

IT Governance through Email

What is IT Governance?

IT Governance is the ability to track, measure and control organizational routines and initiatives, for the purposes of:

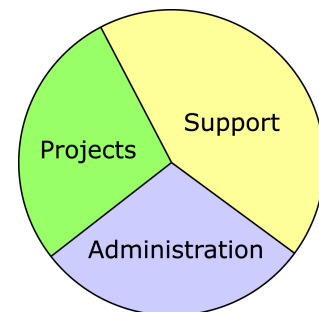
- Reducing costs
- Streamlining processes / Increasing efficiencies
- Minimizing risks
- Providing a decision support system for effective, productive leadership

In a steadily growing and increasingly competitive global arena, organizations are recognizing the need for IT as a business function.

At Gartner's 2004 Project and Portfolio Management Show, Gartner analysts discussed the increasing use of IT solutions among organizations for effective operations. For example, the deployment of project portfolio management (PPM) applications has grown from 2% in 2002 to 26% in 2004.

IT Governance of the Organization

A business is essentially an organization of processes, including administration, project development and support. In monitoring and tracking organizational routines and processes, IT governance also dictates the time and resources allocated to each of these areas. Effective IT governance ensures that each area has the time and resources to complete work efficiently. Ineffective IT governance sees some areas suffer for lack of resources, while others rest on a surplus they do not need.



While businesses increasingly recognize the need for IT governance, establishing a new structure within the organization can be problematic. There are three main agents of change that must be overcome for an IT governance solution to be successful:

Processes: How will this new structure integrate with existing processes? How much of a shift will the organization experience?

Tools: How rapidly will the users accept, learn and adopt the tools within their new structure?

Culture: Are the employees ready for IT governance? Are they open to change?

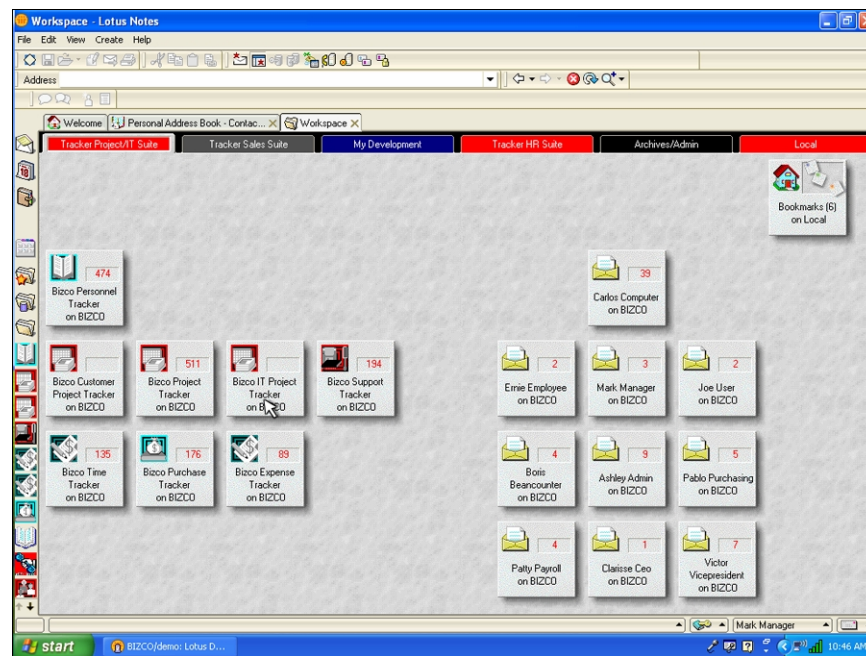
How Tracker Impacts IT Governance

Instead of fighting to impose a new structure on the organization, Tracker simply extends a core component of the organization's existing infrastructure- its messaging platform. Tracker leverages either Lotus Notes / Domino (Tracker Suite® - <http://www.TrackerSuite.com>) or Microsoft Outlook / Exchange (TrackerOffice® - <http://www.TrackerOffice.com>). Through these platforms, Tracker provides solutions that support productive IT governance, by automating and securing the processes within

administration, project management, support services and knowledge management. By utilizing email to automate approval routing of time cards, expense reports, purchase orders, meeting notifications, task management and more, Tracker streamlines processes in a natural way.

Because Tracker leverages pre-existing infrastructure and simply extends the messaging platform the user base is already experienced with, Tracker solutions deploy painlessly and are easily adopted by employees.

It is this combination of power and flexibility that makes Tracker a model IT Governance solution. Tracker provides solutions for the tracking and management of the major operational processes which drive the organization, solutions which can be almost instantly deployed across the organization by simply sending an email with a hyperlink, solutions which are offered through an environment that users are already trained in and familiar with. Competing, stand-alone solutions face the uphill battle of integrating with a foreign system and winning the acceptance of the user community. Tracker simply extends the existing system which is already part of the organization's culture.



Tracker IT Suite

Administration

To function effectively, administration looks to IT for the streamlining and security of core business processes and overhead, as well as increasing visibility of operations. Core business processes include document management (projects, customers, and resources), customer requests and support tickets, asset management and also financial management of processes such as time reporting, expense tracking and purchasing. Overhead includes employee training, change requests, vacation and sick leave management.

There is a growing awareness, particularly in the wake of the Sarbanes-Oxley Act, that administration needs to improve its awareness and transparency of its operations. In a typical 200 user IT department with an operating budget of \$20 million, the ability to detail expenses to administration, as well as justify costs to customers, is vitally important.

Automating IT Processes

Tracker simplifies communication between customers and the IT community with both project and support request functions.

Tracker also simplifies and secures another important IT process- asset management. Using Tracker, IT administrators can easily create assets such as equipment, LANs, phone systems, facilities and more. Tracker also manages requests, assignments, tracking and collection of assets. Administrators can also control security assets like keys, or intangibles such as user accounts, passwords and codes.

Tracker's asset management ability simplifies employee provisioning- the supply, management and collection of necessary security accounts and fixed assets. Tracker automatically assigns selected standard assets to new staff upon entering the workforce and sends notification for their collection when the employee leaves the organization.

Automating Financial Processes

Tracker's approval routing relieves some of administration's greatest headaches: improperly approved and / or inaccurate time sheets, expense reports and purchase orders tying up the billing process. Tracker's approval routing eliminates this confusion as well as improving the legitimacy of the billing process, another important consideration in the wake of Sarbanes-Oxley.

Tracker's leveraging of the messaging system also helps administration manage processes. One of Tracker's features is the "Auto Nag", which automatically sends an email reminder to staff who is late in submitting their time cards.

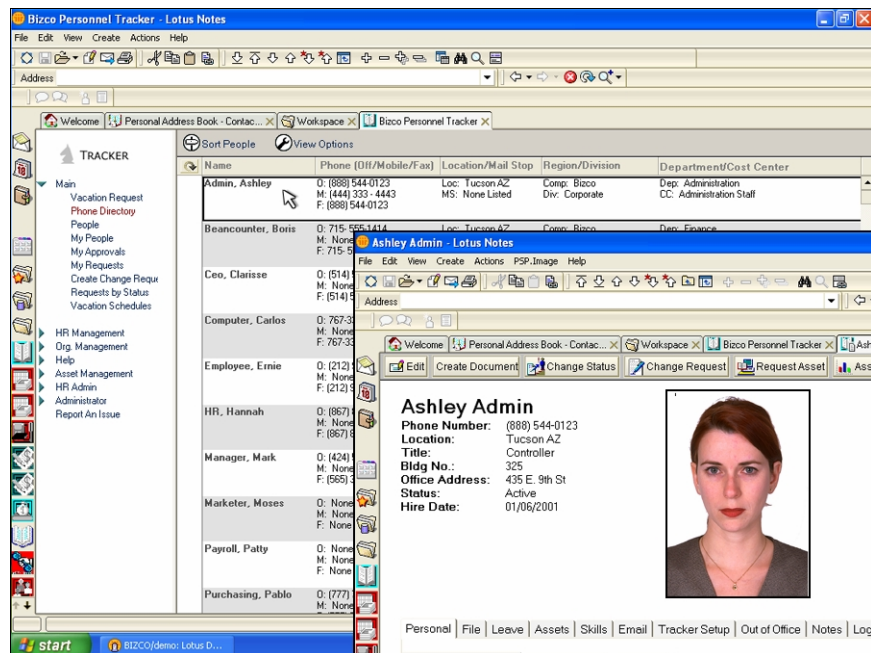
Organizational Transparency

The Tracker Data Warehouse collects data from all of the Tracker databases, projects, personnel, customers, prospects, IT- and consolidates the data into real-time reports. For administration, the Tracker Data Warehouse provides a glass window into their operations, with reports which can be pivoted and filtered as needed to quickly get to the bottom line.

Resource Management

Tracker provides a comprehensive employee database, from which administration can control routing of the employees' time cards, expense reports and purchase orders as well as set approval levels.

Tracker also relieves the cost of overhead, by simplifying processes such as change requests, vacation and sick leave tracking, and training. Tracker allows users to update their personal contact data as needed, and users can also review available vacation and sick time, and submit requests. By enabling users this way, Tracker reduces the workload of HR departments and personnel.



Personnel Files in Tracker Suite

How Tracker Enables IT Governance of Administration

Streamlining processes and reducing costs

- Automating flow of customer requests and support tickets.
- Approval routing of time cards, expense reports and purchase orders through accounting reduces administrative workload and billing mistakes, as well as ensuring process legitimacy.
- Automatic reminders improve timely submission of timecards and status reports.

Measurement & Decision Making

- Real time reports on organizational finances and initiatives provide operational transparency for compliance with Sarbanes Oxley as well as providing business intelligence for effective leadership of the organization.

Controls

- Control of personnel files, configurable approval routing, control of acceptable timesheet format, minimum/ maximum hours worked and more.
- Asset tracking, including fixed assets and intangibles such as security accounts, improve administration's ability to manage the organization as well as measure value with depreciation reports.

Project Development

Like administration, project managers leverage IT to streamline their basic processes: communications, scheduling, billing, task management and CRM. In addition to streamlining, organizations also look to IT to improve the accuracy of billing in project time, expenses and purchasing.

How Tracker Improves Project Management

Centralized Project Management

Project Tracker, both for TrackerOffice (<http://www.TrackerOffice.com/Project>) and Tracker Suite (<http://www.TrackerSuite.com/Project>), provide a centralized location for managing project documents including proposals, contracts and status reports, as well as functions such as task management, team building and meeting scheduling.

Improved Billing Accuracy

Through Tracker, time cards, expense reports and purchase orders are all tied to project data, reducing billing mistakes as well as improving the quality of project reports based on billing data.

Improved communications

Tracker's leveraging of either the Lotus Notes or Microsoft Outlook messaging platform simplifies project activities with automatic notifications of meetings, task assignments, and status report creation. These automatic notifications also serve to clarify responsibilities within the project team. Tracker also provides on-line discussion areas, the content of which is contained in the project folder itself for easy reference.

Reports

Tracker's Data Warehouse provides real time reports on projects, such as project completion rate, time card compliance, budget vs. actual and more.

How Tracker Enables IT Governance of Projects

Streamlining processes and reducing costs

- Automatic notification of task assignments and status report due dates
- Leveraging of messaging platform simplifies communication and scheduling
- Project templates simplify project creation

Measurement & Decision Making

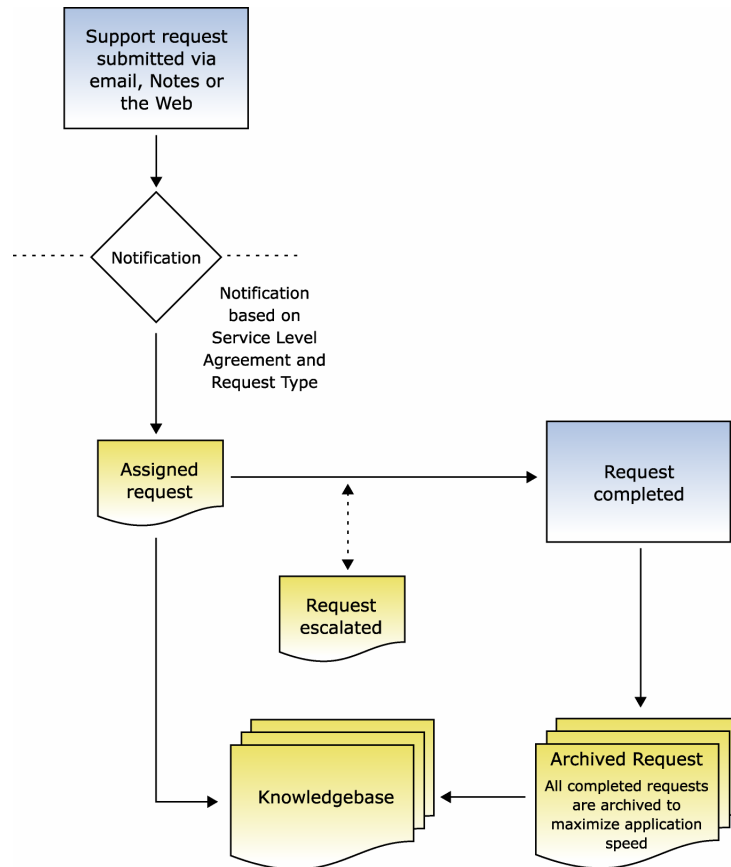
- Real time reports including budget vs. actual, activity ledger, time card compliance and more provide the measurements and business intelligence for effective project leadership

Controls

- Centralized location of important project documents and functions simplify the management of projects

Support

The health of an organization rests on its ability to respond rapidly and effectively to issues, both internally and externally. An effective support system is composed of a resource for user self-help, which speeds resolution, increases user ability and reduces wasted support cycles. Also critical is the ability to submit support requests easily, on a timely basis with correct and swift distribution of requests to appropriate parties.



The support service workflow in Tracker Suite

How Tracker Improves IT Governance of Support

Organic FAQ and Knowledgebase

Tracker Suite's Support Tracker provides an organic FAQ which is accessible through either Notes or the Web. The FAQ allows users to resolve simple issues on their own, eliminating redundant support cycles.

Streamlined ticket creation

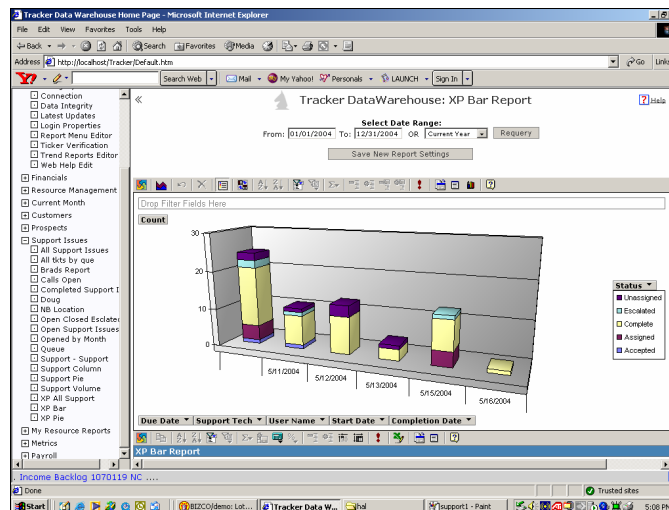
Users can submit support requests through email, a Notes form or over the Web. When using the Notes form or the Web, users can quickly fill out a help request using picklists, and can place relevant screenshots in the request if needed.

Streamlined request processing

Once a request has been submitted it automatically is processed by configurable Service Level Agreements (SLAs), ensuring that the request is processed according to organizational guidelines. Support Tracker also provides the ability to escalate and prioritize critical issues.

Financial Management

Support Tracker reports on issue resolution times, open and closed issues, overdue support tickets, re-opened tickets and more. Using this information, IT directors can identify problem areas as well as evaluate the performance of individuals and groups to better manage the support process and improve cost-efficiencies.



Help Desk Reports

How Support Tracker Enables IT Governance

Streamlining processes and reducing costs

- FAQ for user self help reduces wasted support cycles
- Submission of support requests through email, Notes or the Web simplifies submission
- SLAs automatically route support request to correct responder

Measurement & Decision Making

- Reports including all open and closed tickets, average closure times and overdue tickets allow IT managers to monitor support department activity and needs for resource assigning.

Controls

- Configurable SLAs provide global control of the support process, while functions for reassigning tickets and managing escalation and priority of tickets provide vital flexibility to the process.

Case Studies

Bristol West

Bristol West Insurance Group (BRW) manages auto insurance claims and policies. In 2002, they were faced with a problem- their programmers were taking longer than expected to generate new software to manage their business, completing only 30% of their software projects on time.

To improve their project completion rates, Bristol West needed IT governance- the ability to review all of their current projects and status reports to effectively assign resources, so that project teams could work efficiently.

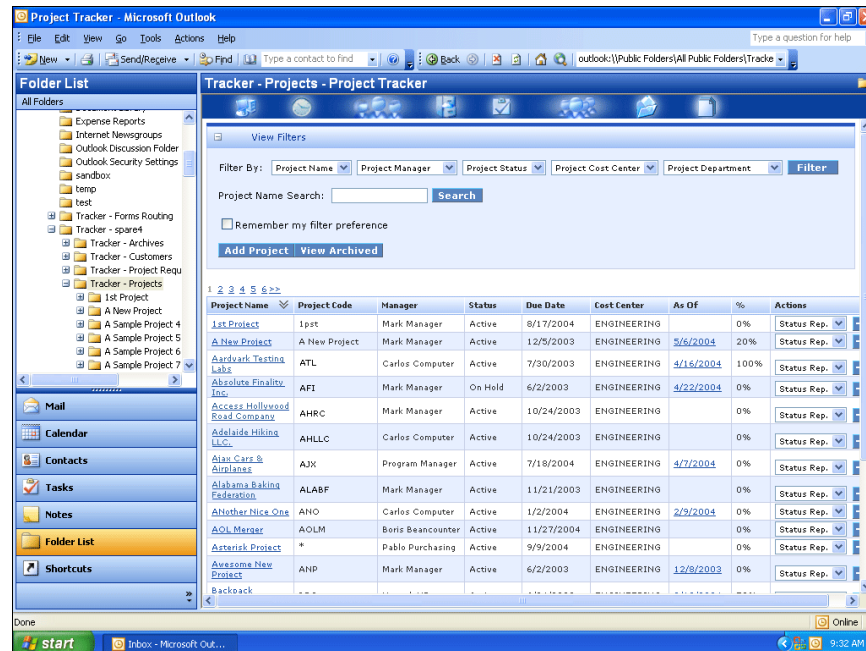
However, they had no formal project management tools in place, and because some of their programmers worked remotely, both in and out of state, the deployment of any new solution appeared complicated.

Bristol West, which used Microsoft Outlook/ Exchange platform for email, evaluated TrackerOffice. TrackerOffice, which could extend their messaging platform with the project portfolio management capabilities they needed, was a perfect fit.

TrackerOffice deployed easily onto Bristol West's Exchange servers. As TrackerOffice is 100% server based, installing TrackerOffice to Bristol West's Outlook clients was as simple as sending an email with a hyperlink. This greatly simplified bringing Bristol West's remote workers on board with the new solution.

With TrackerOffice, Bristol West managers were able to quickly review their entire project portfolio and make adjustments as needed. Using Tracker, Bristol West has seen their on-time project completion rates jump from 30% to 80%.

The Tracker DataWarehouse, which provides real-time data on Bristol West's operations, is particularly valuable. For example, Bristol West executives use a customized weekly CIO report, which lists the department's projects and their current status, budgets and actual costs. Kevin Brady, one of Bristol West's project directors, observed, "It's valuable to our executive team and CIO because they can look at the costs and see where we're spending our capital relative to the return on our business." (Bristol West Moves to PPM, Insurance & Technology Online, Sept. 14, 2004).



TrackerOffice Project Desktop

First American Bank Corp

First American Bank Corp. had 30 programmers on its technology staff, routinely tasked with "a whole plethora of small, short duration projects," according to Noel Levasseur, an executive vice president of the company.

The programmers brought with them their own application preferences, integrating those packages at First American's centralized data center. When First American decided to consolidate their project operations within a single solution, they began looking for applications that would work within their Lotus Notes / Domino environment.

"We couldn't find very many competitive products that worked in our collaborative process with Lotus Notes," said Levasseur. "We were concerned about implementation, and we were concerned about ongoing support."

First American chose Tracker Suite. Because Tracker Suite leveraged the Lotus Notes environment First American's technology staff were already experienced in, user adoption was rapid. Also, because Tracker solutions are 100% server based, installation was a matter of sending a group e-mail to employees. Tracker's server model also alleviated support concerns; any required updates could immediately be replicated across the organization's desktops after being installed on the server.

First American uses Tracker Suite to manage its continually changing project portfolio: prioritizing projects, task management, tracking deadlines and costs, generating business reports, track employee hours and facilitating communications among the programmers with its discussion database.

As well as projects, First American also uses Tracker Suite to govern its support services. Tracker provides First American a robust FAQ and organic knowledgebase which helps reduce the workload of support services. Tracker Suite also simplified submission and tracking of support requests, and its automated notifications to support staff streamlined operations greatly.