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Key Considerations for a successful DCIM Project

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1 Be clear on problems **prioritize over time**

- ⊕ Identify the business critical data center operations problem(s) you are trying to solve with this project, and prioritize.
- ⊕ Focus on solving only the top one or two most important problems first.
- ⊕ Build a set of DCIM requirements that are “must have”, as opposed to “nice to have”, in order to address the problem(s).
- ⊕ Avoid the natural temptation to do too much too soon—that will only dilute focus and reduce the likelihood of a successful outcome.



2 Understand current processes and desired outcome

- ■ ■ Map out your current processes and identify what you like and don't like.
- ■ ■ Define your desired process state.
- ■ ■ Identify the gaps that need to be filled— including people, systems, and information to get to your desired process state.
- ■ ■ Select project resources- people and tools-with the understanding that the success of your DCIM project depends upon the implementation of clearly defined processes.







3 Don't get caught in the feature comparison trap

- ☰ Evaluate two or at most three DCIM products/vendors thoroughly with respect to your “must have” requirements. Increasing the number of candidates will seriously dilute the resources assigned to that task.
- ☰ Describe your specific problems and desired outcome to the vendors and challenge them to show how you can achieve objectives with their product and support.
- ☰ Don't be concerned about missing or weak features that may be useful sometime in the future. Features that do not directly address your defined problem(s) are merely a distraction; and all vendors expand product functionality over time to meet competition and customer demand.




4

Partner with peers in other functions and gain alignment



-  **Identify and engage all organizational functions that may be impacted by the project**
-  **Get cross-functional alignment on business objectives and operational processes**
(e.g. between facilities and IT systems)
-  **Appoint a cross-functional project manager who is empowered to facilitate and drive the project to a successful implementation.**
-  **Discuss and get agreement on project cost sharing model**

5 Identify a team to own and maintain the system

-  Establish a DCIM team, perhaps cross-functional, that will be responsible for administering and supporting the tools required to achieve the business objective.
-  Identify one or more DCIM system administrators who will be responsible for overall system maintenance, monitoring and support.
-  Empower the systems administrators to ensure that the defined processes are followed by all system users so that data integrity is maintained.



6 Start small and **expand over time**



 **Beware of the tendency to expand the initial project.**
Rome wasn't built in a day.




 **Focus on meeting your most critical business problem(s) first and establish success.** A win, no matter how small, is a win to build on.

 **Remember that change can be initially overwhelming so a segmented and phased project implementation can minimize any impact.**


 **Constrain the initial project complexity and you will dramatically increase your chances of a successful DCIM implementation.**







Expect integration but don't need to address immediately - **make sure the platform is open**

-  **Identify your existing systems, processes, and databases that may offer benefits from eventual integration with a DCIM system**
(e.g. trouble ticketing systems, CMDBs, BMS, enterprise-wide reporting systems).
-  **Make sure that the chosen DCIM system is built with an open platform and supporting tools to facilitate possible future integration without disruption to people, system or processes.**
-  **Avoid unnecessary start-up complications and consider integration with existing systems only after initial DCIM project is successfully completed.**

8 Take advantage of expert services

-  Don't be shy – ask for help. Yes, it is possible to configure and implement a DCIM solution on your own, but most customers do benefit from some level of start-up training and assistance.
-  Expedite and simplify your DCIM deployment - your vendor offers services that will pave the way.
-  Avoid the common deployment pitfalls that result in lost time and lost momentum; vendor experience with scores of existing customers will make a huge difference in your initial project success.

9 Ensure people are trained and regularly monitor usage

-  Assign responsibility for initial training to a DCIM team system administrator. Each individual on DCIM team should know his/her role and responsibilities.
-  Consider asking your vendor to help train your staff or to train trainers.
-  Assign one system administrator to monitor DCIM usage on a regular basis to ensure compliance by all user groups; failure to follow defined processes can jeopardize the DCIM project.
-  Consider adopting the use of a documented run-time book – detailing the roles, responsibilities and performance of all organizations. This becomes a living manual to help drive your DCIM project to success.



10 Partner with a trusted, reliable and experienced vendor



Think of your implementation of DCIM as a marathon, not a sprint. Make sure your vendor is prepared to run the marathon with you.



Look for a vendor that has a proven track record for delivering IT and data center solutions over many years. Your deployment of DCIM will grow and mature over time bringing significant benefits and multiple returns on your investment.



Sleep well with the knowledge that your vendor will be there to support you today and tomorrow.

"With dcTrack we have an up-to-minute picture of capacities in all our data centers in terms of power, space, networking and cooling. As a result, we are able to track our data center capacity more accurately and assess our infrastructure needs for the future. Before we deployed dcTrack, it would mean a trip out onto the data center floor to confirm or deny that a server is in a certain..."

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