

Decision Advantage *Workshops*

At C-Byte, Our Business is Your Success

Building a Decision Support System (DSS) may well be one of the most important business moves that a company makes. A Decision Support System can deliver tangible competitive advantages by enabling a company to make better decisions faster than its competitors.

A Decision Support System that provides meaningful data upon which business-critical decisions can be made is an attainable goal. While implementing a Decision Support System can offer excellent rewards, an incorrect approach can have serious repercussions. The key to achieving success is the planning and implementation process employed. That's why more corporations worldwide rely on C-Byte than on any other company when it comes to enterprise-wide, open DSS. C-Byte has created a way to deliver a Decision Support System that is uniquely tailored to you, the customer. In this process, C-Byte professionals guide companies through their information requirements and delivery needs, step by step, toward a successful implementation.

Decision Advantage encompasses a complete portfolio of software, hardware, services and partners that C-Byte uses to create DSS and Data Warehousing solutions.

C-Byte's service offerings are divided into three key areas:

- **Exploration.** In this phase, the project team goes about understanding the business and technical issues while the business teams explore the possibilities that DSS offers.
- **Development.** This step focuses on designing and implementing the most appropriate solution.
- **Deployment.** This is the time that the business benefits are realized. The success of this is dependent upon the right support for users as well as the operational support of the systems.



Decision Advantage Services

C-Byte makes good on its commitment to successfully deliver Decision Support Solutions by:

- Hiring and partnering with the best DSS consultants in the industry.
- Developing an innovative approach that uses both interviews and workshops to deliver DSS.
- Employing a proven DSS methodology based on years of experience.
- Making your success our business.

This document describes how C-Byte's workshop methodology can enhance project development and provide a faster, safer route to overall success.

Why Run Workshops? The Advantages of a Workshop-based Method

C-Byte's decision support methodology differentiates itself from our competitors by:

- Emphatic focus on identifying and addressing your business issues.
- Employing a unique combination of both interviews and workshops in gathering information and driving the DSS development cycle forward.

While other vendors focus on either database design or the tools with which users will access the data, C-Byte focuses on its customer's business - the people and the decisions they must make to meet corporate objectives.

C-Byte also differentiates itself by recommending a unique workshop approach to enhance the business requirements discovery. This approach contrasts with the conventional one-on-one interviews, from which the analyst draws conclusions and produces a report.

C-Byte has found that by using workshops, the development of DSS projects is faster, there is better ownership and linkage, more enthusiasm, and, therefore, results are produced more quickly.

- **Fast Planning.** Moving quickly is essential when a company implements a DSS because business requirements change rapidly. Slow progress is not only frustrating to senior managers, but also potentially dangerous. In a dynamic organization, a “snapshot” that is several months old may no longer be valid.
- **Owership.** A successful DSS implementation requires that business people own and drive the project. Otherwise usage of the resulting system will inevitably be low. The isolated interview process of conventional analysis does little to promote real ownership.
- **Enthusiasm.** Intellectual commitment is one ingredient of a meaningful DSS implementation, but the bedrock of true success is the active participation of users throughout the organization. Enthusiasms runs highest if it is sparked at the outset by involving individuals in the project and creating a team spirit across departments.
- **Correct Linkage.** Linking available technology appropriately to business requirements, internal processes and existing infrastructure is imperative. C-Byte DSS consultants take a unique business-led approach that builds a bridge between the company’s need for a technological solution and users’ needs for a system that is easy to use.
- **Quick Results.** C-Byte’s approach gets to the heart of the business rapidly, highlighting the issues and presenting focused, usable solutions. By segmenting the corporate “problem elephant” into bite-sized chunks, C-Byte delivers workable solutions that offer a return on a company’s investment within just a few months.

C-Byte’s Decision Advantage Workshop

Method: A Flexible DSS Approach

No two enterprises are the same. Business organizations vary not only with regard to their particular needs, but also in terms of how far they have progressed toward a DSS solution.

That is why we have developed a coherent approach that delivers consistent results yet provides flexibility in its implementation. It does not force a customer to pre-described plan, irrespective of the point from which they are actually starting.

The C-Byte workshop approach comprises three interrelated components:

- **The Strategy Workshop.** This first workshop involves a company's senior management team and typically lasts one day. The focus of this workshop is to arrive at answers to a company's "big picture" questions, such as "What do we want to achieve with this system?" And "What are the key questions that we need to answer?"
- **The Business Requirements Workshop.** This workshop brings together business users (typically, department heads and their key managers) in a two-day session designed to further refine understanding. Participants focus on throughout the organization. This process orientation often represents the first time that individuals from different departments come together to review the entire picture.
- **The Project Start Up Workshop.** By this stage, key discrete projects will be identified and agreed upon. The objective of the Project Start Up Workshop is to produce a plan that will deliver results with a few months of implementation. In this sense, this workshop mirrors the approach of Rapid Application Development for classical IT applications. The Project Start Up Workshop comprises a series of breakout sessions that overlap and interrelate. Delegates of the user communities and those who support them work through the details with C-Byte and its partners in these breakout sessions. After just a few days, a working blueprint emerges, ready for implementation.

The Strategy Workshop

This initial workshop is aimed at strategic understanding and direction.

At the start of any DSS project, it is vital that a shared understanding exists among not only C-Byte, its partners and the customer, but also within the various constituencies that comprise the customer. Expectations need to be set within the business about what is possible to achieve and the time frame in which it can be accomplished.

Resolving these issues is the primary objectives of the Strategy Workshop.

The Strategy Workshop

Purpose

- Achieve a common understanding and agreement of vision, priorities and the scope of the DSS project

Attendees 8-10

- Project sponsor and other senior managers who can deliver resources and commitment

Sample Agenda

- Introduction
- Set the ground rules
- Agree to objectives
- Discuss delegates' hopes and fears
- Establish common understanding of DSS
- Understand the business drivers
- Brainstorm, group and prioritize:
 - Business processes
 - Key Performance Indicators
 - Critical Success Factors
 - Business questions
 - Business analysis
- Prioritize project areas
- Evaluate current skill set
- Define a focused message for the project team

Output

- An agreed-upon long-term vision and scope for the project, aligned to corporate goals
- An understanding of the process of building a DSS and what can be achieved
- Priorities for the project
- A framework for structuring business questions that will meet the needs of the organization, at present and in the future

Duration and Venue

- One evening and the following day, off-site

The Business Requirements Workshop

This second workshop is aimed at refining strategic business understanding and direction. It is designed to ensure that priority business drivers, measurements and critical success factors are understood at a day-to-day business level, by both the complete range of business users and the IT department, then “translated” into the framework for the Decision Support System.

A key output of the Business Requirements Workshop is to commit business users to own the DSS project and help them build relationships with the IT department, allowing a common understanding, language and direction to develop.

Business Requirements Workshop

Purpose

- To further define the business scope of the DSS project so detailed planning can begin

Attendees (Up to 24 business users and 12 technical users)

- Key users, their managers and IT business analysts

Sample Agenda

- Introduction and Objectives
- Brainstorm, group and prioritize:
 - Business processes
 - Critical Success Factors
 - Key Performance Indicators
 - Business questions
- Build high-level DSS business data model

Output

- An agreed-upon scope for the first phase of the project
- A prioritized set of business questions for acceptance testing
- A simple, legible data model for DSS

Duration and Venue

- One evening and the following two days, off-site

The Project Start Up Workshop

The Project Start Up Workshop represents the official beginning of the DSS project. This workshop builds on the scope defined in the Business Requirements Workshop and uses four key breakout sessions to develop better understanding and collect the information necessary for the production of a Project Initiation Document (PID). The PID is the blueprint for success, comprising a project definition, project plan, the lists of assumptions, dependencies and roles of the people involved in the project.

The four breakout sessions encompassed in the Project Start Up Workshop focus on User Requirements, Database Design, Infrastructure, and Project Management.

- **The User Requirements breakout** is a three- to four-day session that further refines the output of the previous workshops to ensure that each aspect is reviewed at the appropriate level of granularity. This breakout identifies users' data requirements and their functional requirements, taking into account the

environments in which they work and their current skill sets.

- **The Database Design breakout.** In this breakout, four or five database designers, who understand the source systems and general relational database concepts, work with C-Byte to develop an initial business dimensional model which details the business metrics and the way they will be analyzed. Their output is presented to users and refined as necessary. The team then designs the data extract and load processes and defines the management (or transformation) mechanisms.
- **The Infrastructure breakout.** The Infrastructure breakout explores all aspects of how the DSS would fit into the existing technical infrastructure. The infrastructure breakout team members make recommendations on the communications, machine sizing, end user computer environment, operating systems and other software (although not end user tools). Working with the User Requirements breakout group, this team identifies the training requirements for users.
- **The Project Management breakout** is rarely a workshop in the conventional sense. This breakout is structured around the need for the customer's project manager and the vendor's project manager to work together in producing the PID.

The output from each of the breakout groups and team members' recommendations regarding the best way to move forward (as contained in the PID) is presented back to senior managers for endorsement.

Project Start Up Workshop

Purpose

- The scope the DSS project in detail

Attendees (Approximately 20 overall; 6-8 per breakout group)

- User Requirements breakout: Key users and in-house IT business analysts
- Database Design breakout: In-house database designers and administrators
- Infrastructure breakout: In-house PC, server and network specialists
- Project Management breakout: In-house and vendor project managers

Sample Agenda

- Understand one another and the process
- Discuss hopes and fears
- Review output from Strategic Workshop and Business Requirements Workshop
- Develop detailed response
- Present to senior managers

Output

- User Requirement breakout: Data requirements; functional requirements; outline of initial users, their skill sets and requirements
- Database Design breakout: A refined DSS data model; sources of data; definition of data transformation mechanisms; extract and load process design
- Infrastructure breakout: Recommendations on the communications, machine sizing, end user computer environment, operating systems and other software
- Project Management breakout: High-level PID comprising project definition, roles and responsibilities, project plan, lists of assumptions and possibilities

Duration and Venue

- Three to four days each, off-site

C-Byte: People with the Right Skills for Success

Each DSS planning workshop is fully supported by C-Byte with the right expertise, at the right place, at the right time, to help ensure the right results.

Freed from the logistical burden of arranging the workshops, customers can concentrate fully on the objectives set, knowing that everything else is being managed by C-Byte and its solutions partners.

For example, C-Byte and its solutions partners when appropriate - will carry out any necessary advance work. An experienced facilitator controls the workshop process to ensure that focus is maintained. Administrative support ensures that valuable output is not lost. A dedicated project manager assists with all arrangements.

Professional Services

C-Byte builds information technology solutions precisely aligned with its customers' developing business strategies, processes and practices. The company's Professional Services people are experts at taking the risk out of projects, and the workshop-based methods that are unique to C-Byte help underwrite and accelerate a project's success.

It is an approach born from experience and validated by a proven track record. By bringing together the various functions within a customer's organization, C-Byte's approach enables the development of a holistic solution that is built upon common understanding and a shared commitment to continuing success.

Stated simply, C-Byte shows customers how to find the answers to their critical questions.

Customers don't spend months designing the "perfect solution." Each discrete project - and there could be several running simultaneously - will start to deliver tangible benefits within months of implementation. After a project has been deployed, C-Byte can help perform a Project Review and recommend enhancements.

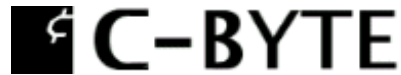
Delivering Results

C-Byte's track record in the high-end UNIX market is unrivaled. While other vendors may claim enterprise-wide experience, few have delivered it in the open systems environment. C-Byte has helped thousands of customers migrate effectively to open systems, linking technology investment directly to business strategy.

C-Byte's attributes its mastery of enterprise-wide, open DSS not just to the quality of its people, its partners and its solutions, but also to the depth of experience gained from these successful implementations. The fundamental aspect of C-Byte's ability to consistently deliver the solution that fits individual customers best is the conviction that designing a Decision Support System is like custom tailoring.

Through the workshop method, C-Byte goes beyond taking all the measurements needed to plan a DSS implementation. C-Byte professionals go to the extra effort of exploring the unique characteristics of the organization. This approach results in a thorough understanding of what will work and what won't work, not just at a technical level, but also at the all-important business and corporate culture levels.

As a result of this custom tailoring, customers typically find that C-Byte DSS solutions provide a perfect fit to their organization.



Corporate Headquarters

US & Canada Headquarters:

C-Byte, Inc.
300, 400 Fifth Avenue S.W.
Calgary, Alberta T2P 0L6
CALL: (403) 770-7818
URL: <http://www.c-byte.com>

With distributor partners in:

Bahrain, Brunei, Croatia, Czech Republic, Egypt, Greece, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Kuwait, Malaysia, Mexico, Oman, People's Republic of China, Philippines, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Slovenia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Taiwan, Thailand, United Arab Emirates, and Yugoslavia/Serbia.

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