John Knepper

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Summary

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY CONSULTANT. Business functional experience in consumer products, finance / credit, manufacturing, retailing, mail order and services industries. Both large company disciplines and small firm entrepreneurship. Significant experience with cash-poor companies in need of advanced technology. Consulting experience with Andersen Consulting, CSC Consulting and Whittman-Hart. Hardware, software and services procurement. Managed as many as 65 staff. Systems architect and team builder. Northwestern MBA.

Specific Project Experience

Successfully bridged the gap between managers and users in Business Functional departments and technicians in the Information Systems area.

International Financial Lender

Assisted with requirements definition, software selection (via formal RFP) and gap analysis for a Financial Operations and Management system to be used at factoring locations in Latin America and Asia. International travel was required.
- Communicated with client management and staff in the U.S. and in Mexico.
- Documented the funding and servicing practices associated with the client's complex financial products.
- Identified software vendors with packaged software which might match the client's requirements.
- Participated with client management in detailed discussions with software vendors in the U.S., Mexico and England to define functional gaps between business requirements and existing functionality of the vendors' software packages.
- Developed work plans, staffing requirements and cost estimates for all phases of the project, including software implementation alternatives.
- Worked with client management and attorneys during vendor negotiations.
- Developed testing and implementation approaches to place the selected software package into production.

Assisted the Commercial Recovery Services division (a collections business) with a detailed requirements definition of the business unit's accounting needs. Investigated packaged software alternatives as well as an in-house development approach.

National Retailer

Supported the client in two priority areas within the Credit Systems area.
- Assisted in the National Rollout of a major credit card product. The "Starter" Card, a new concept in retail credit, is available to consumers who do not have established credit. Mr. Knepper's responsibility was to ensure that the parameters required by the Credit Marketing department were accurately reflected in the final automated systems.
- Automated the transfer of customer account information. Prior to this automation, a lost or stolen credit card resulted in manually setting up a new account for the credit card holder. Prior to the project, no data from the first account was automatically transferred to the new account. As a Business Systems Manager, Mr. Knepper's responsibility was to represent the user community and ensure the completeness and accuracy of the new automated transfer process.

Large Chicago Legal Firm

Investigated, documented and analyzed the business processes and technology that were in place and that were contemplated for the law firm. The objective of the project was to ensure that proposed technology enhancements would be consistent with the firm's need to control costs while improving efficiencies in daily operations.
- Interviewed over 60 attorneys and staff in the Chicago and suburban offices,
- Analyzed identified requirements in conjunction with MIS plans,
- Researched products and services through the American Bar Association's Law Tech Center, and
- Conducted regular checkpoint meetings to ensure project focus and direction.

The final report for this project contained recommendations for Office Automation, Document Management, Access to Legal Service Providers, Communications Links, Docket, Desktop Standards, Local Area Network and Training.

International Distributor of Restaurant Food & Supplies

Completed a feasibility study and a packaged software evaluation. The scope of this client server environment project included general ledger, financial consolidation and reporting, currency translation, groupware communication, and the creation of a non-financial statistics and text data warehouse. As the primary resource on this project, Mr. Knepper worked closely with managers and users at corporate headquarters and at divisions, and with software package vendors.

National Chemical Distributor

Developed plans for the reorganization of a client's Information Services department.
- Interviewed senior management and key users to determine the priority needs that the IT staff should address.
- Determined the skill sets, interests, and training needs of the IT staff.
- Developed a new organization chart that reflects the priorities of the user community.
- Developed new job titles and descriptions for each IT department staff position.

International Architectural and Engineering Professional Services Firm

Completed an Information Technology Study. The scope of this project addressed three areas: to assess current systems, to develop a picture of the direction in which the firm's technological environment should be heading, and to present a plan for the initial steps that should be taken in order to realize that direction. An IT Mission Statement was developed, and the IT organization and staffing levels were reviewed. Developed specific recommendations for the firm's Financial Management System, Electronic Communications Approach, Design and Engineering Applications, Documentation Standards, Training and the Information Data Base.

International Dispensing System Manufacturer

Coordinated the development of a comprehensive telecommunications strategy. The key business issue driving this project was the need to coordinate the activities of two, co-equal headquarters locations; one in the United States, the other in France.

International Clothing Manufacturer

Conducted a quality assurance review of a multi-million dollar project to replace all legacy AS/400 systems with a software package. The review scope addressed project management policies and controls, target dates, task estimates and staffing.

International Consumer Products Manufacturer & Distributor

As the Vice President of Information Systems, Mr. Knepper provided strategic direction and leadership in all data processing functional areas. Under his leadership, the department's primary accomplishments were:
- Integrated a new operating division into the company's business procedures. Within six weeks of the acquisition announcement, orders were being shipped.
- Established the company's first Local and Wide Area Networks. The Novell, token-ring environment encompassed more than 200 PCs in three locations, a gateway to the company's IBM mainframe, multiple file servers, T1 links, fiber optic backbone, shared Hewlett Packard LaserJet printers, and sophisticated backup and recovery safeguards.
- Implemented an EDI processing system to handle customer orders and invoices. The system (1) allowed customers to order by their own SKU number, the Distributor's SKU number, or UPC, (2) took advantage of technology on the Local Area Network, the IBM Mainframe and a third-party's electronic catalog, and (3) completely eliminated the need for manual data entry. Established trading partnerships with over 40 major retailers, including Wal-Mart, JCPenney, Dillard's, Venture, and Federated.
- Implemented a user-controlled system to generate price stickers for specific customers. Each sticker contains both Distributor data (product description and UPC bar code) and customer-specific data (stock number, dating code and retail price). The stickers are printed in the sequence that the order is picked in the warehouse, enabling efficient labeling of product.

- Established an automated electronic link with Charge Card processors to eliminate paper transactions for customer orders that are paid for by Visa, MasterCard, Discover and American Express.
- Installed the Lucas-Bear Forecasting system. This LAN-based system allows users to graphically manipulate sales projections in aggregate and for up to 100 key customers.
- Migrated General Ledger, Accounts Payable and Accounts Receivable from the mainframe and a Datapoint mini-computer to the LAN. Established a new chart of accounts, and formed a new "Charge-back Control" department.
- Introduced regular "downloads" of data from the mainframe to the LAN so that key users could use accurate and timely production data in spreadsheets and documents.
- Installed Wal-Mart's Retail Link; a direct electronic connection with Wal-Mart's computer systems to receive invoice, forecast, point-of-sale and store information, along with two-way electronic mail.
- Increased mainframe CPU and DASD capacities. Conducted competitive bidding process of third party lessors for hardware and maintenance contracts.
- Initiated development of comprehensive LAN-based system that was to replace existing IBM mainframe applications; order entry, warehouse/inventory control, MRP/DRP, inventory costing, purchasing, commission processing, sales / profitability analysis, etc. The system was to utilize SAP's R/3 software in a Unix environment. Warehouse controls would take advantage of state-of-the-art spread spectrum radio frequency hand-held terminals in three separate distribution centers, thermal transfer bar-code label printers and PC workstations. Expected total cost to complete the migration was in excess of $3 million.

Full-service Data Center

As Vice President and General Manager, Mr. Knepper functioned as Chief Operating Officer of a data center servicing multiple independent companies. With a staff of 65, services included database administration, telecommunications support, data entry, computer operations and accounting / administration.

Employment History

Independent Information Technology Consultant	1996 - 2000
Senior Manager, Business Consulting Whittman-Hart Inc.; Chicago Illinois	1995 - 1996
Vice President, Management Information Systems Wilton Industries, Inc.; Woodridge, Illinois	1990 - 1994
Vice President, Information Services GRI Corporation; Chicago, Illinois	1988 - 1990
Manager, MIS Planning & Systems Development and **Vice President / General Manager** Beatrice U.S. Food Corporation; Chicago, Illinois	1984 - 1988
Manager, Applied Technology Jewel Companies, Inc.; Oak Brook, Illinois	1982 - 1984
Senior Systems Consultant CSC Consulting; Oak Brook, Illinois	1981 - 1982
Independent Information Technology Consultant	1980 - 1981
Manager, Consulting Services Andersen Consulting; Chicago, Illinois	1973 - 1980

Education

Master of Business Administration, Kellogg School of Management, Northwestern University, 1973

Bachelor of Business Administration, University of Arkansas, 1971
     (Earned while serving as Captain, Strategic Air Command, USAF)

Bachelor of Arts, University of Minnesota, 1966