



Action Initiative Business Plan Template

Cluster Work Group:	Cluster Mapping and Direction: Who are we and where are we headed? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to identify the ecology of the IT cluster • Increase collaboration and networking opportunities for greater alignment and advocacy
Prepared by:	Team
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Title or Name of the Initiative: <i>Develop a name for the effort that communicates action and positive outcomes. This initiative will be known as:</i>
Cluster Mapping; The ecology of the IT industry cluster

Initiative Champion/Implementation Team Members: <i>Name and contact information for each person working on this initiative.</i>	
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Description & Motivation: <i>What is the nature of the cluster challenge the initiative will address?</i>
<p>What is the ecology of this cluster? There are so many layers to this industry from Software to Internet & Mobility to E-commerce, Network Administration and MIS. Each of these has specific and overlapping needs.</p> <p>The attempt to get at accurate data has been tried repeatedly and yet we still cannot define it adequately. If we are to benchmark or influence the industry's growth and vitality in this region we must remedy this. It is not enough to say we don't know.</p> <p>One tack is to identify this industry by its occupations. All industry clusters have an IT thread. This may help us gain a truer picture of the current economic impact and its patterns of growth.</p> <p>Whatis.com defines it as: ICT (information and communications technology - or technologies) is an umbrella term that includes any communication device or application, encompassing: radio, television, cellular phones, computer and network hardware and software, satellite systems and so on, as well as the various services and applications associated with them, such as videoconferencing and distance learning. ICTs are often spoken of in a particular context, such as ICTs in education, health care, or libraries. The term is somewhat more common outside of the United States.</p>

Objective: *What is the objective of the initiative? How will it impact economic or cluster development in the region? Describe how it relates to the Prosperity Partnership's goal of job creation?*

General awareness of what constitutes the IT matrix in regional economy and its contribution to the economic health of Puget Sound.

A clear understanding of this is imperative to developing a strategy for future development and recruitment of companies into the region.

If there are economic research tools that need to be built then this needs to be accomplished in order to make progress with this initiative.

Al Erisman: ...There are many good jobs that can be created from IT. But IT is also the source for automation, outsourcing and globalization which destroys jobs. It can well be argued that these jobs should be destroyed--and that we are better off without them. But any work in the role of IT and the creation of jobs has to face the issue honestly.

Obstacles and Impediments Likely to Affect Implementation: *What do you expect to be the most significant obstacles to implementation? How can/will they be overcome? What resources will be required (e.g., political support, lobbying efforts)*

Lack of clear and precise definition of terms

Memories of dot.com bubble

Revising the way data is currently collected and reported.

Locating the various sources where data exists and reformatting it to gain new insights.

Building a sub-team of entities that are collecting the data to work together to create the required methods of data collection/analytics.

This team will have to develop a strategy to get those changes made so ongoing research will continue to bring value to decision makers.

Resources will be needed to gather, maintain and build capacity for ongoing and up-to-date knowledge of the state of this industry.

Funding: *What is the estimated cost of this initiative, in phases beginning with design, the "ramping up" phase, and then for ongoing annual costs? Note alternative sources of funding for each phase.*

Level 1 – nominal/in-kind

This ramping up phase could be accomplished with in-kind resources. We recommend the development of a sub-committee of individuals knowledgeable in economic data collection. Bill Beyers extrapolation of ESD, Berk, (and other) data sources would be reviewed and agreed on. Output = Updated job counts get distributed. Since Bill has already begun this process, he may be able to make further recommendations when he returns.

Level 2 – undefined/unknown (Beyers implies large expense potential here). The key problem in using an expanded definition of IT that encompasses the other sectors with major IT occupational employment is that there are no regular surveys of occupations. The state surveys all occupations on a three year cycle under a program mandated by the federal BLS. The state also does a twice-annual vacancy survey that would tell us

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something about IT job openings by sector. So constructing a one time snapshot of IT employment by industry can be done as Bill did, but getting any regular reports as this initiative seems to suggest requires use of the vacancy survey or new surveys done on a more frequent basis. If we are going to track trends in IT employment in the region, I think we should be pushing for a regular survey – quarterly perhaps – that would provide frequent and accurate information to colleges, jobseekers, and employers. However, this is exactly the information we need to see the impacts of changing use of different kinds of IT staff within the regional economy that are affected by how many creators and users of IT there are in the region, the net influence of outsourcing, and the rates of growth of the many different industries that are intensive users of IT.

With the right political motivations, it is possible that entities such as ESD and its LMEA division would be in good position to take up this initiative. It is advisable that a clear plan for the process and outcomes is developed by others with them, all of which may require substantial initial investments, but may cover sustaining efforts.

Outcome/Results: *How will know that we have achieved our objective? How will we evaluate whether or not we have been successful?*

Enthusiasm about resources and futures
 Private sector enlistment/backing
 Consensus of sector definition(s)
 Academic and popular media references The PP-IT cluster “map” information going forward.
 Economic development, education, regional and state agencies and businesses alike will be able to use this data to plan and prepare for the future. Local regions may also use this for cluster building initiatives necessary to support industry needs and growth.

Action Steps: *Describe the initiative in specific steps: Tasks (What, Who, When).*

1. Establish the sub-team to do the research & develop the market analytics necessary.
2. Review current data
3. Create/adjust NAICS and ESD data model
4. Provide results to IT cluster group. Handle questions/objections and either change model or specify limitations.
5. Release model and data to PP. Assist in creation of marketing documents, releases, white paper. Funding discussions as needed.
6. Feedback/adjustments/updates
7. Review output

Timeline: Provide a rough schedule of activity for each step above and the lead person for each task. (Example: Establish implementation team/Jones, Hold first planning meeting/Johnson, Prepare concept/funding proposal/Smith, dates).

<i>Step</i>	<i>Key Person</i>	<i>Timeline</i>
1. Above Actions		90 days

Other action steps/implementation timing issues: