

What CEOs Must Demand To Compete and Collaborate in 2005

— Part Three of Three —

Unleashing the Full Power of Project Management in the Internet Age

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Continual Improvement in Project Management

Every project must be reviewed carefully after it has been completed to determine where the corporate project management process was successful and where improvements are required. New developments occur in this discipline continually, and the corporate process and systems must continually be improved to reflect the lessons learned and newly available systems and procedures.

CEO Demand:

29. That a post-completion appraisal be performed on every project to document the lessons learned and improve the corporate project management process, practices and procedures.

Integrating Project Management Into the Organization

It is no longer sufficient to treat the project management discipline as an add-on, separate approach to how we handle our projects. It must be fully integrated with all affected business systems. This means effectively linking all project management systems and procedures with those that deal with:

- Financial and accounting.
- Resources: people, facilities, equipment.
- Development of product and services: research, engineering, prototype manufacturing.
- Operations: manufacturing, production, field service and support.
- Procurement: purchasing and contracting.
- Marketing: advertising, sales, distribution.

CEO Demand:

30. That the project management discipline and supporting systems be fully integrated with affected parts of the organization.

One of the primary causes of difficulty in planning and scheduling projects has always been how to avoid too much detail in project plans, and how to avoid conflict between project plans and the planning and scheduling systems and methods used in the contributing functional departments. One answer in this area is the establishment of what has been termed an “Project/Operations Planning and Control” function, for want of a better name. Figure 5 illustrates this concept schematically, and shows how projects, whether in portfolios, programs, or stand-alone, and project management systems can be linked and integrated with the overall operations of the organization.

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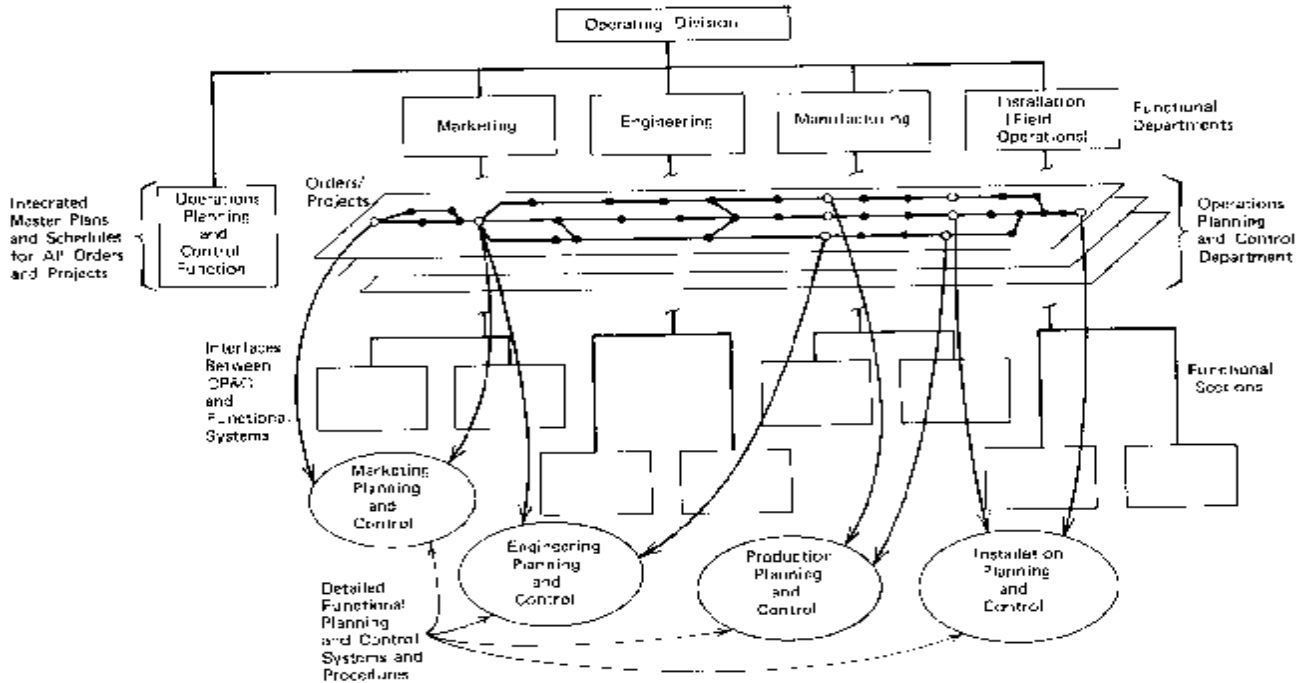


Fig. 5. General Illustration of an Integrated Project/Operations Planning and Control System.¹

Using the Internet In Response to Its Challenges

“Internet Speed” refers to the recent drastic reductions in both a) the time required to launch a new product or service, and b) the time available to competitively respond to market opportunities. The Internet both causes this situation and enables the competitive response. But using the Internet to help deliver completed projects in shorter times requires a concerted effort, starting with the CEO.

There are a number of powerful, commercially available, Web-enabled project management software systems using client servers and desktop/notebook/handheld computers that bring Internet speed to the project planning and control arena. These systems:

- Enable improved collaboration and communication for project teams no matter where the members are located geographically, with everyone working from the same currently updated information.
- Provide risk and issue tracking and escalation processes.
- Empower staff members through access to central information repositories, with suitable controls on who can change the information.
- Automate much if not most of the project management process and related documentation and record keeping.
- Enable key resource assignment within and between projects, programs, and project portfolios, and facilitate corporate resource planning and acquisition.
- Enable tracking and evaluation of changes in project scope, schedule, cost and risk.
- Allow integration of project management processes with all other business systems.
- Capture the “lessons learned” on every project for incorporation into the project management process and related data repositories.

CEO Demands:

31. That a Web-enabled project management system be selected and implemented—as a project—at the most effective (project portfolio or total enterprise) level.

The selection and implementation of such systems is in itself a complex management project that requires application of the principles and practices discussed in this paper.

Using Internet Resources To Improve Your Project Management

The Internet and World Wide Web provide low cost, rapid access to many resources that can be used to improve an organization's project management capabilities, and to keep them abreast of the competition. Table 5 is a partial listing of Web sites related to this subject, courtesy of Max Wideman, with additions to his list. Many of these provide further links to other useful project management sites.

<p>http://www.aipm.com/research.htm http://www.airtime.co.uk/users/wysywig/gloss.htm#WBS http://www.artemisp.com http://www.asapm.org http://www.BUtrain.com http://www.cbponline.com/index.htm http://www.cs-solutions.com http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/opd/pdpm/chap_h.htm/chapt08/chapt08.htm http://www.gantthead.com/Gantthead/default/ http://www.governance.uottawa.ca/english/education/dbm/splash.html http://www.iil.com http://www.infoser.com/infocons/pmi/insight.html http://www.inovie.com/ http://www.iproj.com http://www.maxwideman.com http://www.mpug.org/ http://www.newgrange.org/ http://www.onelist.com/archive/PM-Talk http://www.planview.com http://www.pmi.org/ http://www.PMForum.org/ http://www.pmpartners.com/resources/index.html http://www.pmsolutions.com http://www.powerpointers.com/ http://www.primavera.com http://www.ProjectConnections.com/knowhow/template_list/subjects/pmskills.html#planning http://www.projectlearning.com/project-software/index.htm http://www.projectmagazine.com http://www.projectnet.co.uk/pm/pmgloss.htm http://www.projectsresults.com/ http://www.robbinsgioia.com/ http://www.scitor.com/resources/project_management_links.htm http://www.scitor.com/resources/white_papers/harvey_levine.htm http://www.visualproject.net/index_Flash.html</p>
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Table 5. Partial List of Web Sites Related to Project Management². If some pages are no longer available, try deleting the ends of the URL until you get back to its home page. This list includes e-zines, associations, newsletters, consultants, trainers, software vendors and others, and is by no means complete.

Conclusion

An organization that fulfills the listed demands will join the ranks of those who are on the leading edge of excellence in the global, Internet-Age market. By exploiting the capabilities and power of integrated project management as described above, coupled with the facilities of the Internet—and the right strategies, of course!—organizations will survive and prosper.

References:

1 Archibald, 1992, op cit, 148.

2 Source: Wideman, R. Max, <http://www.maxwideman.com>