

# TECHNOLOGY STEERING COMMITTEE

*Bringing efficiency to IT costs and infrastructure*



## Is your organization experiencing the following issues?

- Your business units don't feel they have the proper software and applications to run their business in 2021.
- You feel like some of your competitors or peers have "better" systems than you do. And you don't understand why.
- You can't easily articulate what you're spending on technology and where you're spending it. You feel like your business spends more and more money on technology, but you don't know what you're getting for it.
- You don't have an IT budget — capital or operating. IT spending just happens every year, and it costs what it costs.
- You can't easily articulate whether or not you have the right software and applications in place to run your business.
- You have business applications, but you don't even know what they are. You also don't know who's responsible for them if they stopped working — other than "It's an IT problem."

***If you identify with one or all of the above, your business needs a Technology Steering Committee.***

*Continued ...*



A Technology Steering Committee is a cross-functional group of employees that meet regularly to evaluate and allocate resources, both financial and human, for technology decisions for the organization. Each member should represent a significant interest within the organization, including leadership in the C-suite. Having a C-level executive on the committee gives the committee credibility and authority.

Once convened, a Technology Steering Committee should improve communication and understanding around the organization's technology – and, if needed, provide direction for an IT team.

When ImageQuest has been hired to develop a Technology Steering Committee, “in every single case, we’ve found they’re spending far more on technology than they even thought they were because it was being masked in other departments’ budgets. Developing the committee brought all IT spending under one umbrella,” said Milton Bartley, ImageQuest's Co-Founder, President, and CEO.

“Secondly, also in almost all those situations, the existing IT team initially thinks the committee will undermine them. However, they learn a Technology Steering Committee gives them a stronger voice across the organization, and they come to appreciate that,” Bartley said.

A Technology Steering Committee (TSC) collaborates with the IT Department and the organization's users. The committee helps keep IT projects aligned with the organization's business goals and initiatives while also keeping the IT team from implementing software that doesn't meet users' needs.

Among its roles, the committee reviews and prioritizes technology projects and investments. The reviews ensure that IT decisions don't trigger additional unbudgeted spending or excessive hours and overtime for the IT department.

The TSC also provides a central focus on IT purchasing and projects, so individual employees aren't independently buying applications and hardware with a company credit card — without any review for compatibility and capacity within existing systems.

A TSC also brings a process and a methodology for IT decision-making. With a committee, the IT team can schedule projects and be in more control of their time.

Also, a TSC can help an IT team be much more proactive on issues – instead of leaping from fire to fire.



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## Some examples – good and bad ...

### EXAMPLE 1

A managing partner at a law firm learns of new docketing software in use at other law firms.

Attorneys with those firms tell the partner they love the software and its ease of use. Convinced, the partner buys the software.

#### ***WITHOUT a Technology Steering Committee***

Unfortunately, the partner talked to attorneys who all work at smaller firms. The partner works at an enterprise-level law firm with multiple locations. The partner's IT team starts looking at the software – after purchase – and discovers it cannot scale to serve the enterprise firm. What's more, the vendor has several gaps in its security policies, making the software inappropriate for the firm, given the regulated clients it serves.

#### ***WITH a Technology Steering Committee***

Again, the partner's interest in new docketing software leads to research on available products. A list of required specifications is developed, both for existing capacity and for compliance issues.

The law firm purchases software designed for the enterprise firm – and avoids numerous crashes, data loss, and other outage issues.



## EXAMPLE 2

Leadership at a sizeable non-profit providing care services tells the head of IT to trim 10% from their budget each year.

The IT Leader receives no other guidance but hears the staff discussing plans to open a satellite treatment center to meet demand.

### ***WITHOUT a Technology Steering Committee***

A new location not only adds staff (users) and a facility (networking and equipment needs) but also contradicts a requirement to trim 10 percent from the IT budget. How does the IT executive bring the new treatment center online and save 10 percent from the prior year? What will the IT department skip to make the treatment center happen?

### ***WITH a Technology Steering Committee***

The TSC knows of the plans to add a treatment facility. It considers the IT needs and costs of such a facility when developing the organization's budget. Also considered are other strategic initiatives the organization needs to accomplish and what IT needs to support those initiatives. The committee prioritizes the treatment facility IT within other initiatives and provides the IT leader with more realistic and specific budgetary guidance.

## AN ADDITIONAL BENEFIT – THE BUCK STOPS HERE

Many of our clients operate in a regulated environment due to the personal data they collect and manage. So in the case of a security and compliance issue – the recent Solar Winds breach, for example – a Technology Steering Committee would be responsible for assisting IT in assessing whether the breach affects the company and what remediation steps the company should take. This ensures the responsibility of

implementing the right security and compliance measures are in place. Otherwise, chances are good that no one handles these issues because no one's responsible. The problem doesn't get addressed, and sooner or later, an organization's critical infrastructure is at risk. A similar issue is Vendor Management. A Tech Steering Committee can also help ensure someone is responsible for assessing the security and

compliance of vendors with access to company or client data.

"Without a steering committee, your IT issues can suddenly boil over into many problems," Bartley said. "Without the committee, no one knows who's responsible for owning an IT issue. With a Technology Steering Committee, now you have a smart group of people looking at issues and coming up with smart solutions." 