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IT Strategic Solutions – MMT2 Task 2

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# Communication Plan

The A Energy company is planning to expand into the Eastern and Southern United States to capture additional sales. As part of this process, a SWOT analysis was completed on the existing IT infrastructure to establish what strengths could be leveraged, the weaknesses that to need to be overcome, the opportunities that can be realized, and the threats that need to be addressed. It is important at this time to create a communication plan that will be utilized to initialize the upgrade project, inform and educate specified stakeholders to the reasons and needed outcomes of the upgrade project, and to gain acceptance, approval, and buy-in from all parties that will be involved. The communication plan is important to introduce a technology initiative to the interested stakeholder, to demonstrate the necessity of the upgrade project, the benefits in the improvements to the IT infrastructure, to provide transparency in the processes within the project, and to establish cohesive working relationships with internal and external stakeholders to ensure the success of the project.

Initially, internal stakeholders need to be identified for the communications plan. Those that should be included are as follows:

* Executive Director, Sabelle Arnold
* IT Manager, Cameron Kern
* Server Manager, Rory Tysoh

External stakeholders will be the shareholders of the company to provide transparency and information regarding the technological advantages being provided by the upgrade projects.

The first communication will be an email to the three internal stakeholders, (Sabelle Arnold, Cameron Kern, and Rory Tysoh) to initialize the upgrade project. The approval email for the proposed upgrade from the CTO will be included. The point of emphasis in this communication is to provide awareness of the project, the reasons for the upgrades, the benefits in upgrading not only for future growth, but improved efficiency and security of the current IT infrastructure. A meeting request will be included with this email to invite the three internal stakeholders to the initial project meeting.

The initial project meeting will once include the three internal stakeholders either face-to-face or through online conferencing, if that is needed for remote stakeholders. The CTO will also be asked to participate to be able to further discuss the benefits and need for the upgrade project. A PowerPoint presentation will be used to be able to properly articulate the concepts of the upgrade, the benefits of the project, strategic opportunities that have presented themselves through the SWOT analysis, and advantages of performing the upgrade project as part of the company expansion. This presentation will be provided along with any additional notes as part of a formal written report of the entire project plan. This formal written report will then be distributed to the internal stakeholders through a follow up email. In addition to the formal written report, the Project Manager, will create a recorded webinar that the internal stakeholders can use to review any aspect of the proposed project plan. The Project Manager will also be available to the internal stakeholders for any follow up meetings as needed. This will provide the collective group the ability to ask any questions that need to be clarified. Once buy-in and acceptance are obtained from the Executive Director, IT Manager, and Server Manager, an online and in-person meeting will be held for the company shareholders to ensure that our external stakeholders are well-informed of the benefits, reasons, and opportunities of the upgrade project. Finally, the recorded webinar and formal written report will be placed on the company’s website to ensure full disclosure and transparency to all stakeholders.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Communication | Format | Frequency | Owner | Stakeholder Distribution |
| Initial Project Announcement | Email | Once | Project Manager | Sabelle Arnold  Cameron Kern  Rory Tysoh  CTO |
| Initial Presentation Meeting | In-Person and Online | Once | Project Manager | Sabelle Arnold  Cameron Kern  Rory Tysoh |
| Formal Written Report | Email | As Needed | Project Manager | Sabelle Arnold  Cameron Kern  Rory Tysoh  CTO |
| Recorded Webinar | Adobe Connect Session | Once | Project Manager | Sabelle Arnold  Cameron Kern  Rory Tysoh |
| Shareholders Meeting | In-Person and Online | Once | Project Manager | Shareholders |
| Follow up Sessions | Phone call or Emails | As Needed | Project Manager | Sabelle Arnold  Cameron Kern  Rory Tysoh |
| Online Access to Formal Report and Webinar | Website | Once and updated as Needed | Project Manager | Sabelle Arnold  Cameron Kern  Rory Tysoh  CTO  Shareholders |

## A1. Reasons

The communication plan is important to introducing a technology initiative to the interested stakeholders for the following reasons:

1. Demonstrate the necessity of the upgrade project.
2. Illustrate the benefits in the improvements of the IT infrastructure.
3. Provide transparency in the processes within the project.
4. Establish cohesive working relationships with internal and external stakeholders
5. Ensure the success of the project.

Each stakeholder will have their own relative point of interest in the project. An effective communication plan will help to identify any concerns and provide a solution to the key people involved. The communication plan included emails that informed stakeholders of the initial meeting and provided and introduction the technological initiative. A in-place meeting was used to provide face-to-face communications and a visual presentation. This allow the Project Manager to further convey the aspects of the project while allowing stakeholders the ability to ask clarifying questions to all facets of the enterprise. A formal report and a recorded webinar were provided as part of the communications available to allow participants the ability to review and clarify the plans for the project. Follow up sessions were included in the communications plan to allow parties involved to have a one-to-one interaction with the Project Manger to ask clarifying questions. Meetings with shareholders as external stakeholders were provided to provide transparency and to inform them of the strategic technological plans that are being implemented to further expand the company. Finally, posting the formal written report to a website accessible to all stakeholders again provided transparency and another format for individuals to review the upgrade initiative. By incorporating a variety of mediums in the communication plans, a foundational understanding of the benefits of the project should be realized by all stakeholders.

## A2. Components: Internal Stakeholders

### Executive Director and Owner, Sabelle Arnold

As the Executive Director and Owner, it should be of little surprise that Sabelle Arnold was selected as an internal stakeholder. An effective communication plan is needed to ensure the acceptance and approval of Ms. Arnold to create a champion for the project. To garner this commitment from the owner it is necessary to appeal to that which is most important to a company about any proposal. How is it beneficial? How will it help us expand? How does it increase profit? Through the entire process, Ms. Arnold was included in the communication plan through email, in-person meeting, and the ability to communicate one-on-one with the project manager. Through this approach of using a variety of mediums, the project manager will be able to convey the benefits of the project towards expansion and profit while keeping open the lines of communication with the Executive Director to address any additional concerns regarding the project.

### IT Manager, Cameron Kern

For the project to be successful, it was important to include the IT Manager as an internal stakeholder in the communications plan to onboard an effective supporter and collaborator for the project. By properly presenting the purpose of the project, the IT Manager should immediately see the benefits that most concern him. Namely, an increase in security, efficiency, expandability, and availability. Again, using multiple mediums allows the project manager to effectively communicate the benefits of the upgrade project to Cameron. With a detailed formal report, a presentation of the proposed upgrades, and a recorded webinar, the IT Manager will have all the available information at hand to address budgetary concerns, timing of the server upgrades, and the opportunities that will be achieved by the project initiative.

### Server Manager, Rory Tysoh

As Server Manager, Rory will be the most affected by the proposed upgrade plan. Effective communications with the Server Manager is critical for a successful completion of the project. While multiple medium options will initially be beneficial to Rory, have the ability to email or call the project manager as needed will be the most crucial aspect as day-to-day operations will be affected during the implementation of the technology initiative. The communications plan should be able to inform the Server Manager on proposed timelines, possible server outages, and resource requirements needed for the project. Again, using an effective presentation, a formal written report, and a recorded webinar will allow the Server Manager to readily have available all the information needed to ease the pain of the upgrade.

## A3. Components: External Stakeholders

### Corporate Shareholders

While shareholders do not need the detailed information of the upgrade project, it is important to provide information to ensure transparency and to inform them of the strategic technological plans that are being implemented to further expand the company. By incorporating a variety of mediums into the communication plans, a foundational understanding of the benefits of the project should be realized by all shareholders. Having a meeting with the shareholders will demonstrate the fiscal responsibility being incorporated into the upgrade project and how the implementation of the project will help grow the company beyond the initial expansion. Finally, posting the formal written report and recorded webinar to a website accessible to all stakeholders again provides transparency and another format for individuals to review the upgrade initiative.

# Sources

No sources were used in the writing of this report.