Evaluating Software

Finding The Best Solution

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“If you define the problem correctly, you almost have the solution.”

– Steve Jobs

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Evaluating Software

- Gather Requirements
- A Scorecard
- The architecture
- Technology and Roadmap
- Integrations
- Exit Strategy

Gathering Requirements

- High level: What problem(s) are we wanting to solve?
- Users/Audience
- Security
- Response Times/Frequency
- Reporting
- Special requirements for that problem space

Develop a Score Card

REPORT CARD

GRADING PERIOD	1	2	3	4
BUSINESS PLAN				
MARKETING				
CUSTOMER SERVICE				
INNOVATION				
STRATEGY				
PROCEDURES				
HUMAN RESOURCES				
STAFF TRAINING				
MANAGEMENT				
grade average				

A = excellent - B = good - C = satisfactory
N = needs improvement - U = unsatisfactory

COMPANY NAME ____________________

- Set Top Priorities/Needs
- All or Nothing? Partial?
- Common Software features (support, UX,etc.)
- Secondary/Nice to haves
- Pricing and Delivery
- Compatibility/Integration

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The Architecture

- Dig into how stable and scalable the product is
- Check out Customer reviews
- Contact users if possible
- Look at Glass Door feedback/employee turnover
- What technologies are being used?
- Release schedule and roadmap
- Past Releases/Bug history

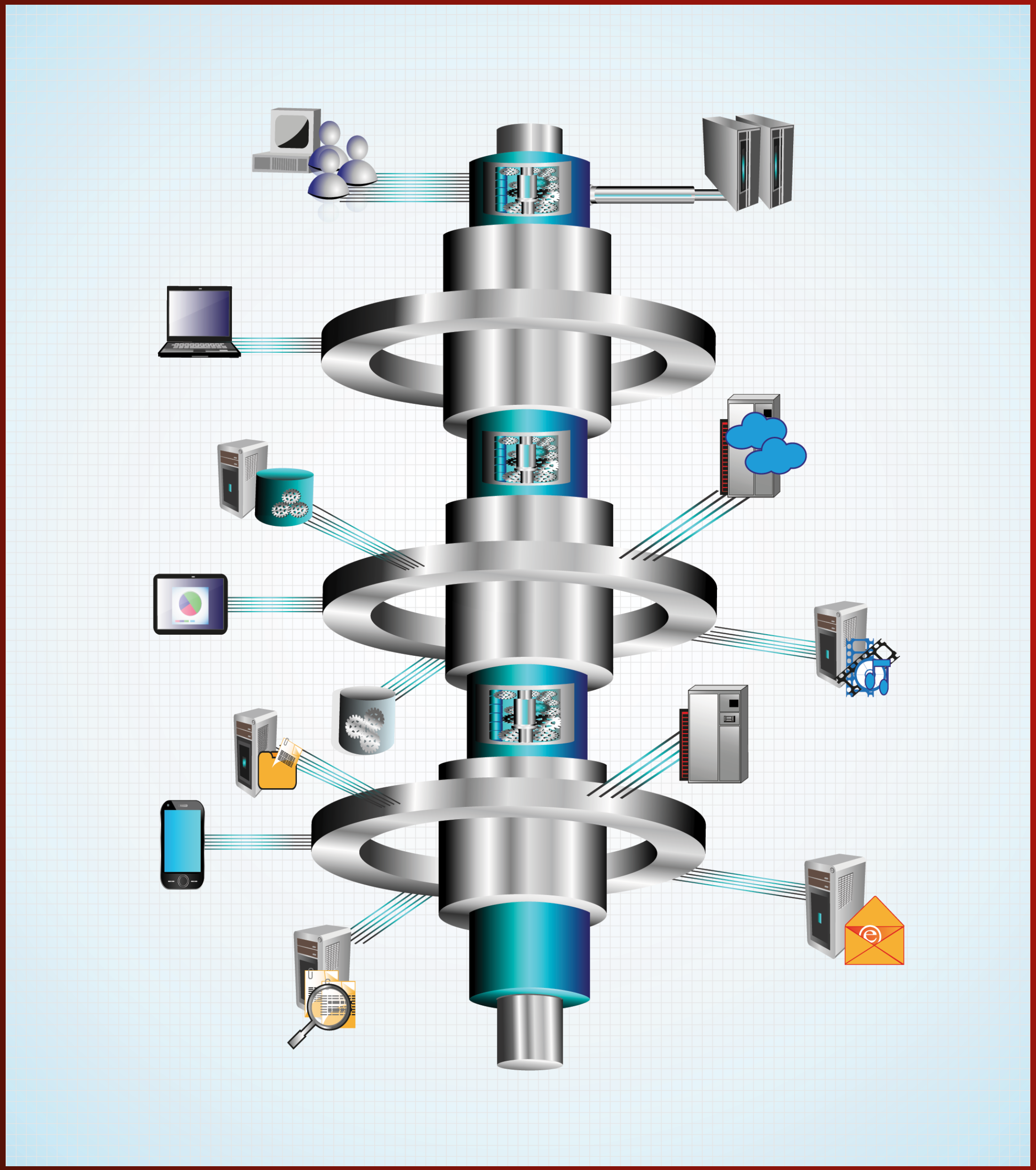
Technology/Road Map

- Modern Technology/Not too many
- Logical Growth, look for critical flaws
- Performance tuning planned
- Consider tech upgrades and impact, on the roadmap?
- Data structure, foundation, able to grow?

Communication

- Cross Teams
- Vertical information and sharing
- Within the team
- Plans, Goals, Visions, and Progress
- Open Channels

Integrations



- Top Tier Vendors/Products
- API available?
- Export options
- Direct connect to DB?
- Roadmap for growth?
- Developer Community

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Exit Strategy

- Proprietary Data
- Open Source or Multi-Vendor?
- Thorough Exports/Reports
- Full-Featured API (CRUD)?
- Admin tools/3rd Party Options
- Cost of moving

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Final Thoughts

- Software is complex and expensive, there is significant ROI in evaluating options
- Look at current state, features, and direction/ growth
- Avoid Silos or Islands. Public APIs are always useful.
- Questions? Comments?

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What We Learned

- You need requirements in order to score options
- Evaluate for today and tomorrow
- Foundation and Architecture are Essential
- Avoid lock-in of all types.

Thank You!

I appreciate your time and would love to discuss any of this further. You can send questions, comments and suggestions through any of these methods.

- info@develpreneur.com
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Our goal is making every developer better.

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