

3

Software

STARTER

Think about your answers to this quiz.

Your favourite and least favourite piece of software.

I love _____ because _____
I hate _____ because _____

A piece of software you use regularly and what its main advantages and disadvantages are.

_____ is great because _____
_____ is not so great because _____

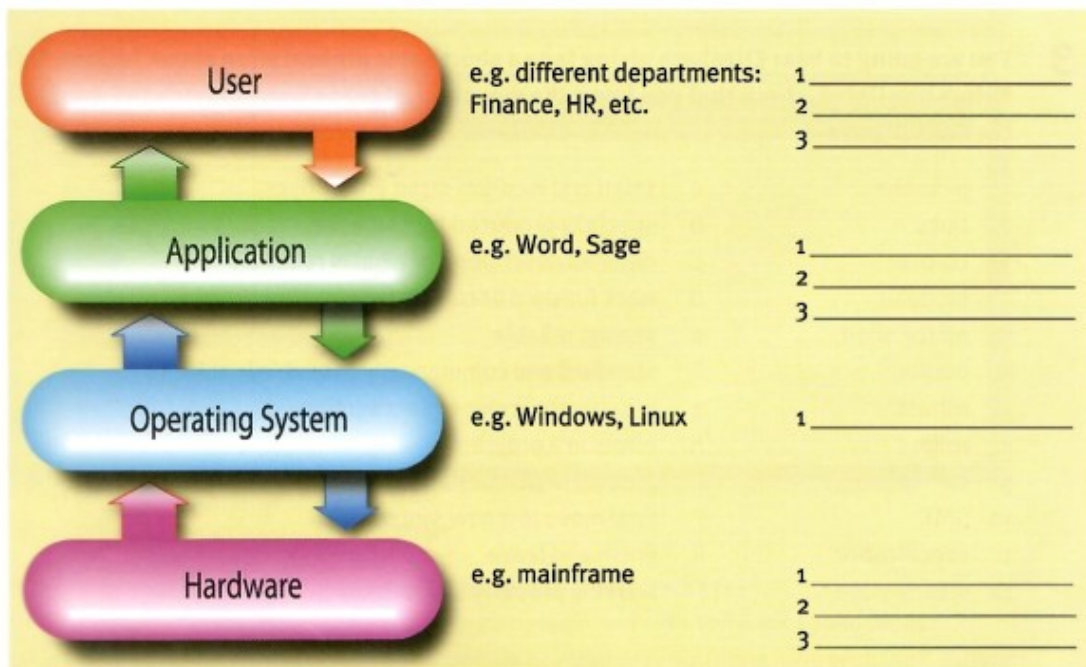
The best cheap / freeware application you have downloaded from the internet.

I love _____ because _____

Now discuss your answers with a partner.

THE SOFTWARE DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

1 Complete the diagram with information about your company's IT.

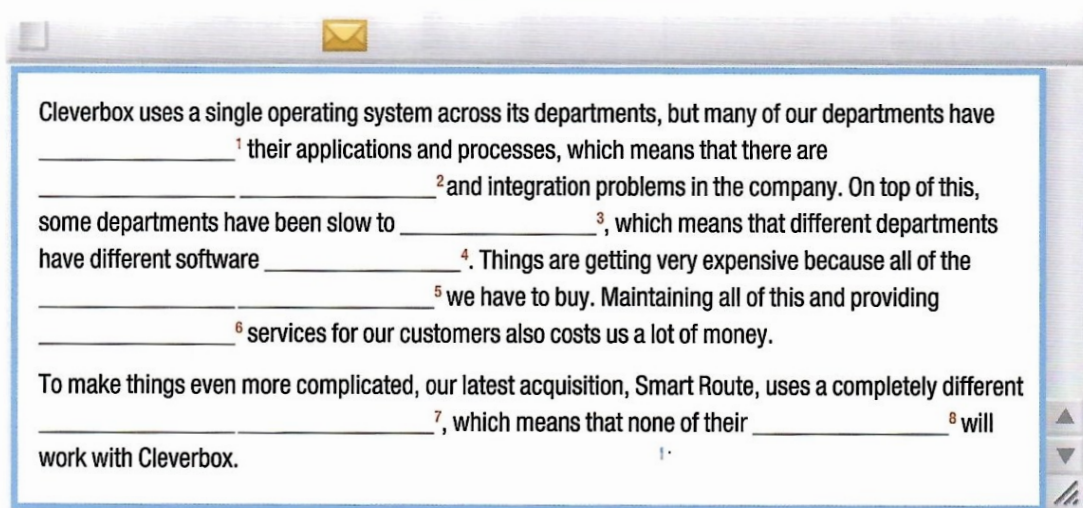


What problems might your company have if it took over another company that used different operating systems and applications?

- 2** Cleverbox is a manufacturer of a new type of IP router that is bought by telecoms network operators. It has grown rapidly, both organically and through acquisition. This rapid growth is now causing business problems with integration. The Cleverbox IT Director, Jane Simmons, sent an email to Elizabeth Hardy, from software development company Talking Software Ltd, outlining their problems.

Complete Jane's email with the expressions below.

applications • customized • data format • helpdesk • operating system • releases • software licences • upgrade



Cleverbox uses a single operating system across its departments, but many of our departments have _____¹ their applications and processes, which means that there are _____² and integration problems in the company. On top of this, some departments have been slow to _____³, which means that different departments have different software _____⁴. Things are getting very expensive because all of the _____⁵ we have to buy. Maintaining all of this and providing _____⁶ services for our customers also costs us a lot of money.

To make things even more complicated, our latest acquisition, Smart Route, uses a completely different _____⁷, which means that none of their _____⁸ will work with Cleverbox.

- 3** You are going to hear Elizabeth giving Jane a short sales presentation about Talking Software. Before you listen, check that you know the meanings of these words. Match the words 1–12 with the definitions a–l.

- | | |
|------------------|---|
| 1 bespoke | a small and medium-sized enterprises |
| 2 bugs | b specially produced for someone |
| 3 cutover | c detailed description of what is required |
| 4 modular | d work finished or completed |
| 5 off the shelf | e strong, reliable |
| 6 output | f standard and commercially available (package) |
| 7 robust | g in separate, independent sections |
| 8 rollout | h errors in a program |
| 9 sign off | i gradual implementation |
| 10 SME | j final move to a new system |
| 11 specification | k finish and leave |
| 12 steady state | l working properly and reliably |

4 Listen to Elizabeth's presentation and complete the three slides detailing Talking Software's areas of expertise.

Business Processes

Team

_____ ¹ Consultants

Tasks

_____ ² business processes and provide a
 _____ ³ or Software Requirements Analysis.

Software Development

Team

20 _____ ⁴, programmers and coders

Tasks

Design _____ ⁵ and code and compile software
 Test for _____ ⁶
 _____ ⁷ existing software products

Application Implementation

Ten people led by a _____ ⁸

Tasks

Install _____ ⁹ software
 Install customized products
 Install _____ ¹⁰ packages

5 Discuss these questions with a partner.

- 1 What problems have you personally had with software packages?
- 2 What problems has your company or organization had with software applications?
- 3 What problems have you seen other people or other organizations have with their software?
- 4 How were these problems fixed in each scenario?

SOFTWARE SOLUTIONS

6 After analysing the two businesses, Talking Software produced a report for Cleverbox. Read the Executive Summary below and match sentences 1–6 with sections i)–iv)c of the summary.

- 1 The accounts packages are not being used effectively.
- 2 Information needs to be stored in one location and this will save money.
- 3 The software needs standardizing and updating regularly, and this will save money.
- 4 The personnel departments of the two companies operate differently.
- 5 One of the bespoke applications is not particularly useful and cannot be used by the other company.
- 6 The two companies need to use a single operating system.

Cleverbox Software: Problems & Options

Executive Summary

Talking Software carried out an analysis on the IT estates of the two businesses and the high level summary is as follows:

Problems: Talking Software has noted that:

- i) The IT Infrastructure of the two businesses requires consolidation into a single data centre and database. There is an opportunity to reduce cost through server consolidation. Communications infrastructure is compatible (MPLS based) but will require some capacity increases on certain links to ensure the end users' experience of using the applications is acceptable.
- ii) Server Operating Systems are incompatible being Windows and Linux. Desktop Operating Systems are also a problem because Windows and Mac OS are used.
- iii) Software Licences: all departments have been purchasing their own licences and there are lots of agreements with lots of vendors and no volume discounts. There are no coordinated upgrades leaving some users and departments without the software functionality they need. This is all leading to high numbers of calls to the IT Helpdesk and significant training costs.
- iv) At a departmental level there are the following issues:
 - a) Human Resources: Cleverbox uses HR Pro as its HR application in real time, whilst Smart Route runs their HR activities using Microsoft Excel updated monthly.
 - b) Finance: Cleverbox Finance is struggling to integrate with your own HR, Sales and Procurement applications due to

different data formats and scheduling. This is leading to delays in Payroll for your own staff, late billing to your clients and late invoice payments to suppliers. Smart Route uses the Sage Release 2.0 which you will not be able to integrate to.

- c) Manufacturing: Cleverbox uses a self developed application that integrates well within the business but will be completely incompatible with Smart Route. Although it is integrated, the functionality is limited and it provides very little management information.

Options: Given the observations above we believe the options for Cleverbox management are to:

- 1 Invest in Smart Route to change their operating system and replace their applications to mirror Cleverbox. A second stage would then consolidate the information of both businesses into a single database. This solution will support your business for the next three years. The cost of Option 1 will be one year's profit and it will take two years to execute.
- 2 Scrap all the legacy software in both businesses and invest in an off-the-shelf ERP (Enterprise Resource Planning) system. This will provide a common database and synchronized data across the combined business. Modular software applications for each department allow every department to store and retrieve standardized data in real-time. This option is future proof. Option 2 will cost two years of profit and take one year to implement and will support your business for seven years.

7 Read sections i) to iv) again. Find words or phrases that mean:

- | | |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1 joining together into one | 6 price reductions for buying in bulk |
| 2 able to function well together | 7 properly organized |
| 3 improvements in size or power | 8 usefulness |
| 4 unable to function well together | 9 problems |
| 5 sellers | 10 combine to work together |

8 Use some of the words from exercise 7 to complete sentences 1–5.

- The trial version only has limited _____ – if you want to use all the features, you have to buy the full version.
- We had some serious _____ with our IT infrastructure, so we called in some consultants.
- If the printer isn't _____ with your operating system, it won't work.
- After a series of _____, our broadband speed has now risen to 24Mbps
- The rollout of the new software was very well _____, and everything went smoothly.
- If all our departments buy new software licences at the same time, we'll get good _____.

9 Look at the two options in the summary. Put these notes on each option into the correct columns.

will last for seven years
can be done in two stages
only requires one company to change its software
will last for three years

can be implemented in a year
can be implemented over two years
will cost two years' profit
will only cost half of the other option

Option 1: features and advantages

Option 2: features and advantages

Can you add any other features or advantages to the list?

FUTURE CONSEQUENCES

We often use the first conditional to talk about the future consequences of present actions.
*If they choose option 1, it **will** cost two years' profit.*

We can also use this structure to talk about future ability and obligations.

Future ability: **will be able to, won't be able to**

*If Smart Route changes its OS, both businesses **will be able to** use a single database.*

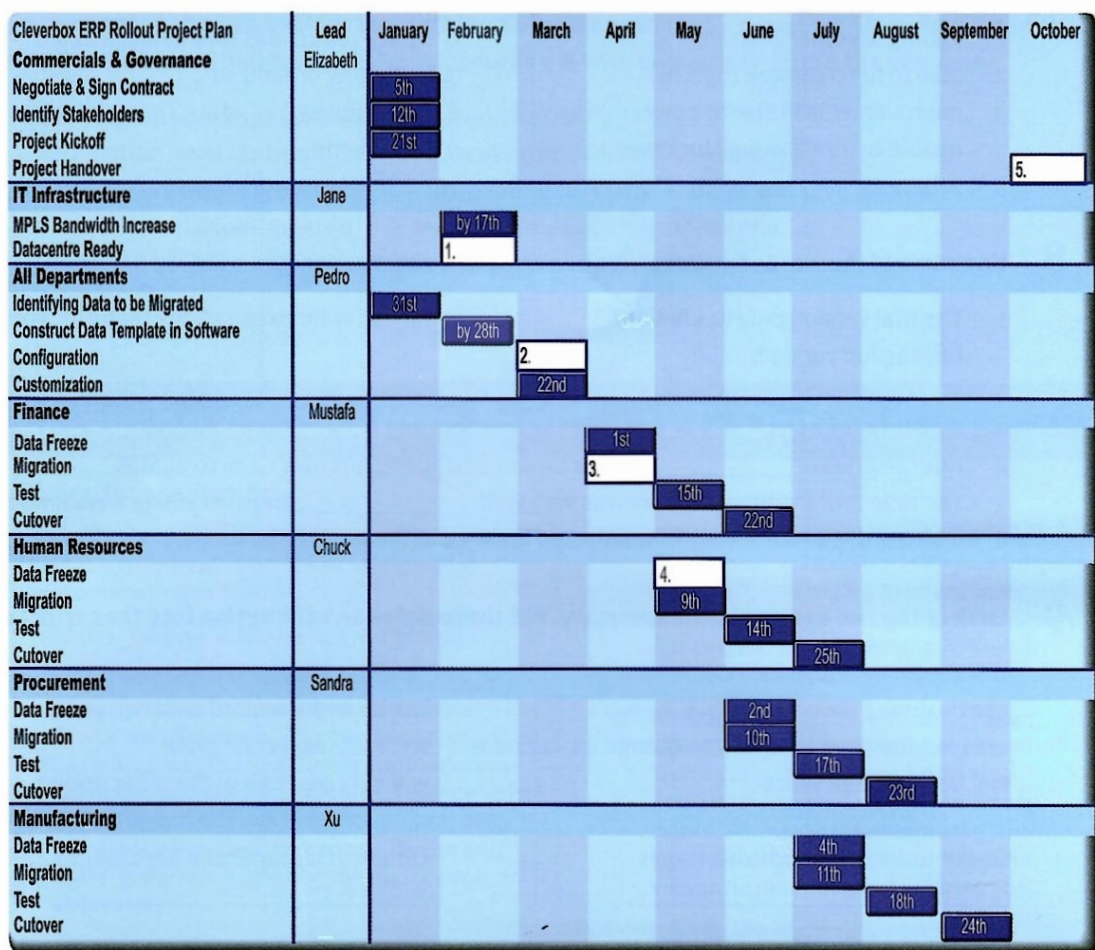
Future obligation: **will have to, won't have to**

*If they choose option 2, they **will have to** pay more up front.*

10 The recommendation section at the end of the Executive Summary is missing. Look at all the information in the text and discuss with a partner which option you would recommend.

Now write a short paragraph summarizing your recommendation.

PROJECT MANAGEMENT



11 Elizabeth from Talking Software is having a conference call to discuss the rollout of the new ERP software for Cleverbox. Look at the chart and answer the questions.

- When will the project kick off?
- Who is responsible for the Finance department?
- What department does Chuck lead?
- Who is in charge of upgrading the MPLS?
- When will the data freeze start for the Finance department?
- Which department will be migrating data on May 9th?
- When will HR start testing?
- When will Manufacturing cutover?

AUDIO



12 Listen to the extract and complete the missing dates 1–5 on the chart.

13 Listen to the extract again. Say if the following statements are TRUE (T) or FALSE (F).

- 1 Elizabeth is expecting some delays and missed deadlines.
- 2 Elizabeth explains the workstreams involved in preparing the data templates.
- 3 The four departments will all follow a similar procedure for the ERP rollout.
- 4 Mustafa is unsure when the data migration will begin.
- 5 HR cannot employ anyone new after May 3rd.
- 6 Manufacturing will be very busy during the testing period.

☐
☐
☐
☐
☐
☐

14 Match the words 1–8 with the definitions a–h.

- | | |
|-----------------------------|--|
| 1 bottleneck | a delay |
| 2 within scope/out of scope | b leave unchanged |
| 3 slippage | c blockage |
| 4 rollout | d final date for completing (a project) |
| 5 stick to (a date) | e move (data) from one system to another |
| 6 dirty data | f implement and start using (new software) |
| 7 deadline | g information with mistakes (e.g. spelling mistakes) |
| 8 migrate | h suitable/unsuitable for inclusion |

15 Complete this extract from an email using some of the words above.

I'm sorry to have to tell you that there has been some _____¹ in the project and we won't be able to _____² our original _____³ on July 30th for completing the _____⁴ of the new software.

Pedro's absence for three weeks caused a bit of a _____⁵, and there were more delays when we realised that there was still some _____⁶ in the database that needed cleaning up.

Still, I am confident that we can complete the project by the end of next month.

TIME PERIODS

Prepositions and time words

Look at the prepositions we normally use with these time expressions.

at 6.15
the end of the month
the weekend

on Monday
the 15th
August 11th

in August
2007
the 1990s

no preposition yesterday
last week
next week
tomorrow

by and until

by means not later than.

I need that report by Wednesday.

(Monday, Tuesday or Wednesday will be OK.
Thursday will be too late.)

until means from time A (often now) to time B

We will be working with you until the project is completed.

(We will be working here from now up to the end of the project.)

16 Complete the sentences with *by*, *until*, *in*, *on*, *at*, or - (no preposition).

- 1 Would you mind waiting _____ Mrs Langton gets back?
- 2 By the way, could I remind everyone that our next meeting will be _____ Tuesday 18th _____ 11.10.
- 3 I had a few problems connecting to the internet _____ I installed Wi-Fi.
- 4 Could you give this invoice to Helen? I think she's coming in _____ tomorrow.
- 5 My father worked for NCR until he retired _____ 1990.
- 6 We can't use the new system _____ it has been fully tested.
- 7 I need that report _____ 6.30 tomorrow at the latest.
- 8 What did you do _____ the weekend? Did you go to London?

17 Listen to Pedro's description of the process. Complete the extracts with the missing words.

- 1 _____, we need to identify all the data that you each have to migrate ...
- 2 _____ each department will then construct a data template ...
- 3 ... this needs to be done _____ the end of next month.
- 4 _____, the database will be configured ...
- 5 _____, any customization of your templates or processes must be completed ...

18 Read the situations below and choose one. Think about five steps for each situation. Use some of the sequencing words above to explain your situation briefly to a partner or write a short paragraph putting the steps in sequence.

- 1 A non-expert wants to format the hard drive on his PC and re-load the operating system, but doesn't want to lose any important files or emails. Explain the steps in this procedure.
- 2 A company is moving to new premises in the same city. Explain what steps they need to take to make sure that their IT system can move with the minimum amount of disruption.
- 3 The Finance Department of a small company has decided to start using a new accounts package. Explain what steps it needs to take to use the software effectively.

19 Work with a partner to complete the work streams in a software rollout programme.



Partner A File 3, p.75
Partner B File 3, p.77

Read the article about cloud computing and answer the questions below.

Who is in the cloud?

The “cloud” and cloud-computing are among the buzz words of the year. The big players are moving into this area in a big way. Google will already run your email and host your documents, and its App Engine lets users run custom applications. Amazon has a service that allows users to set up virtual servers on the internet, and Microsoft is joining the party with Windows Azure.

At the same time, the concept of cloud computing is far from new, and one company that has been in the business since 1999 (an age in internet terms) is salesforce.com. The business lets customers manage their sales data, leads and other information on the internet using salesforce.com’s online applications, and with over \$1 bn in annual revenue, it is clearly a model that works. Marc Benioff, the company’s

44-year-old chief executive and co-founder is convinced that cloud computing is the way ahead. ‘This is the future,’ he says. ‘If it isn’t, I don’t know what is. We’re in it. You’re going to see this model dominate our industry.’

Benioff sees the service cloud as the alternative to call centres and telephone helplines. He believes that when customers have a problem with a product or service they no longer call a helpline, they go to Google. Companies like Orange are already using the service cloud, where they can set up their own web portal with links to customer services and other applications.

But are there any dangers to this the brave new world? When Gmail was hit by an outage in February, Twitter was alive with cries about the risks of moving mission-critical data

and applications outside your own IT department’s control, even though the downtime lasted only about two and a half hours. Besides questions about reliability, some doubters also voice worries about privacy and security.

But supporters of the cloud say that organizations like Salesforce and Google do a much better job of uptime and transparency than most IT departments. ‘All complex systems have planned and unplanned downtime,’ says Benioff, who claims 99.9% uptime last year. ‘The reality is we are able to provide higher levels of reliability and availability than most companies could provide on their own.’

His 55,000 customers and 1.5 million subscribers, will be hoping that he is right.

Say if the following statements are TRUE (T) or FALSE (F).

- Salesforce has been operating cloud services longer than the big players. ☐
- Salesforce has had to change its business model because of falling profits. ☐
- Benioff believes cloud computing will replace call centres and helplines. ☐
- Cloud computing suffers from more unplanned downtime than average in-house IT departments. ☐

OVER TO YOU

- What applications do you regularly use that are provided in a “cloud”?
- Do you think people will be comfortable with all software being provided remotely in the future?
- What are your reasons for your answer?
- How many clouds will there be? Do you think one big service provider could provide a single cloud for everyone?