

Intentional, Timely and Transparent: The HDI Development Process



Choosing a partner for system development is a big decision. We understand the common concerns many of our clients and potential clients initially have when selecting a vendor:

Sticking to a set timeline

We know it's critical for our clients, especially those in the government sector, for their system development to meet strict deadlines for implementation. HDI guarantees adherence to a set timeline to maintain funding and legislative support.

Though some of our clients in the private sector also have strict project timelines, they often look to our team for guidance surrounding the development process and the time it will take to successfully develop their system. HDI will create a realistic timeline based on each client's needs.

Communication with the vendor and client involvement in the project

At HDI, we prioritize communication with our clients throughout the system development process. Our process includes scheduled touch points and frequent communication, and each client has access to their project manager via phone or email at all times. Clients are involved from the very beginning through the conclusion and ongoing management of their system.

Staying within the set budget

We guarantee to stay within your budget, which is set prior to project implementation.

How HDI Manages Projects

We are dedicated to our projects being on time and on budget, and have established a tried-and-true process to make it happen. Each of our project managers are PMP (Project Management Professional) certified and trained in the PMBOK

standards (Project Management Body of Knowledge).

What is PMBOK?

PMBOK is a collection of standards, best practices and procedures for planning and executing projects successfully from start to finish. This style of effective project management constantly evolves, and HDI has found it to be the ideal method for executing system development projects smoothly within set timeframes.

There are five PMBOK stages that HDI follows for each project, to the benefit of both HDI clients and internal teams:

Initiating: Setting a Foundation

- Kickoff meeting: The HDI team will meet with the client to initiate communication and make introductions – the client is involved from the very beginning.
- Requirements gathering: The client will share all pertinent information about the project, goals and specific needs with the HDI team. Government agencies usually lay out this information in procurement packages, so this stage is often a time for the agency to walk HDI through all requirements to ensure clarity and understanding on both sides. Many of our private company clients use this time to work with HDI to determine the project requirements – what data is needed, how the system will need to function, and how to make it happen.
- Identify security and accessibility requirements: Who will need access to the system internally, and what groups of people will be using the system? HDI will work with the client to make these determinations upfront, as they will affect system development.

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- Expectations are set between client and HDI: this can include communication expectations, budget and more – we all want to be on the same page from the beginning.
- Scope is finalized: For most government clients, this includes confirming HDI's understanding of everything in the procurement package. For many of our private company projects, we'll work together to determine the scope of the project and what is needed.

Planning: Finalizing Project Details

- Timeline confirmed: HDI guarantees meeting project deadlines, and will set a realistic timeline from the beginning to end of the project.
- Internal budgets finalized: Once the budget is set in the initiation phase, we plan internally to make sure we stick to the budget.
- Develop project documentation: HDI will work with the client to gather all necessary documents be used or referenced during the system development.
- Create project plan: We'll map out the entire process, timeline included, from beginning to end.

Executing: Where the Work Gets Done

Execution of the project includes system design and system development. We approach these phases using the Agile method, which has become more integrated into PMBOK over the most recent iterations of its standards.

Agile system development involves working with user stories and developing in two-week sprints.

- HDI gathers all requirements determined in the

initiating stage and breaks them down into user stories.

- User stories are components and parts of each requirement, written for outcomes the user will expect to see. For example, if the user does X, Y is expected.
- A single requirement could turn into 20 user stories, depending on the complexity and steps needed to accomplish an outcome for the user.
- HDI developers work on individual user stories, and each has a development time frame estimate associated with it.
- Development cycles take place in two week sprints. After two weeks, the team stops, checks in, reviews everything accomplished in the past two weeks and makes sure all expectations are met. If changes need to be made, they are finished in the next two-week cycle.
- By working in two-weeks sprints, HDI ensures that the development process meets expectations along the way. This process is more effective than the antiquated waterfall process, where bugs or misinterpretations of requirements are oftentimes not realized until a system is completely built, and subsequent rework causes timelines to be missed.

Monitoring & Controlling

Monitoring and controlling takes place in tandem with execution thanks to the Agile method of checking in and reviewing work every two weeks. This protocol allows HDI to ensure all work is completed within the established scope and timeline, and errors can be corrected along the way. It also avoids miscommunication and errors being overlooked until the end of the development process,

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when it can be more challenging and time consuming to make corrections.

Once development is complete, the HDI team invests time doing complete internal testing. From there, we move into UAT (User Acceptance Testing), and the client is given the opportunity to see and test the final system.

UAT can take different forms, depending on the client. Some clients prefer to test alongside the development process within the two-week sprints, while others opt to test the system at the end after being included in decision-making and demonstrations throughout the development process. It's up to the client to choose their preferred testing method.

Closing

The closing stage is when it's time to go live and the client gives a final sign-off on the project. This is an exciting time for both the client and the HDI team, as we are always eager to launch a new system and support the client through the go-live process.

Closing also includes post-project analysis both internally and with client – our team is always looking for feedback and ways to improve our process and work. We look at what worked, what didn't and lessons learned, to make sure we are always growing and developing as a company.

At this point, the client also moves into our operational management phase. This means that, unlike other providers, we don't simply hand over your system and leave you to roll it out to your customers. Instead, HDI is there to support you as you implement your new system. Whatever operational function the client wishes HDI to fulfill, we will be there - from assisting with ongoing operations to full account management functions,

HDI can fully staff our clients' programs.

Support from Start to Finish

Our clients will always be a part of their system design and development process, because their input and feedback impact the success of their project. We work with both government agencies and private companies to develop systems that work, and our development process is proven to be successful in both realms. HDI's current clients have been working with us for at least five years – our longest retainer client has been our partner for 15 years.

HDI's development process is rooted in intentional project management, timeliness and clear communication with clients, which is why we guarantee systems are developed on time, within budget and with outstanding support from our team.