*This document is intended to be used as a resource to help prepare a funding or approval request for audit issue tracking system at your organization. The information contained within this document should be incorporated into your organization’s specific funding format. The context of the text is from the point of view of you making a request for funding internally; this is not a sales proposal per se.*

**BUSINESS CASE: IMPLEMENT A FORMAL AUDIT ISSUE TRACKING SYSTEM**

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This document provides support for implementing a formal audit issue tracking system. With the number of audits and other reviews, tracking corrective action can be difficult using spreadsheets and other documents.

We are recommending the system from AuditFindings. It is a secure, web-based audit and issue tracking platform that will provide a central location to document and report on corrective action. With a web-based issue tracking system, we can reduce the time spent overseeing items and more easily ensure that issues are being resolved. We anticipate the system to save us over 100 hours of employee time a year in tracking and reporting on issues. In addition, the system will provide us a method to easily ensure that issues to not go unresolved. In our industry, unresolved issues could negatively affect our regulatory status.

The cost for using the system will be XXX.

**SITUATION/PROBLEM**

At present, our organization has many internal and external audits being performed. In addition, we have regulatory agencies that perform reviews as well. Keeping track of all of the issues is currently a manual process using spreadsheets. We receive audit or examination reports from the various entities and then we record the issues identified within spreadsheets. The problem with this process includes, but is not limited to, the following:

* It is hard to get others input to update the spreadsheet. If we email a copy to others to update, we now have multiple copies that need to be reconciled. This takes a lot of time and is prone to errors.
* Controlling spreadsheet versions is difficult. Sometimes, auditors or examiners are provided a previous or non-updated version of the document, which reflects poorly on the organization.
* It is difficult to control what users change in the spreadsheet. Sometimes users enter content that then needs to be edited for uniformity, taking more time.
* With a spreadsheet, it can be difficult to report on specific items. If we only want some of the data for a meeting, it is hard to limit spreadsheets to just certain items.
* No ability to make actionable items. With a spreadsheet, we cannot set triggers to notify people of issues they are assigned to correct, or notification of past due items, or being alerted when others update audit issues.
* Without actionable items or notifications, it is easy to overlook the corrective action for an item. Any unresolved audit or exam findings reflects poorly on our organization.

**ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED**

To minimize this problem, we considered several alternatives. These alternatives range from continuing to use spreadsheets, to developing our own in-house solution. A summary of these alternatives is listed below.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Option | Pros | Cons |
| Spreadsheets | * Low-cost
* Already in use
 | * Difficult to update
* Version control difficulties
* No automation
* Difficulty in reporting
 |
| Hosted/dedicated solution from AuditFindings | * Low cost
* Good reporting
* Advanced features
* Multiple-user access
* Vendor support
 | * Vendor reliance
 |
| Internally developed database, such as Microsoft Access | * Control platform
 | * Expensive (potentially)
* Reliance on employees
* No updates/support
 |

**RISKS AND MITIGATION STRATEGIES**

With any new product, there are some risks involved. The key risks related to the various alternatives, including mitigation strategies, are listed below.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Risk | Mitigation |
| Poor or no return on investment | Ensure that the financial costs are minimal |
| Employee time taken to learn a new system | Ensure that the system chosen is easy to use |
| Lack of support for solution chosen | Ensure that the system chosen has adequate support |
| Lack of availability of the data  | Ensure the system chosen has adequate business continuity/data recovery plans |
| Compromise of information via a data breach | Ensure that the system has adequate security and controls |

**RECOMMENDED SOLUTION**

The solution to the problem is having a multi-user software for employee to access and update information. We are recommending the AuditFindings solution. It is a dedicated system focused solely on tracking and resulting audit and examination issues.

The cost for using the system will be $x.x.

**BENEFITS TO US**

A software solution dedicated for tracking and resulting audit and examination issues would benefit us by the following.

* With AuditFindings we can assign issues to others and they then log into the system and manage and update their items. This feature saves us time in overseeing corrective action. No more emailing and reconciling spreadsheets.
* We can limit what information people view. If someone is an “assignee” they can only view the items assigned to them.
* We can get the reports needed for management oversight. With advanced search and filter functions, we can query the data to report only the information we need.
* We can easily monitor unresolved issues. From a Dashboard, we can see any items that are still unresolved. The system can send notices or reminders at certain intervals as well.
* Should anyone leave the company, having items centralized ensures that audit or exam findings are not forgotten.

**REFERENCES**

* AuditFindings Brochure
* AuditFindings FAQ
* AuditFindings Security Summary