

September 1st, 2017

EXECUTIVE NOTES

PETE BOYER, AMY WRIGHT, TODD BARNES

"Perspective"

As many of our dedicated Executive Notes column readers (we hope plural) can likely attest, we are often writing about the challenges we face both as a company and as part of the overall GovCon community. These issues can range from program funding cuts to changing agency priorities to the “trickle-down” effects of larger ideological budgetary battles between the two parties that lead to talks of shutdowns. Over the 17 years we’ve been a company, we have dealt with all of these things (and more), but, every so often, an event occurs that forces all of us to pause for a bit of perspective. The past week’s historic flooding along the Texas Gulf Coast, brought on by Hurricane Harvey, has done just that.

By now, we have all seen the tragic footage of the, almost, incomprehensible destruction wrought by the storm, as well as the accompanying human toll that will only grow in the days and weeks to come. Nature’s awesome power has once again left us humbled and struggling for answers and direction. Still, while each of those appear to be in limited supply at the moment, there are still things that those of us who live in unaffected areas can do (and none require you to own a boat!). To start, consider a donation to either the Red Cross or a number of other reputable non-profits involved in domestic disaster relief efforts. If you would prefer a more direct non-monetary contribution, there are other organizations who accept goods, such as clothes, blankets and other basics. And, finally, for those who may be trained in emergency response or recovery efforts, your services may be in need, as well (rest assured, if you fall into this last category and feel called to volunteer, we will do all we can to accommodate your extended leave request).

Epic disasters on the scale of Harvey, thankfully, don’t happen very often, but when they do, it is incumbent upon all of us who enjoy the bounties of a free and prosperous society to temporarily set aside our daily worries and complaints and consider how we might be of assistance to those whose immediate needs and concerns are of far greater significance. Since our inception, Macro has always considered that spirit of generosity as integral to our corporate culture, and we have been continually amazed by the ways in which so many of you have responded, when called.



Soon, as the waters recede and the news cycle returns to the events of the day - both political and otherwise – we will likely find ourselves returning to the same personal and professional issues that often dominate our thoughts. When that does, inevitably, occur, though, we need to remember that for a great many of our fellow citizens, the rebuilding process will have just begun.

FINANCE

PATRICK REARDON

Devon is beginning to ease back into working again, but on a very limited basis for the next two months. KGRF will continue to support Macro until Devon is back full time in October but please continue to reach out to Patrick Reardon (preardon@macrosolutions.com) or Toby Payne (tpayne@macrosolutions.com) if you have any issues.

In August, the team will be working on finalizing notification alerts from Unanet, which you may have already started to see with regards to timesheets. The team has begun an overview of key Unanet reports for Project Managers and Corporate staff member. Training will continue for Project Manager on in-depth reports, centered around project financial status, resource planning, and comparisons of actuals, budgets, and plans. This training will come as part of not only the Financial Handbook, which is still in the development phase, but also as part of the Unanet Project Management Financial Handbook. If there are questions prior to the training or development of these handbooks please reach out to Patrick Reardon.

If you Unanet specific questions or issues please reach out to unanet@macrosolutions.com.



STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

TODD HAGER

"Macro's Modernization Playbook"

As more and more agencies update their antiquated IT systems, many are looking for a proven roadmap to help them prepare and implement the changes necessary to modernize their systems. Macro Solutions is taking a close look at all the facets of a modernization roadmap, pulling in lessons learned from many solid customer engagements to develop a play by play approach to system modernization. Still in draft mode, our goal is to have the Modernization Playbook featured on our website by the end of this year.

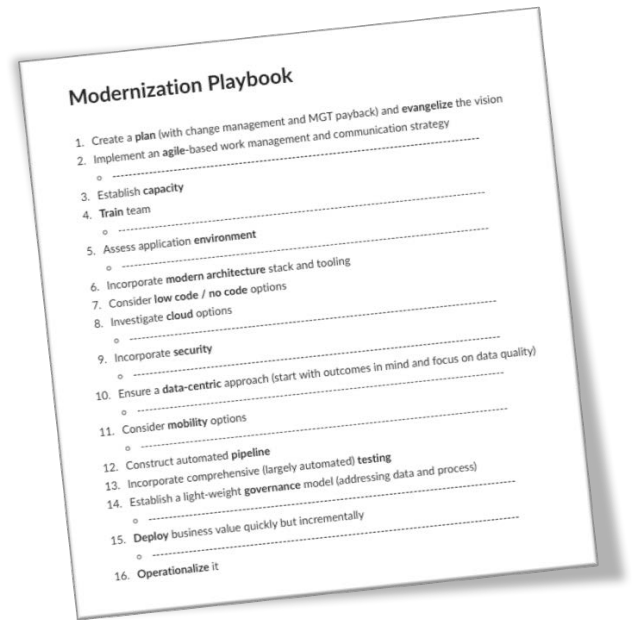
Why a Modernization Playbook focused only on technology isn't enough

IT Systems Modernization is too frequently discussed as a dollars and cents proposition in which additional funding is added to existing budget with too little attention spent on change management.

Having a strong, clear and well-prepared approach to the technology and related security requirements is table stakes for any of these projects. Well-implemented system modernization efforts will have profound changes to the CIO organization, changes that need to be planned well before embarking. Additionally, while system modernization is a priority for many agencies, as recent legislative initiatives have pointed out funding will only be made available with the expectation that it is returned in full (or more) through resulting reductions in costs that are expected within a short timeframe. Technology alone cannot solve this task, but it's the smart application of technology coupled with people-focused changes to longtime operating procedures, that will provide true business value.

What does that mean for my customer?

Macro Solutions is developing a Modernization Playbook that articulates the play-by-play process for planning and delivering on a system modernization roadmap that goes beyond technology to address the organizational changes and how to capture, track, and ensure the necessary reduction in funding required of these projects.



CONSULTANT CARE

SUSAN DISILVESTRE

As I'm writing this article, I can't believe that September is just a few weeks away. The summer seems to have flown by and many of us are busily preparing to send children off to college, new schools and making time to just enjoy what's left of the warm weather.

It is also a time of year when we as a company come together to once again acknowledge each of you for your contributions to Macro Solutions. We know that you made a choice in coming to Macro and supporting the work that we do for our customers.

We acknowledge that you each share a part of yourselves when you come to work and support our customers by being positive, supportive and contributing members of a team.

Throughout the year, we sponsor activities like the happy hour, baseball game and holiday party to show our appreciation to each of you, and your families. It is a time when we can come together and celebrate one another, and the outstanding work and contributions that you each make every day. We look forward to seeing many of you at the Employee Picnic and Baseball Game at Nationals Park later this month.

We appreciate your efforts and recognize the value that you add to what we do as an organization. And so, we thank you. These two words are so simple and yet so undervalued in our crazy, busy lives!

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

PAUL CHANDLER

Faithful readers of the Macro Minute will recall that the dog days of summer have brought on a wave of proposal activities at Macro Headquarters. These activities continued throughout the past month, and we are pleased to report that a final bid was submitted to the Army Corps of Engineers for the important Financial Management Systems (CEFMS) project that has been much written about in past issues. In addition to submitting the CEFMS proposal, a wide array of Macro Solutions employees, Consultants, and partner companies are engaged in prime contract bids in support of projects at the United States Department of Health & Human Services (HHS) and the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA)

In addition to the prime contract opportunities referenced above, Macro Solutions is actively participating in several notable proposal efforts as a subcontractor. By the time that this edition of the Macro Minute has been published, we expect that three subcontract bids will have been submitted. These include an Agile/DevOps project at the U.S. Patent & Trademark Office headquarters in Alexandria, Virginia; a major, enterprise-wide application support initiative at the U.S. Coast Guard; and a program that will provide Enterprise Information Technology (IT) Services support – in particular, database support – to the Pentagon's Department of Human Resource Administration (DHRA) and associated field agencies through the Defense Manpower Data Center (DMDC). In addition to these bids, a fourth subcontract effort is underway in support of the U.S. Navy, and this project will be active through early October 2017 based on the present timeline.

Finally, the General Services Administration's Federal Acquisition Service has requested that all bidders for the recent Alliant 2 (A2) and Alliant 2 Small Business (A2SB) contracts extend the period of proposal validity by three months. With this extension, Macro Solutions now expects to see A2SB awarded by the end of this calendar year. The Business Development (BD) team has spent much time and effort preparing for A2SB's eventual award; and the BD team's former intern Thomas Clark, who returned to school at the University of Maryland in late August, counts among his accomplishments a major research project that analyzed task orders released under the predecessor contract vehicle, giving Macro Solutions insight into the work that may be re-competed under A2SB.

QUALITY & STAFF DEVELOPMENT

BENAE FRANCIS



"What is Quality Assurance and Why is it Important to Macro?"

In developing products and services, quality assurance is any systematic process of checking to see whether a product or service being developed is meeting specified requirements. As is with Macro Solutions, many companies have a separate department devoted to quality assurance. A quality assurance system is said to increase customer confidence and a company's credibility, to improve work processes and efficiency, and to enable a company to better compete with others. Quality assurance was initially introduced in World War II when munitions were inspected and tested for defects after they were made. Today's quality assurance systems emphasize catching defects before they are delivered.

You may be aware, Macro Solutions goes through a rigorous auditing process to ensure we are delivering top notch services, both internally and externally. As a result of this audit process, Macro holds 5 internationally recognized certifications. CMMI Level 3 for Development, CMMI Level 3 for Services, ISO 9001 for Quality Management Services, ISO 20000 for IT Service Management and ISO 27001 for System Management Security. Many companies use quality standards to ensure that their quality assurance system is in place and effective. Conformance to these standards is said to guarantee that a company delivers quality products and services. To qualify for these certifications, a company's Executive and Quality Management Teams decide quality assurance policies and objectives. Next, the company formally writes down the company's policies and requirements and how the staff can implement the quality assurance system itself. Once this guideline is in place and the quality assurance procedures are implemented, an outside assessor examines the company's quality assurance system to make sure it complies with all regulations and standards. From there, the outside auditor compiles a detailed report describing the sections of the standard the company has met and those that are non-compliant. The company then agrees to correct any sited non-compliances within a specific timeframe. Once the procedures are corrected, the company then becomes certified, as being in conformance with the international quality standards.

COMPANY SPOTLIGHT

TODD HAGER, VICE PRESIDENT, STRATEGIC INITIATIVES



Todd Hager is Vice President of Strategic Initiatives for Macro Solutions and has been working with Macro since April 2015. He provides leadership in strategy, innovation, quality, marketing and practice development. Prior to joining Macro Solutions, he co-founded a business, BroadPoint Technologies, where he ran the federal practice.

Todd holds a B.S. in Business from the University of New Hampshire and an M.S. in Business and Telecommunications from The Johns Hopkins University. He is a certified PMP, a Certified Scrum Master (CSM), and ITIL v3 certified.

His professional volunteer experience includes Industry Chair for the ACT-IAC Emerging Technology Community of Interest, Co-Chair for the ACT-IAC Blockchain Working Group, member of the AGA Financial System and Technology Committee, member of the AGA Blockchain Working Group, and member of the GAO Agile Experts Working Group.

His personal volunteer experience includes the National Cathedral Literacy Program, Mathematics Teacher for the Academy of Hope, Math Tutor at the University of the District of Columbia, Capstone Mentor at Chavez Schools, Career Mentor for Year Up, and Business Mentor for EdTech startup companies for Village Capital.

Todd is married to Gayle Hager, has one daughter (whom he just delivered to Washington University in St. Louis to start her freshman year) and lives (now as empty-nesters) in DC. In his free time, Todd enjoys running, trying new restaurants, biking and listening to podcasts.

Once the certification is received, the work is far from completed. A full certification process must be completed every 3 years. During this period of time, the company must complete internal audits throughout the year, to ensure all standards are upheld and quality services and products are being delivered, as regulated by the standard. Additionally, auditors will return to the company on a yearly basis to complete surveillance reviews, reviewing our findings and next steps planned.

Quality delivery of each and every service is a priority goal of Macro Solutions, and we strive to maintain the benchmark standard, in all areas of the company. Should you have any questions regarding the current processes in place, suggestions on how we may improve our quality process or ideas regarding the streamlining of process, please feel free to contact our Director of Quality and Staff Development, Benae Francis at bfrancis@macrosolutions.com.