# PLC partners project delivery experts

Vendor Project Management

Many organizations do not get the most out of their relationships with their hardware and software vendors. There can be many contributory reasons, including over-emphasis on commercial issues, a lack of technical knowledge, communication hampered by lack of trust or respect, a lack of understanding of outsourcing needs, poor training etc. In most cases there is awareness that the relationship is not what it should be but there is a feeling of powerlessness to do anything about it.

This relationship is a key factor in many projects and requires a professionally managed approach not only during the contractual stages, which are well documented, but also throughout the **implementation stages.**

Employing project management disciplines will set the expected standards and benefit both parties in the longer term:

- Create governance structures for the vendor to interact directly with internal clients, ensure they are documented and agreed.
- Prearrange change control processes and pricing to address scope creep.
- Maintain a detailed, written audit trail of all discussions and agreements.
- Ensure roles and responsibilities are clear during and after implementation.
- Rules of engagement should include onsite attendance requirements.
- Implementation strategies are mutually agreed upon.
- Reserve the right to review vendor designs and request changes.
- Project plans, test plans etc. are submitted in advance for your approval.
- Specify documentation required from the vendor, including media and format.
- Any training provided by the vendor must be preapproved by you.
- Specify support and maintenance to be provided through a Service Level Agreement, including performance metrics and escalation procedures.
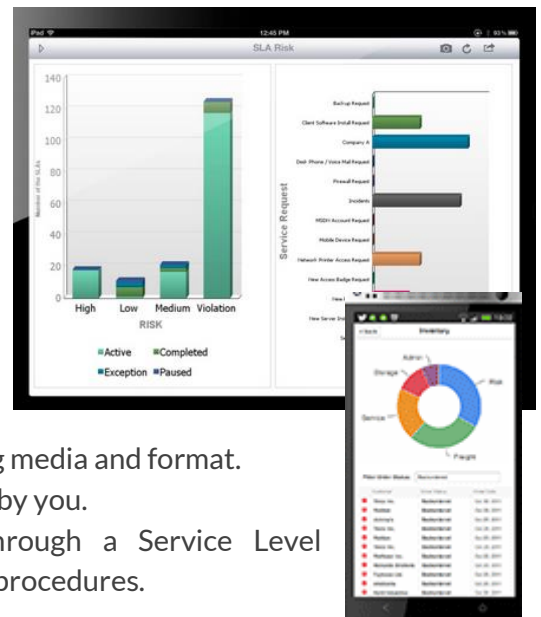
The continuous evaluation of results will allow you maximise the return on investment from your vendor partnerships. With all the information you gather, you will be able to evaluate on a regular basis where attention is needed.

Continually engage with your vendors - good Vendor Management is one where you can make a very big difference to your organisation with a relatively small effort and expenditure.