

AUSTRALIAN PROJECT & CONSULTING SERVICES



PROJECTIONS

...making concept reality

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Welcome to Projections!



THIS MONTH we're excited to announce that Helen Baraklilis and Paul Flintoft have joined APCS, Helen as a project coordinator and Paul as Sales and Marketing Manager. We spent [5 minutes](#) delving into the mysteries of Paul so you can find out a bit more about him.

Hopefully I'll be able to coerce Helen into explaining a little about her background next month!

Greg White has spent the last two months explaining how the budding project manager should go about [qualifying for the PMP](#). This month he looks at the recently announced changes to the examination that will ensure that the PMP continues to maintain its prestige into the future.

Remember the mainframe? While they're not dead, it's fair to say that commercial computing has mostly moved to client server type models. Jeff Carlin wraps up his [Utility Computing](#) discussion with a reflection on the past. Perhaps there are some lessons to be learnt and applied before Utility Computing can come close to meeting expectations.

What do you look for in an IT Consultant? Within your organisation is there a sense that IT is slightly out of step with the business? Paul Flintoft has been [kicking a few tyres](#) to come up with some answers.

The eighth installment of Scott Coleman's [12 Project Management Principles](#) looks at the relationship between responsibility and authority. A mismatch here could bring a project to its knees.

Oh and don't forget to [Ask Craig!](#)

Until next time.

[Craig Dennis](#)

PS: If you find APCS Projections interesting you might like to forward it to a [friend or colleague](#).

Utility Computing (Promises and Expectations...) Part 2



By [Jeff Carlin](#)
Project Director

***"You no longer need to own or operate IT assets,
Pay Per Usage models - wind it up and down to synchronize business and IT,
Rapid provisioning of capacity at linear and predictable cost profiles,
Managed and controlled - all environments stabilized, virtual, efficient and
adaptive"***

OVER THE LAST couple of issues I've looked at key utility computing areas where clients seek the utility model to work it's magic, such as viable per seat costs and improved server utilisation and concluded that true utility computing is not with us just yet.

Our clue to the future lies in the past. Mainframes provided bureau services long before open industry standardisation. Previously, a key criteria for delivery of these solutions was the one-stop-shop vendor that could manage the many components within it's own architecture - expensive, simple, elegant, reliable and graded.

Watch closely as one big IT vendor continues it's on-going strategy of acquiring more software assets within it's portfolio. This will allow greater exploitation of the architecture - evidence of this is now appearing through better price/performance benchmarks from the combined server, operating system, database and middleware products leveraging proprietary threads and secret or unpublished "go-fast features". The upshot of all this is we can expect to see future integrated metering of consumption across these capacity elements, but not for another 12-18 months at the earliest.

Other vendors who focus on "platforms only" will feel the effects of being marginalised, as will the Software-only vendors (Microsoft has some breathing space until Linux adoption increases). Platform-only vendors continue to tout their solutions beyond the box, but in reality they are becoming increasingly confused about their value-proposition for a client and confined to just shipping tin and minor enhancements to their operating systems. Until they can establish an integrated value chain with database and application providers, they will remain exposed to commoditisation - which for some is a sweet-spot for their business model, e.g. Dell and for other the early signs of a rapidly approaching death in that market.

Unfortunately, Australia suffers from a lack of real scale type economies. Without the cheap and robust tools readily available "out of the box", establishing a fully-featured Utility Computing offer for the Enterprise market takes huge upfront investments from a Service Provider and it's only "toe in the water stuff" for now.

We are seeing "spot" opportunities being considered on a case-by-case basis around customisation of a particular client's needs and attempts by Service Providers to extend these architectures out just a bit further for making it available to the Enterprise market segment. However, as is mostly the case, these extensions are typically blocked or killed by the initial security fears of shared infrastructure amongst different clients, lack of transparent metering solutions and the low single digit operating margins for the Service Provider businesses inhibiting future large-scale investments.

Watch this space!

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Ask Craig



Are you struggling with a thorny IT management issue or at a loss to explain the benefits of a new technology that your manager discovered in last weeks Financial Review? The good news is that you're not alone! From time to time we all find ourselves grappling with something that came out of left field.

For that reason we have established "Ask Craig" as a forum that will enable our readers to share their issues - and hopefully gain some useful insights. Each month we'll examine a reader problem and try to offer some practical guidance.

What's in it for me you might ask? Well, apart from the exchange of ideas, a small gift will be the reward for having your question published.

So get to it! [ASK CRAIG!](#)

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Kick the Tyres, Light the Fires



By [Paul Flintoft](#) M.Bus, FAIBF
Sales & Marketing Manager

CURRENT THINKING in organisation best practice encourages business leaders to be computer-savvy and not delegate the ownership and governance of their business' key IT functions to IT people.

Perhaps surprisingly, IT's support of business process in Small to Medium Enterprises (SMEs) is not always core or key to smooth business operations.

Good business-savvy IT consultants do have a role to play in accelerating your business growth, but not in the way business leaders traditionally think they do.

Why should I bother? I'm in the SME world, not a corporate conglomerate; Computers aren't key to successful operations of my business.

This may be so. To be sure, picture the main thing you (or your P.A.) does on your computer in your office. Imagine if it stopped working for an hour, a day or a week? What business processes would either not function, or function poorly? How many customer needs could not be serviced?

Challenge your IT Manager on what contingencies are currently in place. The spend on contingencies will most likely be nowhere near the cost of not doing business due to IT systems failure. Then ask how much it would cost to guarantee system availability. The likely number you get back will be normally be higher than you are ideally comfortable with as it will largely involve duplication of existing IT functions within the business for use in case of emergency.

A business-savvy IT consultant can really help you here by working with your business and IT people to collectively identify and prioritise risk areas and propose and implement solutions which may incorporate process and system changes, possibly utilising IT services which would normally be out of reach of SMEs IT departments.

Australian Project & Consulting Services is a SME whose people are good business savvy IT consultants and good business savvy project managers. We work with the leaders of SMEs business to make IT investments work properly. No tyre kicking needed. No time burnt.

Stay tuned; in Part II we'll look at another common reason - How can I manage something I don't understand?

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Everything you wanted to know about PMP certification Part 3



By [Greg White](#)
Senior Project Manager

LAST MONTH WE discussed [PMI's](#) requirements for gaining a PMP certification in more detail. However since Part 2 was written, the Project Management Institute has foreshadowed changes in its requirements for the new examination.

The PMP examination tries to ascertain a candidates understanding and application of project management principles as outlined in its Guide to the PMBOK (Project Management Body of knowledge). Along with knowledge based questions, it does this by using scenario based questions that need to be interpreted from the position of a project manager. The examination may also test a wider body of knowledge than just the information included in the guide.

The PMP examination will change in October 2005 to be based on the principles and terminology used in the 3rd edition of the Guide. The current examination is based on the thinner "2000" edition of the guide. Additionally, PMI will be tightening the experience requirements to require both leadership experience and formal reference contacts to that experience in the application. PMI is to also increase its level of auditing of the submitted experience requirements.

There are also significant changes with the examination. Until September 2005, the passing grade for current examination is just below 70% of 200 questions with 4 multiple choice answers. In October 2005 the examination passing grade will be based on just over 80% of 175 questions with 4 multiple choice answers. The examination will continue to have 200 questions. However 25 of the questions will be 'sample' questions to evaluate their possible use in future examinations. These 25 questions will not be counted in the passing grade and will not be distinguishable from the real questions.

The Project Management Institute is certainly raising the bar and thus ensuring the long term prestige of the Project Management Professional (PMP) certification.

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12 Project Management Principles



By [Scott Coleman](#)
Managing Director

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PROJECT MANAGER responsibility must be matched by equivalent authority. It's not enough to be held responsible for project outcomes if you don't have any authority to make it happen. Project managers must ask for and obtain enough authority to execute their responsibilities. Specifically, Project Managers must have the authority to acquire and coordinate resources, request and receive company, and supplier cooperation, and make appropriate, binding decisions which have an impact on the success of the project.

Next Month: Stakeholder participation

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5 Minutes with Paul Flintoft

**What do you do at APCS?**

Today is day three of my new role as Sales and Marketing Manager. Success will be growing APCS' profitability through clearly communicating the benefit of what we do to Small to Medium Enterprises in Victoria. We make IT investments work .

Who are you?

I have just turned 40, am the father of two energetic boys, Mark (9) and Sean (7). I live in Hampton, and enjoy playing Ice Hockey and fencing, and navigate in car rallies for a bit of fun. A recent hobby is getting my motorbike licence again. Zipping around bayside streets on an old Vespa appeals.

What do you bring to APCS?

Before taking on this job, I have worked in Defense and Banking and Finance as well as in the vendor community, lately in sales, but previously in roles including project management and IT consulting. Being on both sides of the fence gives me a useful perspective.

Pick three people who you would invite to dinner.

Richard Feynman, the physicist who made physics simple, spoke in plain language, is a bit of hero. He led NASA through to finding the root cause of the Challenger disaster. My wife Jenny, (we are separated , but she is my best friend). My boys would want Lara Croft to come too (no complaints here). And Harold Holt, if it's a pool party. He was always good for swimming lessons, apparently.

How would you spend your last \$50?

A fish shop hamburger and a glass of good bubbles. Possibly a Wedding's, Parties Anything CD from a bargain bin, and give the change to the Salvos.





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