



ACH Technical Assistance Questions to consider when buying IT services

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Purpose of Presentation

- ACHs are being approached by many vendors offering to provide services to help implement priority projects
- This presentation is intended to provide guiding questions to ensure ACHs are able to obtain the IT tools needed to implement their project plans

Phases of IT Purchasing

- 1. Planning*
- 2. Identifying Potential Solutions*
- 3. Contractual Design*
- 4. Post-Purchase*

Planning

What is the need and scope you are looking to address?

- Be as specific as possible in outlining the requirements and include functionality, performance (size, speed and other), capacity, number of users, where users will be located, and other elements.
- Do you have the staffing resources to maintain the tool (i.e. if there are problems) or do you want the vendor to maintain?
- Will you host the tool on your system or will it be hosted remotely?
- Identify your timing for product deployment and provide the funding source.

Planning

How are you going to make a purchase?

- Do you have time to issue a request for information or a request for qualified quotes?
- Have you reached out to multiple vendors to ensure you are making a reasonable purchase?
- What tools are other ACHs leveraging?
- Can you leverage existing tools that other ACHs, the state, the county, the local health jurisdiction or other entities have already deployed?
- What is your anticipated payback period?

Identifying Potential Solutions

Has the IT product been tested, and does it function and perform as reports and salesperson says it will?

- What other entities are using the IT tool? Are they happy with their purchase?
- What is the reputation of the company? Are they known for addressing customer concerns?
- Does the product have to be modified to meet the ACH needs?
- Develop scenarios and request demonstrations of the product with the discussion tailored to your needs.

Identifying Potential Solutions

Have you compared competing products and companies?

- How much training will it take to introduce the new product to users and will the vendor provide the training?
- Will this IT purchase align with broader health IT initiatives in the state in the near or long term?
- Will the product make the user's job easier or harder?
- Do you have enough information to make a direct purchase?

Contractual Design

Is this a one-time purchase or a subscription model?

- What are the costs for tailoring the product to your specific needs?
- Are there costs for future requested changes to the product and for ongoing maintenance?
- Is the contract for time and materials, or is it a deliverable base contract?
- Is there clear understanding in the contract about what services will be performed?
- Is there a deliverable expectations document to further define deliverables?
- What are the costs for initial and ongoing training on the solution?

Post-Purchase

What change management is needed to get users to fully embrace the tool?

- How will users use this IT product?
- What is this tool replacing (if anything)? How can you ensure a successful transition is made?
- What is the communication plan to roll out this new system and who are all the stakeholders involved?
- Using a new IT solution almost always has some bumps, so leveling expectations can be helpful to ensure overall success.

Questions?

Contact: