Strategic Direction / Governance for Common Solutions at Penn

Goals
• Advance Penn’s mission through technology innovation and best-in-class IT solutions.
• Enhance IT services and support through broad adoption of common solutions.
• Reduce costs through aggregated licensing/purchasing and shared services.
• Ensure compliance with policy and best practices for security/privacy.
• Improve integrations across Penn systems/data in support of business functions/workflow.
• Leverage knowledge sharing and support across the IT community.

Common Solutions Governance Model – Roles and Responsibilities

IT Roundtable

As part of its campus-wide IT governance role, IT Roundtable will charge and oversee the proposed Common Solutions Steering Group, and with input and recommendations from that group will:
• Manage the Common Solutions Portfolio
• Prioritize and charge specific common solutions efforts, assigning or enlisting leadership and participation by staff with sufficient time and the skills and experience to complete the work.

Common Solutions Steering Group

Comprised of a subset of IT Roundtable and/or designees, the Common Solutions Steering Group will identify areas of common interest and assess opportunities to implement IT solutions that will address campus needs and achieve strategic goals. The group will consider changing business needs as well as emerging technologies and market trends, and will recommend strategies to pursue common solutions in areas that it feels are a priority.

Collaborative Strategies

As we pursue specific solutions the following approaches will each be employed when/as appropriate. In some cases a combination of approaches will be pursued in phases (eg. assessment, followed by product evaluation, followed by pilot). Consistent in all approaches is engagement with IT staff and other stakeholders in Schools and Centers, drawing on their expertise and their knowledge of business processes and needs to develop requirements and evaluate solutions.

Campus Evaluation Teams

In cases where there is broad interest in a particular area, Penn has a well-established process for convening collaborative campus-wide evaluation teams.

Needs Assessments, Feasibility Studies, Cost/Benefit Analysis

At times it will be necessary to do more detailed assessments in order to better understand whether and how it makes sense to pursue a particular solution.

Pilot / Partner

In some cases there may not yet be broad interest in evaluating a solution even though we anticipate significant value/adoption over time, or it may be more efficient or effective to have a few Schools and
Centers do more targeted evaluation and testing or participate in a pilot. ISC can partner in support of these efforts, with results shared back to IT Roundtable and the Common Solutions Steering Group.

**Vet and Pursue “De Facto” Solutions**

Finally, if a solution that is a market leader is already meeting the needs of a number of Schools and Centers, the Common Solutions Steering Group can recommend that it be turned over to the Common Solutions Working Group to fully vet the vendor, confirm a good contract is in place, and then pursue aggregated purchasing and/or implementation of a shared service when possible.

**Common Solutions Working Group**

The Working Group is a collaboration among staff within ISC and BSD who, working in concert with OACP and OGC, each have well established roles supporting the evaluation and purchase of technology products and services, and who will each support Common Solutions efforts in keeping with their normal roles. This group is already working to share and aggregate information and to provide web resources that will help IT organizations identify and vet solutions that will best meet their needs.

**Solutions Inventory**

The Solutions Inventory will provide information about products and services that are meeting the needs of organizations at Penn or that are currently being evaluated. The Working Group is compiling a spreadsheet that captures a variety of information related to categories, vendors, and products, including whether solutions have been vetted and whether there are contracts in place that address our requirements for security and privacy. The Solutions Inventory can be developed and maintained at whatever level the IT community would find valuable (and will sustain through their ongoing input).

The goal is to provide organizations a starting point to identify candidate solutions to meet their needs, encouraging adoption of known/good/secure products where appropriate, with the potential that over time some will reach a critical mass of adoption and become Common Solutions.

**Resources to Identify and Vet Solutions**

Building on Penn’s ongoing Cloud efforts and on existing templates and best practices for evaluation teams, we are compiling information and web resources to help IT organizations exercise due diligence and more quickly and effectively identify and evaluate solutions to meet their needs. Examples include:

- [Cloud Computing: Opportunities Used Safely](#)
- [Data Sensitivity and Review Framework](#)
- [SPIA for Vendors tool](#)
- Sample contracts and preferred privacy and security language for agreements
- [Box Data Sensitivity and Usage Statement](#) or [HTML](#)
- Gartner Market Research
- Internet2 Net+ Services