



SPIRIT
CONSULTING



Company Overview

Spirit Consulting is a full service provider of Information Technology solutions. Information Technology Services provided by Spirit Consulting are diverse. Within the Technology arena, Consulting, Application Development, and Custom Internet/Intranet Services are Spirit Consulting's primary areas of focus. The Consulting Service concentrates on the analyses of business processes and systems and the use of automation to increase efficiency. The Application Development Service relies on a keen understanding of both business and technology to provide an objective solution that can be quickly prototyped. The Internet/Intranet Services provide alternative solutions using Web technologies, including custom applications that support both intercompany and intracompany communications.

Spirit Consulting's industry experience is diverse, including an array of seamless services to industries including Financial Services, Healthcare, Pharmaceuticals, Technology, Engineering, Retail, Education and Government. Application experience is extensive, including solutions supporting Sales, New Business Pipeline, Project Tracking, Human Resources, Budgeting, Advertising, Portfolio Management to name a few. Spirit Consulting's functional disciplines are also quite expansive, ranging from project managers and architects to developers, administrators and trainers. One of the most distinctive components of Spirit's Consulting's practice is the requirement of direct hands-on experience from all of the professionals that support client engagements. Another distinctive component of Spirit Consulting's practice is an approach to all client engagements to first "listen" to the client and then to deliver a focused and cost-effective response. Spirit Consulting prides itself on ensuring that prior to client engagement all agreed upon services have clear direction with deliverables that are able to be satisfied in a timely manner.

Although direct client project support is Spirit Consulting's primary business activity, there is also a strong commitment to maintain a database and network of thoroughly screened professionals that are available for both temporary and permanent placement.

Spirit Consulting's extensive work with high profile clients has established the company as a well respected leader in the computer consulting industry. Spirit Consulting has developed its excellent reputation primarily through the quality consultants that it employs. Thorough screening and evaluation processes enable Spirit to carefully select and maintain personnel only of the highest caliber. In addition to imposing strict guidelines on employment, a pleasant personality and a genuine interest in helping people are essential attributes of all Spirit Consulting professionals, thus the motto.....

" We're Always With You "



Consulting

Consulting Services offered by Spirit Consulting focus on evaluating existing and/or planned business processes and systems in order to provide recommendations for improved efficiency through the use of automation.

The automation alternatives to support a business process can be enormous. The wide array of computer related products and services available on the market today is extensive. The ongoing evolution of these products along with the constant introduction of new technologies and services further complicates decision making.

In addition to the vast number of technologies and services available, the knowledge and interests of the personnel involved with the decision making, both business and technical, also have a significant impact on the options pursued. It is not uncommon that the agenda of the personnel involved, whether they be internal to the company or externally engaged, often dictate a strategy that is in their own best interests, rather than the best interests of the organization.

Spirit Consulting's goal is to provide an objective viewpoint intended to define an optimum solution that is appropriate to satisfy the objectives of the business, without allegiance to a specific product and/or service. Our approach is straightforward and direct, with the initial emphasis on understanding the business and then quickly gaining indepth knowledge of the current and/or planned systems, technologies and infrastructures involved.

Although we recognize the importance of strategic planning and provide recommendations in this area, we are primarily focused on strategies that will make an immediate impact, cost effectively. Our philosophy differs somewhat from the "Big Six" type of consulting, which often discourages quick turnaround departmental solutions and focuses on large scale, enterprise-wide deployment that typically possesses a high dollar cost. In our opinion, long term, large scale projects often do not fully come to fruition because of significant time lapse. In today's world, common occurrences such as economic change, company reorganization, budget constraints, and merger and/or acquisition can all adversely impact the plans and costs of a large scale project.

Outcome from our consulting service frequently recommends a change in the business process and/or modifications to functionality contained within existing systems or functionality planned in future systems or enhancements. In those situations whereby our analysis determines the need for follow-on development, Spirit Consulting maintains relationships with a diverse group of technologists in order to provide the appropriate application development support.



Application Development

In addition to the wide array of technologies and services on the market today, the implementation alternatives can be equally diverse. Posed with identical problems, no two development teams will provide the exact same solution, even if the technologies involved are the same. Spirit Consulting's application development service is unique in that all developers we engage possess the literacy and analytical capability with both business and technology. It is our opinion that the ability to understand the business is essential in the development of the optimum solution, regardless of the technologies involved. This broad expertise helps bridge the gap that often exists between the business units and their technology support units.

Our development strategy is to first focus on the expeditious roll-out of a prototype system and/or enhancement that is in position to evolve. The prototype system provides an ideal forum for the refinement of system requirements through direct hands-on pilot use. Although we recognize the importance of understanding process flow in detailed system design, we are of the opinion that prototyping can give immediate insight into the eventual "look and feel" while at the same time provide an effective means to flush out requirements issues that may not always be obvious on the drawing board.

In addition to the use of prototyping as a tool to maximize efficiency, we also believe that it is good practice to concentrate on the core functionality prior to adding the "bells and whistles". Initial strategies that spend time developing ancillary features that may not necessarily be essential to the project, but "look nice", often result in unnecessary rework due to subsequent changes in the core processes and/or functionality. Our approach concentrates on developing solutions that remain focused on the core problems to be addressed, giving lesser regard to the "bells and whistles" until the core functionality has been handled.

As the development cycle progresses, Spirit Consulting recommends heavy reliance on the use of the Spirit/Client Portal as the means to follow the project plan and track the individual activities and milestones. This is an effective way to ensure that all parties have a mutual understanding of the activities and the associated completion time frames. The conscientious use of the Spirit/Client Portal is encouraged as the forum for members of the client organization to post issues. It is our opinion that it is essential that all issues have adequate discussion prior to automatic implementation. The most common mistakes are made when developers force the system to meet an objective simply because it was requested. The importance of trade-off conversation cannot be overlooked.

Spirit Consulting's application development service can be provided either on-site or off-site. Most of our engagements contain a combination of the two. Project details and/or travel costs typically dictate the optimum scheduling of the development personnel involved.



Custom Internet/Intranet Services

The most common public perception of the Internet Service is the one which involves the creation and development of a "Web Site". This is part of the Spirit Consulting service, but our forte is not limited to the traditional Web Site that typically contains a series of linked "pages", but rather a solution that explores the evolution of the site into more of a "system" that can extend the communications within an organization both internally and externally.

The Spirit Consulting "Data Center", allows for the development and hosting of custom solutions that use the Internet, and links or extensions of existing Web Sites, as a means for both intracompany and intercompany communications. Intracompany solutions allow individuals within the company to communicate, in an independent forum hosted at the Spirit Data Center, outside the internal company network in a secure manner minimizing impact on existing company infrastructure. Intercompany solutions allow for secure communications between companies minimizing concerns over internal company firewall issues and/or the need to the procure additional support from internal system administration and technical personnel.

Another aspect of the Spirit Consulting Custom Internet Service is the ability to utilize the infrastructure resident within the Spirit Data Center as a test facility to design and test an application or enhancements to existing applications. This can include a test environment for a solution similar to an initial company Web Site, an extension of an existing Web Site or Intranet application, or a test bed for a brand new company-deployed Intranet application. All of the testing can occur without impacting existing internal company infrastructure or requiring the need to involve support from additional administrative personnel.

As is the case with our Consulting and Application Development Services, the Spirit/Client Portal is an integral part of Spirit Consulting's Internet/Intranet Service. The Spirit/Client Portal is an effective means to track progress, demonstrate functionality and provide a roadmap to both the Internet/Intranet Services that Spirit Consulting provides and other Internet and/or Intranet addresses that may be relevant to the business activities of the client organization.

Spirit Consulting's participation in the Application Service Provider (ASP) business is unique in that all clients that may have similar application needs do not necessarily need to utilize the same exact environment. Although it is efficient to leverage off of existing functionality and design wherever possible, our approach assumes that the capability to customize in the client's own private environment is the optimum method of application hosting. With the opportunity to customize, solutions can be created from a template ASP model that can be more focused on supporting individual client needs rather than supporting the needs of all client organizations that may be involved with the same business activity. This ability to customize reduces the clutter that is often present with the standard ASP model that typically attempts to force a single solution for all client groups involved with the same business activity.



Spirit/Client Portal

All Spirit Consulting client relationships are initiated with the creation of a Spirit/Client Portal that is made available to select personnel within Spirit Consulting and members of the client organization. The Spirit/Client Portal defined here, is a shared forum that resides at the Spirit Data Center that allows for a secure method of communications between Spirit Consulting and the client organization using the Internet as the network protocol. This purpose of this Portal is to provide a means of access for select personnel within the client organization, at home or at the office, through the Internet without impacting existing company infrastructure and without the requirement to load additional software on the client machine. The use of the Spirit/Client Portal comes as part of all Spirit Consulting services, independent of whether or not these services are consulting or application development related.

The initial structure of the Spirit/Client Portal is a function of the client organization's interests and is made available within just a couple of days following the initial consultation. The typical Spirit/Client Portal begins with a simple framework that documents the outcome of the initial meetings, the objectives of the engagement, and provides for the opportunity to continue to easily share follow-on dialogue using an access control list that is dictated by the client organization. Enhancements to the Spirit/Client Portal usually provide a forum to conduct project planning, schedule meetings and document meeting minutes, define project requirements, and keep record of ongoing activities and milestones. For application development projects, whether they are developed on internal infrastructure or hosted at the Spirit Data Center, other common enhancements to this portal include the ability to allow pilot users to document/track system design issues and/or to provide recommendations for system changes. The Spirit/Client Portal is commonly further expanded to be used as a roadmap to access other related activities within the client organization, access select company Intranet areas, or other external Web areas that may be of interest to the client organization.

The Spirit/Client Portal is an integral part of all Spirit Consulting engagements. This Portal ultimately evolves to become the central point where all historical information on the relationship is maintained. Designed with a database backend, the Portal provides alternatives for searching and reporting on data in a variety of ways, i.e. by project, system, team member, activity, subject, status, open issue, action date, etc. The capability also exists for users to attach files to documents, regardless of the source software from which they were created. This Spirit/Client Portal positions the client organization to manage the involvement and access of team members and provides them with an immediate way to quickly gain the appropriate knowledge through easy historical access to the details of all activities. Used properly, the Portal becomes an excellent audit trail, team members become less reliant on e-mail as the primary means to discuss and/or track project related issues and there is less reliance on an individual's knowledge should they leave the organization.



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