

A G E N D A

AD HOC TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE

REGULAR MEETING
MONDAY, OCTOBER 16, 2017, AT 9:00 AM
BOARD ROOM – GATEWAY COMPLEX

1. MEETING CALLED TO ORDER: Donald J. Liddle, Chair
2. ROLL CALL: Liddle, England, Solloway, Kern, Lanier, Slee, Weihrich, and Kelso, ex-officio member
3. APPROVAL OF REPORT: None
4. RESIDENTS' FORUM
5. BUSINESS
 - a. GRF Counsel Grafals
 - b. Lanier document (Attachment)
 - c. Discussion
6. RESIDENTS' FORUM
7. ADJOURNMENT
8. NEXT MEETING: The next regular meeting will be held on Monday, November 6, 2017, at 9:00 a.m. in the Board Room at Gateway Complex.

DJL/pj

cc: GRF Board

From: DR WAYNE B LANIER [mailto:w_lanier@pacbell.net]

Sent: Tuesday, October 03, 2017 2:47 PM

To: Paulette L. Jones <PJones@rossmoor.com>

Subject: Please distribute this to the members of the GRF Technology Committee

REQUIREMENTS SPECIFICATION

1. Reference: In the IEEE software life cycle **SRS IEEE 830** describes requirements specification. This can be best accessed through Wikipedia. What I write below is more a practical discussion.
2. *At the the Lowest Level of Specification: A Requirements Specification* is a document describing what is to be implemented, developed, built, or purchased. It may be a software system. It may be a process to be carried out. It may be a physical device. It may be a structure.
3. *At a more Detailed Level of Specification: A Requirements Specification* lays out both functional and non-functional requirements for what is to be implemented.
4. *Also at a more Detailed Level: A Requirements Specification* may describe how an existing system, implementation, or structure may be modified to achieve a new purpose.
5. ***The very First Step*** in any development is writing a **Requirements Specification**: The *Proposers* (Our Committee would be *proposers*) must gather as initial *Focus Group* stakeholders (GRF members, *etc.*) to thoroughly discuss what they want the system, implementation, or structure to achieve. We, actually, went through such a Focus Group exercise in our discussion of various projects during Monday morning's meeting. The object is NOT to specify exactly HOW the system, implementation, or structure is to be built. The object is to clearly lay out a list of Requirements that we would like to see met. The end product should be a consensus document that sketches out, in list form, what we think should be achieved. *It is important that this document also clearly indicate and define the ultimate wider User Community.*

What must be avoided in this step is bringing in "experts" or "vendors". This is where most business folks stumble. They do not consider themselves "experts" and the "received wisdom" of their training inclines them to reach for the comfort of "expert consultants" (who can also be blamed if things do not work out). Moreover, they very often fail to recognize or appreciate the expertise within their own working community - so they reach for outside "expert help". Most such "expert" help is connected with one or more companies who offer specific products; it is in the "expert's" self-interest to "guide" the stakeholders away from alternative solutions and toward their business connections. This is not simply a matter of greed, "experts" are inclined to opt for what they know and trust rather than think creatively about what the client really needs.

6. The most important Step is this ***Second Step***: Having defined the wider User Community, **the Proposers must convene a series of discussions and Focus Groups drawn as widely as practical from the User Community.** These User Focus Groups must be allowed free-rein to fully explore their own requirements for the system, implementation, or structure.

Failure to carry out this step will, almost surely, result in User complaints that may hamper or even destroy the effort of system construction and implementation. This does not mean that all User ideas must, or even should be implemented. But, what it will surely do is identify critical user requirements that the original Proposers may have overlooked or not appreciated. Moreover, it is an opportunity to build User support and consensus. Again, this is NOT the time to bring in systems “experts”. ***The object is to define clearly what the User Community wants and needs. These are USER REQUIREMENTS.***

7. Only now, in this “cycle”, is the time for a ***third step***, where a **Request for Quote (RFQ)** should be made to Vendors. “Experts” may be useful in specifying appropriate Vendors. With a very clear set of **Requirements**, an **RFQ** meeting these Requirements ensures that the Vendors know exactly what is needed and can make a quote of time and cost to meet the clearly-stated requirements.

What this avoids is members of the User Community being confronted with a new system which meets established requirements, but fails to meet their legacy requirements. Some, of course, may be flexible enough to re-adjust their needs to the new system. Others, however, will be forced to pay for and tolerate a system that fails to meet their needs while they also pay for a legacy system that does. In essence those Users will be forced to maintain and pay for two systems. Such Users will NOT be “happy campers”.

In the present Comcast system, I am one of those unhappy campers who has to maintain, at additional cost, two separate systems. Why...? Because, as a scientist with an established research following, I have contacts all over the world whose input and ideas are vital to my continuing research and theirs. My history with these contacts goes back more than 20-years. Scientists who carry out research in Salt Marsh Microbiology do contact me, but not on a daily, weekly, or even yearly basis. They contact me only when they have a problem in my area of expertise, or want to inform me of their recent research. No doubt that, with some difficulty and time spent, I could dredge up e-Mails from all those contacts, in the order of near hundreds, and inform them that they should, no longer, use w_lanier@pacbell.net, but use w_lanier@comcast.net. WHAT CHORE. Yet, if I simply abandon my old e-Mail address, I might lose those contacts. Others, *involved in more complex matters of technology*, face similar problems. The existence of this Committee results from such problems.

If the issues in 1 - 7 are met, the remaining steps of system development are straight forward.

Wayne Lanier

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Per speculum in aenigmate.