



Independent Project Assurance

What You Get with Independent Project Assurance from THInc.IT

When it's time to implement a comprehensive upgrade to your business systems and software - and you need to do everything you can to make sure your project is a success - how can you be assured that the project team can create and execute a comprehensive plan that achieves the desired objectives on time and within budget?

One way is with Independent Project Assurance from THInc.IT. Independent Project Assurance uses a systematic approach designed to validate that the solution, service or system you've chosen meets the necessary requirements and specifications and fulfills its intended purpose for your organization. It's a reliable way for your company management to get an independent perspective on project activities. The process includes a strong emphasis on comparing your solution's intended deployment plan with the project tasks being executed - so you can catch significant differences early. Your

project manager and team will have a chance to make course corrections earlier rather than later, giving you a better chance of keeping the project within tolerance limits and delivering project outcomes that align with project expectations.

Your Independent Project Assurance engagement includes:

- ▶ Facilitating early detection, mitigation, and correction of cost and schedule variances
- ▶ Enhancing management insight into and control over process and organizational risk
- ▶ Supporting project life cycle processes to ensure compliance with regulatory, performance, schedule and budgetary requirements
- ▶ Validating the project's solution and processes to ensure compliance with defined requirements

What is the purpose of Independent Project Assurance?

Independent Project Assurance provides you an independent, objective assessment of the quality of your implementation or integration project plan and associated activities. Objectivity is inherent because an Independent Project Assurance engagement is delivered by parties not directly engaged in the development or deployment of the solution. Typically, Independent Project Assurance includes reviewing, analyzing, evaluating, testing, and validating the software or systems being deployed, as well as the completeness and quality of all project tasks and activities. This analysis includes a review of:

- ▶ Software
- ▶ Software integrations
- ▶ IT infrastructure
- ▶ Documentation
- ▶ Training
- ▶ Testing
- ▶ Supporting processes
- ▶ User readiness

What will I learn during an Independent Project Assurance engagement with THInc.IT?

You will receive documented answers to questions, such as:

- ▶ What are the current processes, solutions and technologies in place, and what about them is working well for us right now?
- ▶ What is the desired future state of the organization that the solution is expected to enable? (This question is usually answered during a Business Process Requirements Assessment [“BPRA”]. Let us know if a BPRA was completed prior to this project or if you would like to learn more about the BPRA exercise.)
- ▶ What have you defined as your business requirements (now and in the future) that are not accommodated in the documented functionality of the solution? How will your organization address these known solution gaps? (These gaps are normally discovered and documented during a Fit/Gap Assessment. Let us know if a Fit/Gap Assessment has already been performed or if you would like to learn more about the Fit/Gap exercise.)
- ▶ How is progress measured in the areas being evaluated, and what resources are being employed to monitor activities?
- ▶ Is the project staying within the defined scope, schedule and budget?
- ▶ Are project documents and related process flow diagrams accurate and up to date?
- ▶ Is there adequate stakeholder involvement and executive sponsorship in the project?
- ▶ Are best practices and metrics employed to identify issues and measure progress and performance?

Verification

How is it done and what is accomplished?

The verification portion of the Independent Project Assurance process involves the evaluation of a system and its components to make sure they satisfy documented project objectives and requirements. During verification, the project's primary activities are examined and assessed by members of THInc.IT's Independent Project Assurance team. Verification techniques use static testing approaches that evaluate the system configuration, workflow and documentation. The testing process is expressly designed to prevent material omissions, identify implementation and integration challenges, and validate the soundness of the project plan. Static testing techniques typically include:

- ▶ Configuration reviews – Systematic examination of the solution's configuration
- ▶ Inspections – Review of project steps, work solutions and documentation
- ▶ Walk-throughs – Inspecting solution configuration by having the system execute various business cycles to ensure that the system workflow follows logical business process paths as determined by input conditions and selections made along the way

Validation

How is it different and what's the end result?

The Validation process is designed to determine that the solution being implemented **does what you expect it to do**. Performing validation maximizes the likelihood that:

- ▶ Requirements are adequately defined
- ▶ System design and functionality conform to requirements
- ▶ Data is entered and maintained correctly
- ▶ Test results are accurate

Validation techniques generally incorporate dynamic testing approaches that examine the solution's physical response to changing variables. This type of testing is meant to determine whether or not the solution's output is as expected. A dynamic testing plan typically includes some of the following activities:

- ▶ Unit testing
- ▶ Integration testing
- ▶ Use case testing
- ▶ System infrastructure testing
- ▶ User acceptance testing
- ▶ Load testing

What are best practices to consider before undertaking a THInc.IT Independent Project Assurance engagement?

Before your organization engages with THInc.IT in an Independent Project Assurance project, there are several best practice organizational efforts and commitments that should be taken into consideration and acted upon as needed in order to ensure that the Independent Project Assurance engagement will be efficient and successful.

- ▶ Document the expected levels of commitment your team is able to provide.
- ▶ Budget appropriately for Independent Project Assurance activities, accounting for project scope, schedule, risk and other potential variables.
- ▶ Select a qualified internal team to work with THInc.IT to perform the Independent Project Assurance activities.
- ▶ Identify Independent Project Assurance acceptance criteria.
- ▶ Arrange for the Independent Project Assurance team to have access to all required data and resources necessary to deliver effective Independent Project Assurance services.
- ▶ Make sure the Independent Project Assurance team receives all process flow diagrams and is invited to all project meetings.
- ▶ Maintain Independent Project Assurance team independence.
- ▶ Make adjustments and corrections based upon the recommendations of the Independent Project Assurance team.
- ▶ Incorporate Independent Project Assurance findings into a "Lessons Learned" project journal and associated documentation.

Let us be your guide forward



Toby Stansell

Chief Operating Officer, THInc.IT
toby.stansell@thincit.com
864.233.3981



Jim Holman

Director—Strategic Consulting, THInc.IT
jim.holman@thincit.com
404.733.3267

Let's Get Started

Clients consistently rate us highly on our ability to understand the issue, define the problem and provide resourceful solutions. Our staff consists of certified individuals with years of experience, enabling us to design, implement, and integrate solutions on any scale. Contact us to leverage our experience to add value to your organization's success.

sales@THIncIT.com

804.794.3491

THInc.IT
Innovative Technology Solutions

Gold
**Microsoft
Partner**
