



Delta Holtby  
Customer Success Manager

# The four main reasons to consider **Virtual CIO Management Software**

Learn why not all Virtual CIO Management Software is the same

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# Who Should Read This?

This guide is written for all business owners and executives who want to identify the business-IT initiatives with the greatest return on investments. It is especially aimed at business owners that need a central IT prioritization process.

The problems discussed are universal for small to medium sized businesses (SMB). In short, this applies to you.

Within this document we discuss the problems faced by business executives who want to ensure

technology is meeting their business strategy. You want to rein in shadow IT, wasteful duplication, and gain control.

## We focus on the importance of

- Prioritizing demand for technology
- Reduce costly duplication
- Coordinate technology priorities within and between teams
- Use real-time data to create a roadmap

# Is there really a problem?

As a company you are often facing the following IT problems

## Insatiable Demands

Requests for new technology are overloading what your team can realistically manage. There is no central prioritization process and IT projects are started (and stopped) randomly versus strategically.



## Wasteful Duplication

Dedicated software applications for each group (sales, marketing, HR, support, engineering, accounting, etc.) often have overlapping features, service the same processes (HR needs employee data—but it's in the accounting app already) and maintains the same data (sales and customer service but each has a different system). Each system is EXPENSIVE—but they could be combined.



### No Coordination

Each department has their unique system needs and each is treated like an island. Little centralized planning is done that identifies common BUSINESS problems which require similar IT solutions. It takes an “informed” CIO leader who can identify and coordinate the common critical needs.



### No Investment Insights

IT often doesn't know where all the money goes. Renegade departments start IT projects and purchase non-budgeted SaaS products on their own. Often, they abandoned the project, but the company keeps paying for the SaaS—ouch.



# So, what can you do?



### Meeting about your Meetings

You could continue to attend dozens of “the same different meetings” to coordinate mountains of tech requests.



### Remain Stuck in Excel Hell

You could try to use multiple manually created spreadsheets to track applications, projects, and costs. Unfortunately, they are seldom updated, not shared and error prone.

### Use “Sophisticated” Project Management

Of course, IT has project management software – but it takes a master's degree to understand.

# So... **the big question**

How can you shape demands for IT, reduce costly duplication, easily coordinate between teams, and know all the planned and unplanned investments?

Perhaps you should consider...

## **Virtual CIO Management Software**



## Let's evaluate the top four things we should look for in Virtual CIO management software

# 1

## Prioritizes demand

Make the best technology investments using real data. Stop the never-ending texts, emails, phone calls and the endless contentious meetings to reach a decision.



- **Maintain Demand Inventory**

Maintains a central inventory of all ideas and demands for technology. Provides a repeatable process to capture all stakeholders' ideas (demands) for changes to the IT environment and enables demand assessment.

- **Perform Demand Assessments**

Links ideas to the strategies they impact and the business processes and capabilities they affect. Enables management to see the "big picture." Assess the impact early in the demand process and identify the business owner's, the approval process and capture the anticipated benefits.

- **Generate Impact Analysis**

Visualizes the request for change by graphically displaying the people, capabilities, processes, applications, technologies, and information impacted by the proposed change. Enables management to assess each request for technology using trade-off analysis and make investment choices based on preestablished criteria.

# 2

## Stops Duplication

Stops the wasteful duplication of applications, technology, and IT systems. Optimizes your technology portfolio that perform the same or similar functions to save money, reduce IT complexity and streamline processes.



- **Business Application Inventory**

Track all key business application attributes including contacts, life cycle, risk, value, and alignment. Determine gaps in the application, focuses investment dollars on the applications with the maximum return.

- **Administer Target Retirement Candidates**

Administer the utility of technology using a lifecycle that tracks the stages of the technology (tolerate, invest, migrate, eliminate). Retire duplicate and unused applications to save money, reduce complexity and streamline processes.

# 3

## Easy Coordination

Improves technology trade-off discussions using a repeatable and disciplined process to make better informed decisions, remove roadblocks and assess business value before money is spent.



- **Aligns Business Drivers with Programs**

Maintains a central program inventory that links Business Drivers with Programs (business initiatives), highlighting which programs are delivering the most business value.

- **Aligns Projects with Programs**

Links individual projects to a business initiative so management can monitor which projects are contributing the most to a program's progress.

- **Monitor Inflight Projects**

Maintains a central project inventory that monitors the health and status of projects. Includes instant reporting on project status, state, and health –enables easy coordination of resources assigned to projects.

# 4

## Data-Driven Insights

Your software should maintain a unified view of your entire technology landscape. Real-time dashboard data enables the right decision to be made on the spot. Increases productivity while reducing risk by using simple “what-if” data analytics.



- **Real-time IT Health Dashboard**

Visualize the most current data using graphs and charts. Uses Gartner's TIME lifecycle rankings (Tolerate, Invest, Migrate, Eliminate) to identify emerging trends, monitor efficiency and eliminate redundancies while maximizing reuse.

- **Export data to Excel**

Exports data to spreadsheets format for easy sharing and offline analysis.

- **Generate Detailed Asset Investment Report**

Financial reports that detail the true cost of the entire technology landscape that is reported to management enabling simple investment rebalancing and asset management.

# Unfortunately, **not all vCIO management software is the same**

## Some have serious challenges



### Some don't include business strategy

When aligning technology with the business strategy some systems cannot link the relevant components automatically --forcing you to maintain it manually.

### Missing program and project vitals

Many don't have detailed project data & analytics, so you have no visibility into overall project health. You're left in the dark without a way to improve.

### No Portfolios

Few have an application portfolio management inventory or a service catalog, making it is impossible to link technical infrastructure to the business applications that it supports.

### No Business Intelligence

Most systems lack customizable dashboards or a facility to modify or add unique dashboard panels.

### Too Hard to Use

Most vCIO software is difficult to use and requires deep technical modelling knowledge to operate (steep learning curve).

## Following are additional areas you should consider within vCIO software



Strategy Execution Management



Program and Project Portfolio Management



Application & Technology Portfolio Management



Business Intelligence & Reporting



Ease of use for SMB's

## Let's look at each of these in detail

### 1 Strategy Execution Management

Should include common features like demand management and impact analysis which help small and medium size businesses determine the right IT strategy. You want a solution that produces strategy using business language and manages technology as a business investment.



- **Document Strategic Business Drivers**

Simply put, business drivers form the criteria that test investment decisions focusing scarce resources on what matters most. Key business drivers ensure that technology planning is aligned with what matters most.

- **Business-IT Strategic Planning**

Business and IT alignment leverages information technology effectively to achieve the desired business strategy. Helps you cut through the noise and invest in the highest value companywide improvements.

- **IT Financial Management**

Enables team members to maintain key financial metrics and record the annual investment for the entire IT spend, which puts you in control by using plain business language and dollars and cents.

## 2 Program and Project Portfolio Management

vCIO software must include common features like tracking project stages, project objectives and project timelines which are all needed to help small and medium size businesses prioritize their investments. But also look for...



- **Program & Project Repository**

Programs, projects and their related objectives and key performance indicators are maintained in one, online, single database. Enabling anyone with the need-to-know to have real-time read access to their respective managerial data.

- **High-level Project Planning**

Track projects by linking all the critical interrelationships between programs, projects, applications, IT services, people, and processes. Avoids unexpected consequences, removes risk, and eliminates disruption to operations.

- **Program and Project Vitals**

Track programs and their projects, status, budget, schedule, scope, and resources. Everyone in the organization can quickly see potential problems and quickly react so projects stay on course.

## 3 Application & Technology Portfolio Management

Look for common features like technology inventory and service catalog which are needed to help small and medium size businesses manage the critical technical infrastructure. You need to tie the business applications to processes – enabling owners to spot opportunities to tackle process challenges.



- **IT Service Dependencies**

Links technical infrastructure to the business applications that it supports. Identify the critical business processes ensuring money is budgeted to support the essential business applications.

- **Technology Assessments**

Generate IT Health Score. Understand the technical maturity and organization capabilities. Focus investments on the larger gaps.

- **Maintain Processes Supported by Application**

Links processes to the business applications using a standard process reference framework. Direct investments to the highest value improvements.

- **Application Integration Data Flow**

Tracks key data exchanged between applications. Documents where important information is stored, promotes data sharing, and streamlines operations.

- **Technology Inventory**

Create a service catalog of the critical technical infrastructure. Set standards & reduces the time and cost of delivering technical services and improves the user experience.

## 4 Business Intelligence & Reporting

Includes common features like dashboards and exporting data to MS Excel. These help employees collaborate and coordinate activities. Some software lacks user customizable dashboards or can't drill down to instantly shift from an overview of data to a more detailed and granular view.



- **Multimatrix Report View**

Enables "What-if" scenario planning using pivot tables and off-line data analytics. Helps you easily share data with others and collaborate, spot potential opportunities and connections among and between investments.

- **Real-time IT Health Dashboard**

Visualize relationships between the business score, technology score and the criticality of applications, programs, and projects. Quickly assess where misalignment between the business and IT occurs using easy to read charts and graphics.

- **Generate Detailed Asset Investment Report**

Track and measure the dependencies, constraints, and supports for each investment in the portfolio. Enables business owners to rank investment factors using money as the common denominator.

## 5 EASIEST for SMB's

There are numerous programs for multi-billion-dollar organizations, but they are way too expensive, overly complicated and require courses to learn, or a fleet of consultants—way too much overkill for the small companies that need the same information.



- **Easiest Onboarding**

You need a method that uses a learn-by-doing approach and walks you through every step of the framework and implements the method along the way, saving time and money.

- **Easiest to Learn**

Web-based design should be (really) simple to use with no learning curve.

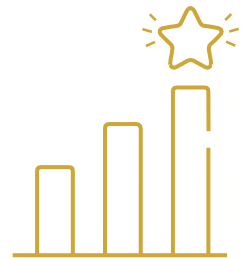
- **Easiest to Buy**

It should include simple monthly payment terms. Cancel anytime, no long-term contract.

# Wrap up

**In summary, when trying to solve the typical CIO problems, you should consider vCIO software. It should help you:**

- Prioritize demand to make the best technology investments in real-time data.
- Stops duplication and optimizes your technology portfolio to save money, reduce IT complexity and streamline processes.
- Improve technology trade-off discussions using a repeatable and disciplined process to make better informed decisions, remove roadblocks and assess business value before money is spent.
- Help you maintain a unified view of your entire technology landscape.



## Imagine This

You're out of the server room (stopped putting out today's fires) and into the boardroom.


Your GetInSync dashboard is boldly on the screen, and everything is there!  
All the projects, requests, budgets are visible, and everyone is talking.

You quickly point out the redundancies and areas for integration (and the team agrees to cancel the \$50k app that's clearly already covered). Every team can see the status of each others' programs and projects in real-time – no department is an island.

The investment shortfall is visible and “real” Ahh haa!  
The CEO tells finance to increase the budget to cover it.

All smiles, all happy—your company is unstuck and in sync. Life is good!!



BROUGHT TO YOU BY  **etinsync**

#1 Easiest Virtual CIO Management Software for SMBs