

AnteoNews.

A quarterly newsletter published by Anteo Group.

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Some of Our New Clients:



golden state foods



New Sponsorship:



Story Ideas for AnteoNews?

Send any story ideas or article submissions for future editions of AnteoNews to Margaret Hearne at marketing@anteogroup.com.

Anteo Group Increased Internal Staff 100%

2005 was a year of growth and expansion for Anteo Group. In a market where hiring and retaining employees is becoming more and more arduous, Anteo Group increased internal staff over 100%. The strength of the technology market provided a solid foundation for Anteo Group's addition of two new offices and the acquisition of Future State Consulting in 2005. As for the future, Anteo Group has no plans of slowing down.

In addition to internal growth and expansion, Anteo Group's customers more than doubled throughout the year. Some of our new customers include: AutoTrader, Data Return, Extron, Hummingbird, Cox Communications, Co-Operative Bank, Golden State Foods, e-Gistics, Svenska Handelsbanken, Voca, Witness Systems, Belkin, and e-Rewards.

"The technology hiring market remains strong for both full time positions as well as consulting roles," says Anteo Group President and Co-Founder Dion DeLoof. "It is typical to see a slight decline at year-end, but the market held strong and hiring actually increased at the end of 2005. The first quarter of 2006 looks to remain steady and strong for hiring nationally. We can't thank our clients and outstanding consultants enough for fueling our growth in 2005!"

Anteo Group's growth has been recognized by the Center for Entrepreneurship and Corporate Growth (CECG) & Innovations Publishing: GBS Eagles Program of the Southeast's Fastest-Growing Private Companies and Entrepreneur Magazine & Price-waterhouseCooper's Hot 100 Fastest-Growing New Businesses. Anteo Group's excellent work environment has been recognized numerous times by the Atlanta Business Chronicle's A+ Employers list and by the Dallas Business Journal's Best Places to Work.

Fast Facts

Bureau of Labor Statistics of the U.S. Department of Labor

"Nonfarm payroll employment grew by 243,000 in February, and the unemployment rate was little changed at 4.8 percent," reported the Bureau of Labor Statistics of the U.S. Department of Labor on March 10, 2006. "Job gains occurred in construction, financial activities, health care, and several other industries."

Most Popular Words of 2005 on Merriam-Webster's Online Dictionary

1. Integrity
2. Refugee
3. Contempt
4. Filibuster
5. Insipid

IT Spending on the Rise?

According to the November 2005 CIO Magazine Tech Poll, "CIOs are predicting IT spending to increase by 7.8% over the next 12 months, up from 5.7% in November and 5.2% in October."

What Affects Your Productivity?

According to a survey published in Human Resource Executive, when asked "What issues affect your productivity" the most common responses are: Stress, Personal/Family Issues, Chronic Medical Conditions, and Unscheduled Absences.

Getting Results from ERP: Transitioning from Implementation to Optimization

By Rob Prinzo, Anteo Group Vice President of Consulting



The ERP Application Lifecycle

The ERP application lifecycle is the continuum of activities required to support an ERP application from the initial strategy through system optimization. The ERP application lifecycle consists of two major phases: Implementation and Optimization.

Phase I - Implementation

Phase I consists of activities that result in the implementation of an ERP application. These activities include: defining the strategic direction; analyzing business and technology requirements; obtaining project funding; acquiring hardware, software and integration services; and implementing the enabling solution. Over the last ten years, most large companies have completed Phase I of the ERP application lifecycle by implementing a new financial and/or human resources application – usually in response to Y2K. In the current business environment, most Phase I activities are being conducted by mid-market companies, state and local governments, higher education institutions and organizations who are re-assessing their initial ERP vendor choice.

Phase II – Integration and Optimization

During Phase II, organizations achieve results by continued planning and project initiatives aimed at streamlining business processes, providing decision makers with better information and integrating applications across the enterprise. Although most organizations scale back their enterprise application project efforts after the system is live, anticipated system benefits typically occur two to four years after implementation. Typical Phase II projects include:

- Application Management Optimization
- Implementing New Functionality
- Application Integration
- Business Intelligence/Reporting Solutions
- Data Archiving
- Employee Self-Service/Portals

In order to transition from system implementation to application optimization successfully, organizations should consider the following steps:

1. Assess the Current State

Before determining the future of the ERP application, conduct an assessment of the application's current state – how, what, where and why it's where it is. A team comprised of business, application and technology owners should begin with an evaluation of the entire ERP application lifecycle and conclude with a clear understanding of the present lifecycle stage. The assessment should include a review of the original system objectives, project performance to date and industry best practices to identify a list of Phase II projects for system optimization.

2. Get a Handle on Operations

The majority of Phase II benefits from ERP applications will come from the projects that improve business processes such as adding new application functionality, extending applications to employees and business partners, integrating data with other applica-

tions, and providing executives and managers with business intelligence tools for better decision making. To focus clearly on the value-added initiatives, organizations must overcome any performance or application management issues. Before moving forward with Phase II initiatives, ensure that ERP system operations for change control, service packs, environment synchronization and release management have been stabilized. Failure to complete these tasks will result in wasting valuable resources to resolve system problems instead of implementing strategic projects.

3. Implement a Continuous Planning Process

After conducting the current state assessment and stabilizing operations, determine the future of the ERP application by implementing a continuous planning process. Recent industry research suggests that companies that continue to plan beyond system implementation are more likely to achieve their desired results than organizations ending their ERP initiatives after the initial implementation. The focus of the planning process is the development of a strategic plan for the ERP application. This strategic plan will serve as the roadmap that guides the organization's goals and objectives for the next three to five years. Within the strategic plan, the goals and objectives should be defined as projects that will serve as the action plan to achieve the organization's overall purpose for the ERP application.

4. Execute Achievable, Results Oriented Projects

Unlike the system implementation, Phase II integration and optimization projects can be implemented as pilot projects and then rolled out to the organization in phased projects, lasting no more than three to four months. Examples of such projects are employee self service or business intelligence. By using this approach, the organization will achieve results faster and maintain the flexibility to adjust and control project schedules based on projects returns, lessons learned and resource requirements. Additionally, by achieving quarterly project milestones, the implementation team will gain a greater sense of accomplishment and credibility within the organization for its ability to generate results quickly.

5. Measure Results

Once the Phase II projects are identified, project plans developed and resources allocated, the overall strategic plan should be monitored on no less than a quarterly basis. Success should be measured by the team's ability to meet the target dates outlined in the objectives and projects. Because results are to be achieved in the future (possibly three to five years out), project schedules may need to be adjusted based on lessons learned or as business and technology drivers change.

Conclusion

For most organizations, Phase II of the ERP Application Lifecycle has already begun. For companies still completing ERP implementations, Phase II is on the horizon. There's a clear difference between those organizations who successfully navigate their ERP application and those who do not. Organizations who plan, monitor and evaluate the ERP application through its entire lifecycle will achieve application optimization. Those who do not, will be forever stuck in "maintenance mode." The success of an ERP application is based on the organization's commitment to continued planning and implementation of Phase II projects that extend the capabilities of their ERP to achieve their desired results. ●

Customer Service and the Software Consultant

By Gil Estes, President PGE Software

As a software consultant, I find myself having to balance the needs and wants of the client with doing what is right. In a perfect world, you are brought in by a manager who has a solid understanding of the business issues involved and the technical possibilities. This person will also be open to suggestions from you, the hired consultant.

Unfortunately, there are times when this is not the case. The client (manager) may be relatively inexperienced and therefore, lacks the understanding of what it takes to get the job done.

In my experience, I have had the privilege to work with some outstanding clients who fell into the former category. If all of your clients are like this, then you need read no further. If not, read on...

Identify the Goal

More than likely, the actual scenario will fall somewhere between these extremes. Either way, the first step is to identify what the goals of the project and/or your role are. At the highest level, the fundamental goal of both the client and you should be to have a successful, satisfied client. How to go about achieving that goal is the focus of this article.

The Customer is NOT Always Right

For many, the old saying "The customer is always right" seems to be a safe path to follow. This is what worked in our parents' generation and has proven to be a hallmark of retail sales for decades. This is what some clients are looking for. But what happens when the client is just plain wrong? In this case you have a few options:

1. Do what the client wants since they are, after all, writing the checks. This will almost surely result in an "unsatisfied" client when, in the end, the project fails. Even though you can say "It wasn't my idea," you will surely be blamed because you are, after all, the consultant. Seldom is a consultant retained who is "perceived" as responsible for a failed effort.
2. Do what you think is right, in spite of what the client wants. In this instance, if you end up with a solution that accomplishes the task, the client may be appreciative and grateful.

Great Leadership Skills Start With You!

By Pat Baumgartner, Anteo Group Business Development Manager



In today's fast-paced technology world, refined people skills are becoming nearly as critical to performance as technical capabilities. With technical professionals being asked to take on more and more, a majority of that new responsibility may not deal with technology at all. As a matter of fact, the ability to lead teams, people and projects has become just as critical as knowing the latest API or design pattern. Improving leadership skills is neither a new or ground-breaking idea; what may be new is that improving your leadership skills starts with you.

If you sit back for a moment and think about great leaders; characteristics that come to mind are usually focused on their outward public persona. These outward effacing character traits are very easy to see. What may not be so obvious is how

At the same time, you may alienate the client so that even though the problem is solved, any chance of further work with that client will be gone. Then again, if you miss the mark, and you did it your own way, you will surely be blamed and not hired again for future work. In a worst case scenario, you may even find yourself open to legal issues.

3. Illuminate the perceived issues for the client to see. If you understand your role as one of "helping" the client, then the best option would be to help them discover the problems and possible resolutions. But how do you do this without coming off as arrogant?
 - **Ask Questions:** Ask questions that will make your client think. By asking intelligent questions, it shows that you want to have a deeper understanding of what they are trying to accomplish. It also forces the client to understand "why" they are doing certain things, and may show short comings in their thought process. The key here is self-discovery.
 - **Provide Examples:** Provide examples of how others have solved a similar problem. It never hurts to have an example or two available that show how a similar issue was resolved successfully. When presented as a question (What if we approached it like ACME, Ltd did in this article I read...), it will come across as trying to find alternative, successful methods of accomplishing the objectives.
 - **Understand the Client:** Try to understand where your client is coming from. Not understanding the client is probably the biggest mistake I have seen consultants make. They may have a better understanding of the business need than you do, and there may be other factors driving the decision. Again, ask questions. By asking questions, it may reveal flaws in your own thought process, and will again show that you are taking more than just a passing interest in their needs.

To summarize, for success as a consultant you must understand that your job is to help the client succeed. It may mean going beyond what the client asks and pushing for a deeper understanding for both you and the client. By doing this, you put yourself into a role of partner who will be called back again and again for future projects. ●

great leaders understand and learn from themselves. Knowing yourself is one of the most critical steps in improving your overall ability to lead. When you know and learn from yourself, you are comfortable with your strengths and not crippled by your shortcomings. Personal awareness allows you to learn from both your mistakes as well as your successes; and ultimately keep you growing and evolving.

The methodologies used to understand a new piece of technology or a new enterprise application can be used as a framework for studying yourself. The key is linking that methodology to things other than technology. While it does not come natural for everyone, self awareness can be achieved through persistence, tenacity and follow through. But ultimately it comes from paying attention to experience. Good, bad or otherwise, careful, honest reflection must be made on every interaction until a level of comfort is gained. Once you get on this track, your leadership skills will have the capacity to grow to unlimited heights. ●

Anteogroup.

Enterprise Java Staffing • ERP Consulting

United States Offices

Atlanta – Headquarters
1230 Peachtree Street, NE
Suite 2075
Atlanta, GA 30309

Dallas
14221 Dallas Parkway
Suite 1500
Dallas, TX 75254

Los Angeles
600 Anton Boulevard
11th Floor
Costa Mesa, CA 92626

United Kingdom Office

London
45 Beech Street
London
EC2Y 8AD

About Anteo Group

Anteo Group is an award-winning Enterprise Java Staffing and ERP Consulting Company. Through structured methodologies, Anteo Group simplifies project resourcing and implementation for small to Fortune 100 companies.

For more information, visit www.anteogroup.com.



May 25, 2006

Cobb Galleria

\$75/Person

(includes breakfast and lunch)

8:00 AM to 6:00 PM

Java DevCon 2006 is a conference specifically designed for software developers and represents the most economical educational event a professional Java developer can attend in Atlanta. There will be nine great speakers on some of the hottest topics like AJAX, Struts, Eclipse, Spring, JSF, Seam, Patterns, Best Practices, and Open Source.

Java DevCon 2006 will also feature door prizes and the opportunity to network with 300+ of Atlanta's most elite software developers. The meals and breaks are organized to maximize attendee interaction so you can learn what other local Java experts are working on in Atlanta!

The Atlanta Java Users Group, Inc. (AJUG) is a volunteer managed, non-profit organization. AJUG is the focal point for Java evangelism in the Southeast by providing community-driven educational and networking opportunities for software developers.

For more information, visit: www.ajug.org.