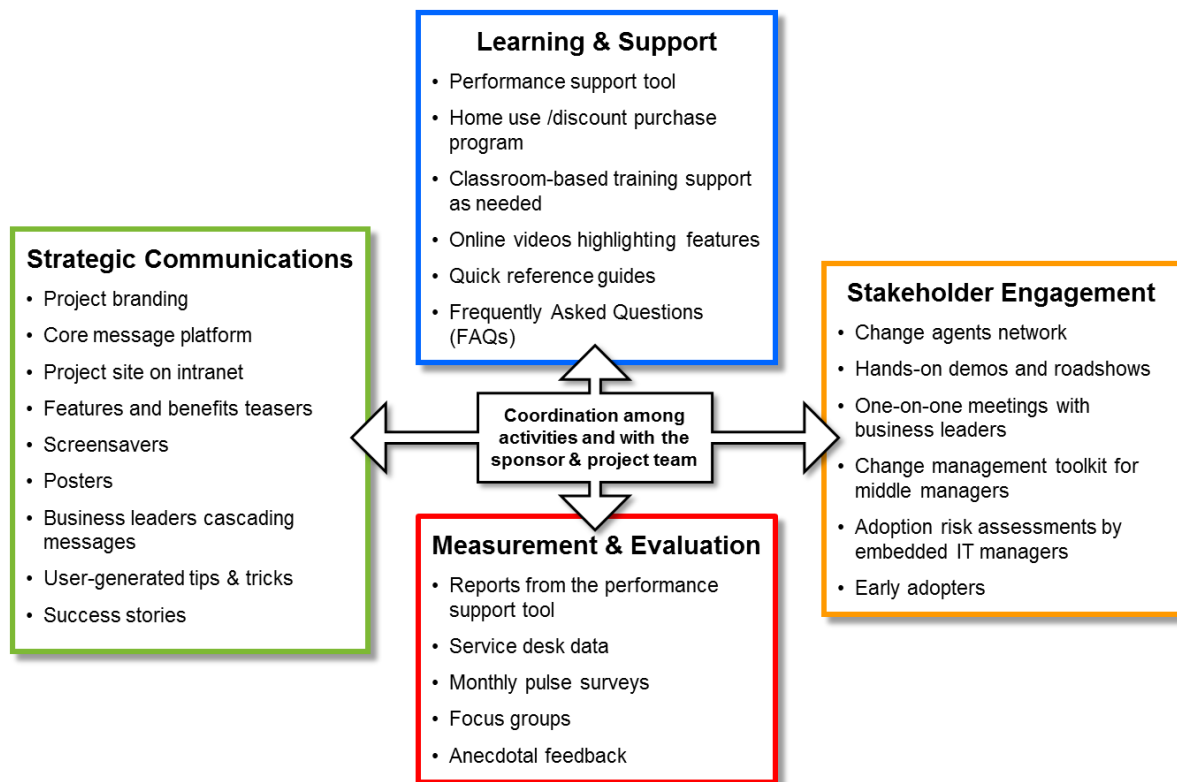


Exhibit B: US-Based Transportation Company’s Application of the Accelerated End-User Adoption Model

In applying the model, the US-based transportation company used LearningGuide as their third-party performance support tool. They heavily promoted Microsoft’s Home Use Program to encourage employees to purchase a personal copy of Office 2010 for only \$10, which they could use at home. Classroom-based training was delivered on an as-needed basis when the performance support tool wasn’t enough. The change agents network was comprised of 100+ employees from various divisions and geographies, and was convened every-other-week for several months during the run-up to the software deployment and during post-deployment.



Key Takeaways



- ✓ The IT project team's *organizational change capability* is just as important as its *technical capability* in driving end-user adoption
- ✓ Use a holistic organizational change approach geared toward IT end-user adoption. Don't rely solely on push communications and a traditional training approach
- ✓ Ensure your IT project team includes a skilled organizational change expert with IT experience – get outside help if needed

Request a Free Assessment

If you would like to improve your IT organizational change capability or are interested in applying the *Accelerated End-User Adoption* model to your project, please contact us. If you mention this white paper we would be happy to conduct a no-obligation assessment over the phone and provide you with recommendations for enhancing your team's organizational change approach.

Emergent helps companies implement their strategic business initiatives through organizational change leadership, strategic communications, and stakeholder engagement. Headquartered in Denver, CO, we serve clients across North America. Our boutique size enables us to deliver top-tier consulting services with compelling ROI for our clients. Emergent partners with a wide array of companies, including several of the Fortune 500.

For more information on our IT Organizational Change Leadership capabilities, please contact Managing Principal Jesse Jacoby at jesse@EmergentConsultants.com or 303-883-5941.

¹ Lessons from 169 SAP Implementations Using Service Providers in North America, Gartner, March 2011