

Building vs. Buying Systems to Support the E-World

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The Core Issue: IT

- What is the capability and relationship of IT with advancement?

- i.e. -

- Are they in a position to deliver?

Project Scope

- Integrating online giving
- Interactive/Personalized online communities
- Migrating print communications to email
- Integrating legacy data with the web
- Donor recognition

The Players

- **Project Initiators/Evaluators**
(Who needs it and who will sign off?)
- **Someone to translate Advancement needs into technical requirements**
(Electronic communications staff member, Consultant, Online services vendor)

The Players, cont.

- Person/s to turn technical needs into reality
(*IT staff or Vendor*)
- Campus constituents who will be impacted
(*Deans/VP/Faculty?*)

The Product: Part 1

- Fits into alumni/fundraising strategy
 - Operation
 - Adds real value to support other efforts
 - Look and Feel
 - Clearly integrates into rest of site
 - Image it presents
 - Cutting edge or clumsy execution

The Product: Part 2

- Allows you (not the vendor or IT staff) to control:
 - Updates
 - Planned upgrades
 - Customizations

The Product: Part 3

- Addresses long-term integration with campus systems
 - Legacy alumni/fundraising data systems
 - Begins to integrate data:
 - alumni web use/donor contact/email response and giving patterns
 - Provides tools to measure results

Build v. Buy: The Options

- Third Party Products (Harris Pub, IAC, PCI)
 - Contract with a company to utilize pre-programmed solutions
 - Hosted off-site:
 - quicker startup, data must travel
 - Hosted on-site:
 - infrastructure investment, data stays local

Build v. Buy: The Options

- Contracted Development
 - Contract with company to develop system to exact specifications
 - Significant learning curve
 - Significant expense
 - You control your destiny

Build v. Buy: The Options

- Build in-house
 - Internal systems knowledge
 - Small learning curve
 - Complete skill set likely outside of expertise
 - Data integration, scripting
 - Your project is one of several priorities
 - Is there an accountability structure

Weighing the Issues: A Checklist

- Multi-year cost
- Features
- Integration with campus systems
- Staff impact
- Implementation timeline

A Checklist: Cont.

- Positioning for future projects
- Campus politics
- Other benefits

Reality Bites: Our Story

- Critical Issue: Money (Not spending any)
- Role of IT: We can do it better
- Campus Politics: Give IT a shot
- Staff impact: Let other projects go
- Position for future: ???
- Reality: Nice feature set, but only up to capability of staff.

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