

Who's Running Your Next Project ?

You have a successful post production facility, and decide to increase revenue by installing another edit suite, grading suite or dubbing theatre. You might even be considering relocating your entire facility. But who are you going to get to design and run the project? Who is going to ensure that the project is completed on time and within budget?

The instant reaction for most facilities is to award the project internally, giving the responsibility for the new system to one of the in-house engineers. Unfortunately, this leaves a gap in the technical support team, and a freelancer is often brought in to cover their shift. One of the main reasons for choosing this option is that the Chief Engineer or Technical Director insists upon having someone within the engineering team who can understand fully the project infrastructure; after all, they will be responsible for keeping it running once the project is complete. But how cost effective is this solution? In many cases, the engineer chosen will be one of the technical support team whose daily responsibilities will be supporting the technical resources

within the facility. They will have a firm understanding of how the facility is built and operates, but their installation experience may be limited to perhaps one or two projects a year. Consequently, the time taken to design the project, create cable schedules and schematics, coordinate the broadcast wiremen and finally test and commission the system, is far longer than a dedicated project engineer. This means that the projects are frequently delayed, incurring additional costs for freelance cover until the project is finished. Moreover there may be more direct cost implications in the suite not being completed for its first booking, causing a loss of revenue to the company.

These additional costs are commonly overlooked during the budgeting stage, but should be considered when reviewing the actual costs of any project undertaken in house.

"Time and money can be saved on the majority of in house projects by calling upon the services of a recommended systems integrator"

One solution would be to use a freelance project engineer to implement the design and installation of the new system. This enables the technical support teams to remain intact, and ensures that the right level of installation experience is being utilised on the project. The downside is that the project engineer will invariably will not own the project outright. They will not be responsible for hiring the wiremen, or paying for the cables and consumables etc.

The project engineer may be reluctant to offer a fixed price for the installation as many aspects of the project time-line are out of their control; for example, if there are delays in deliveries or the wiremen take longer than expected to complete their work. Again there are no guarantees that the project will be completed by the deadline.

A more complete solution is to use a reputable systems integration (SI) company. The SI will own the project

for you, ensuring that the cables, connectors and more importantly the wiremen are all managed properly. The team of engineers and wiremen work extremely efficiently, appreciating their own responsibilities and streamlining the installation process. The experienced team will quite often have time-saving tips and techniques to speed up the project; pre-wiring many of the cables off site etc. In some cases entire racks can be pre-wired before being brought to site, which minimises downtime and expedites the project.

That said, how can an SI convince the Chief Engineer that the installation will be carried out in the way they want, and that once the project is finished, the engineering team have a full understanding of the system? The London-based systems integration company Absolute CAD offers a full turnkey solution to each project. They discuss the project in detail, ensuring that the work adheres to the facilities technical specification. On completion the client is presented with full documentation, and a technical handover to the technical staff. Mike Watson, Technical Director, explains: "Time and money can be saved on the majority of in house projects by calling upon the services of a recommended SI. Because they are so efficient, the project is completed very quickly, hitting the critical bookings deadline."

Mike continues: "What separates Absolute CAD from other SIs is that



Entire racks can often be pre-wired before being brought on-site

in most cases we provide a fixed price quote for the work, there are NO hidden extras. Not many of them can say that. It means that projects are completed on time and more importantly within budget."

Next time you are planning a project, consider what the actual costs of the installation will be, and how it affects your company.

For more information and free quotation for the services of Absolute CAD please visit www.absolutecad.tv or call freephone 0800 731 7027

A good SI can ensure the practical elements of the integration run smoothly

