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Background - How to tackle local IT solutions and other threats

In Ireland as elsewhere in Europe local IT solutions – sometimes referred to as “Shadow IT” are an ongoing problem for ICT and prisons are no different than anywhere else.

In the Irish Prison Service we have had a number of local IT solutions develop over the years. These have included setting up small systems in IBM Lotus Notes and in MS Access as well as the use of Dropbox for files.



What are the possible causes?

What are some of the causes of local IT Solutions:

IT is too slow

When the business issues a request for a new system or a change to existing system, it takes forever to get through bureaucracy. If they develop it themselves, they get it delivered quicker.

IT is too expensive

Solutions delivered by IT are always too expensive and therefore get rejected at board level. The business see the workaround as doing it themselves.

IT does not deliver innovation

The business would like to get solutions which specifically suit their requirements. They don't need to be bleeding edge, but they should be modern and effective. The users see what is out there. They use Twitter, Facebook, e-banking etc. They want this kind of innovation at work. If they don't get it from IT, they will start looking elsewhere.



What are the possible causes?



What are some of the causes of local IT Solutions:

IT does not treat users with respect

The users are customers. They want to be treated as if they were the one and only customer. That makes them feel good. They feel their work is respected. If they get a feeling from IT, that they are a nuisance, they will not want to cooperate.

IT is defensive and inflexible

IT is seen as a naysayer. The business is constantly reminded why something is against procedures, or technically impossible. There are no alternatives offered.



What are the possible fixes?



What are the possible ways of avoiding local IT Solutions:

IT is too slow

IT needs to react more rapidly to the business needs. While the necessary governance is needed to secure funding, resources and the necessary business cases and requirements analysis need to be done in order to ensure project success, these need to be done quickly and without too much bureaucracy.

IT is too expensive

IT Business Cases should not only indicate the costs of a project but also the benefits in terms of, for example staff numbers saved, more rapid work solutions etc. Proper Cost/Benefit analysis is essential.

IT does not deliver innovation

IT must be innovative and provide modern, up to date solutions. Consistently updating old legacy systems, long after they are outdated is often not the best policy.



What are the possible fixes?

What are the possible ways of avoiding local IT Solutions:

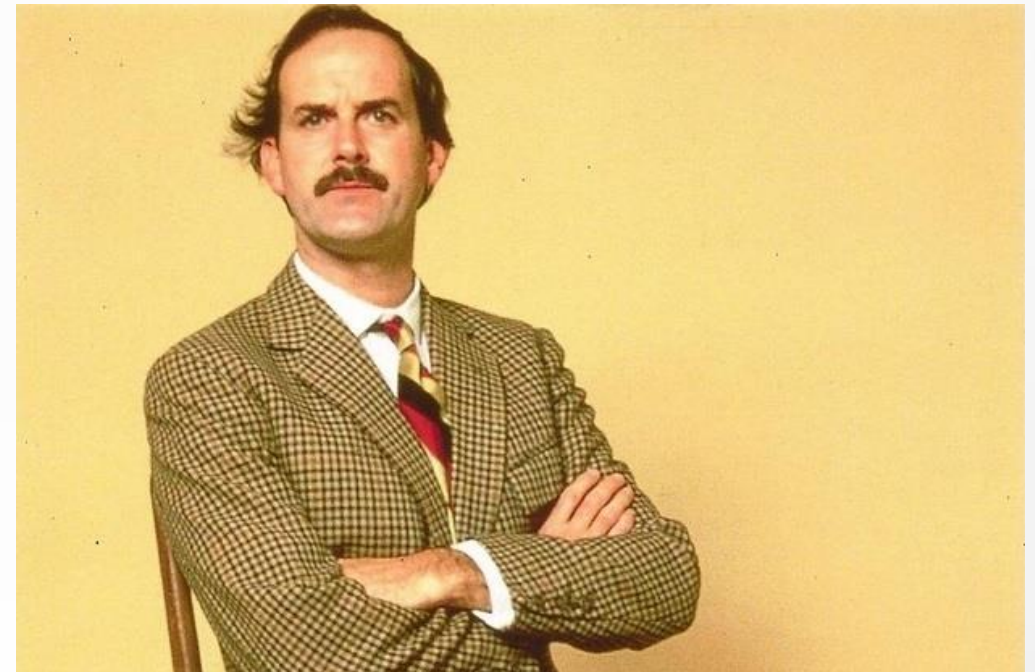
IT does not treat users with respect

IT must always remember that the business are our customers and treat them as such. We should never adopt the Basil Fawlty approach when talking to our customers:

“This is typical. Absolutely typical...of the kind of...rubbish I have to put up with from you people. You ponce in here expecting to be waited on hand and foot, while I'm trying to run a hotel here. Have you any idea of how much there is to do? Do you ever think of that? “

IT is defensive and inflexible

IT must be seen as a flexible solutions provider. If we cannot deliver one way we should always offer other options.



What did the Irish Prison Service do?



In the Irish Prison Service we tackled the problem by doing the following:

- We spoke to the business to understand what they were trying to achieve - what was the business problem that they needed to address
- Set up working groups comprising both the business and ICT to find an innovation solution to meet the business needs
- Rapidly developed this solution with the business input
- Engaged with and trained the business in how to use the solution.

What were the solutions in the IPS:

- Citrix ShareFile
- SharePoint
- Updated .Net Applications



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How to tackle local IT solutions and other threats

- ☐ Sami Lukkarinen
- ☐ Riku Pammo

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What is Shadow IT ?

- ☐ Information-technology systems and solutions built and used inside organizations without explicit organizational approval
- ☐ Deployed by departments other than the IT department or without the knowledge of the IT department
- ☐ Shadow IT solutions are not often in line with the organization's requirements for
 - ☐ Control
 - ☐ Documentation
 - ☐ Security
 - ☐ Reliability
 - ☐ etc.

(Although these issues can apply equally to authorized IT solutions)



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Problems that follow

☐ Costs

- Shadow IT adds hidden costs to organizations

☐ Data loss or leaks

- Shadow IT data backup procedures may not be provided or audited.
- Personnel and contractors in Shadow IT operations may not be put through normal auditing processes.
- Originators of Shadow IT systems may leave the organization often leaving with documentation or leaving behind complicated systems the remainder of staff cannot manage.

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❑ Organizational chaos

- Shadow IT creates a dysfunctional IT -environment leading to possible friction between IT and non-IT related groups within an organization.
- Improper motivations behind Shadow IT efforts
 - such as seeking job-security or self-promotion
 - An employee establishes a system or an environment that only he or she can maintain
 - data hoarding
 - Might be in serious conflict with the data control
 - favor trading, etc. can lead to significant management issues.

❑ Barrier to enhancement

- Shadow IT can act as a brake on the adoption of new technology

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Situation in the beginning of 2017

- ☐ Government ICT Agency was providing on site support, but there was a lack of centralized coordination
 - ☐ On site support was extremely dependant on individual experts
 - ☐ Some work stations and local networks were practically without support
- ☐ Prisons were working independently with ICT -issues
- ☐ Wide range of local ICT-solutions
- ☐ No own ICT – function in the Criminal Sanctions Agency

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What we have done in 2017-2018 to tackle these issues

- ☐ More discussion with prisons and other organization groups
- ☐ Set up new control groups

IT-steering group

- ☐ Implementation decisions for information systems
 - Implementation of new deployable systems
- ☐ Follow-up of emerging IT management projects also act as project steering committee
- ☐ Control of the development of existing information systems
- ☐ Monitoring the implementation, prioritization and funding of development objects identified in the information systems.
- ☐ Follow-up of the annual budget, new projects and contracts.
- ☐ Handling of sub-groups escalating issues
- ☐ Steering group has two subgroups
 - Coordination Group of the Security Information Systems
 - Prison and probation services IT-user group



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Prison and probation services IT -user group

- ☐ prison IT-user group with 90 members from all prisons and probation service offices.
- ☐ User group acts as a news channel for different departments and units in current security and information management issues
- ☐ Its objective is to support and coordinate local ICT –contact persons to increase interaction between central unit and prisons.
- ☐ The user group meets 6-8 times a year.

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IT- contact person /Information security officer

- ☐ Every facility has it's own IT-contact person/ Information security officer (who contribute approximately 5-15% of their time for the task).
 - ☐ Ensure the flow of information between central office and prison and also between prison and Government ICT Agency (on site support)
 - ☐ Rapid reaction to exceptional situations
 - ☐ Reporting on security breaches
 - ☐ Provide information her/his own unit about current IT-topics
 - ☐ Aware of the number of workstations and their use for their own offices

Q & A

