

## Successfully Navigating a CLM Software Implementation Suggestions and Best Practices Recommendations

Your organization has decided to implement a contract management software solution. Great! Selecting a solution that meets your needs is just the first step. For some organizations, navigating the implementation process can be tricky and confusing, leading to frustration and wasted time. By following a few simple guidelines, you can properly prepare your organization for the task ahead and ensure that the process runs smoothly.



### **1. Ensure that key stakeholders are on board with the process.**

Hopefully you included at least one member of each key department in the selection process. If not, now's the time to get them up to speed. Cooperation is key when you are making a major change that will affect the whole organization. Employees should know what is changing, when the changes will take effect, and what their specific role is in the process.

### **2. Have a realistic plan (and stick to it).**

Be practical when planning the process. Set clear and reasonable goals for your team to ensure that the process is not rushed or dragged out. An average implementation process should take about 30 to 90 days from project kickoff to go-live. Identify your key pain points with your current contract management processes and develop a plan to address them.

### **3. Map it out before you set your system up.**

Analyze your current processes before setting up your system and amend them to ensure that everything flows the way you want them to. The software is only as useful as the data you enter into it. If you put garbage in, you will get garbage back. Setting up your system incorrectly wastes time and resources and can drag the process out. Ask your contract management software provider for best-practices recommendations throughout the setup.

#### 4. Start out simple.

**Remember**, if you have selected a reputable CLM provider, they will be very experienced in successfully implementing industry-specific contract management solutions.

Contract management software has a wide variety of useful features to offer. However, overwhelming your users with too much at once can leave them confused and dissatisfied. Start by getting the essential

functionality working properly first. Then, once your users are more comfortable with the system, work on adding the bells and whistles as a phase-2 project. For example, if your organization is currently using Excel and PDFs to track contracts, it may be appropriate to first use the system as a centralized repository to easily track, search and report on contracts with email alerts. Then, once familiar with the core system functionality, your organization can realize advanced benefits of the software by automating other important business processes including approvals/reviews, workflow, contract authoring/writing, clause management, online negotiation, electronic signatures and more.

#### 5. Dedicate some time and don't rush.

Rome wasn't built in a day, and neither is a new contract management system. Change can be daunting for some, especially when you are doing a massive overhaul of your current processes and procedures. Your users are going to need time to adjust, and you are going to need time to test your system and get it up and running. If you are not bulk importing legacy data into this system, it may be wise to dedicate a small team of individuals (possibly temps or interns) that can focus on entering data and testing the system to ensure that it functions properly prior to your go-live date.

As with any major process implementation, there may be a few hiccups or bumps in the road. However, if you plan appropriately, your team will be better prepared for the phased approach. A successful contract management software implementation will allow your organization to more easily manage compliance, mitigate risk, boost productivity, minimize contract cycle time, control visibility, streamline negotiations, increase ROI, and much more.

#### About Us

CobbleStone's Contract Management Software provides a centralized contract repository and automates contract authoring, compliance, monitoring, and risk management. Contract Insight has been selected by hundreds of clients and thousands of users to streamline the contract lifecycle management process. To learn more about CobbleStone Systems' Best-of-Breed Contract Management Software, visit [www.CobbleStoneSystems.com](http://www.CobbleStoneSystems.com) or call 866-330-0056.