New Software: IT Hurdles

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Goal

RCD and RAMP are considering ways to make the challenges of government and corporate software acceptance easier.

How do we best accommodate user needs regarding software acceptance?
Introduction

• This presentation was to be delivered by an HP manager for a large multi-state agency
• A last-minute change in travel plans resulted in them not being able to come to this years’ RAMP meeting
• However, they wanted me to pass along the following roadblocks that were met by their agency when installing the VARSKIN software
How does their agency use VARSKIN?

• “We don’t use it often, maybe a few times a year”

• Last time it was needed, a contractor was called since they still had V5 loaded on their computers
  
  • used it for simple spill/skin contamination of known activity concentrations and compared it to standard calculations using agency rules-of-thumb
System for Application Management

• This agency has a “system for application management” (SAM) through which approval is needed prior to installing new software
• SAM is a registry of the agency’s systems and applications
• The process takes an extremely long time
  • applied for V6 SAM approval in May 2018; received in Sept 2019
  • each new version requires a new SAM approval
• The SAM approval has an associated Last Date Authorized (LDA)
  • the LDA for V5 expired and the V5 software was removed from agency computers prior to acceptance of V6
Software from the Web

• Once approved and in the SAM registry, some IT departments still will not download any software from a website (even from RAMP)
  • wary of downloading contaminated software
• Their work-around is to copy to a CD at home and bring it to work
  • then align schedules with an IT person to have it installed
• The agency sites that do have IT departments willing to download from RAMP, must get their IT people to fill out the NDA and obtain approval
Verification & Validation Testing

• V&V testing is required on any new version before the agency can use VARSKIN results in an official dose estimate

• The test plan and the report are routed up the line
  • which may take several months for completion
More on V&V

- The new version must be installed in order to conduct V&V tests
- Meaning that users may be forced to use their home computers
- This agency just completed SAM and V&V for V5 when V6 hit the streets
- To continue using V5 would have been fine, but by the time the word was out that V5 was approved, the RAMP site no longer had V5 for download, only V6
  - you’ll notice that V5.3 is back on RAMP
How can RAMP assist with Software Acceptance?

The following may help similar agencies/corporations:

• Change the VARSKIN primary version number less often
  • prevents the need for new approvals and new V&V testing

• Continue to support previous versions
  • making them available for download via RAMP

• Provide the software on CD upon request
  • avoids troubles related to downloading from websites
Questions

• Would a web-based version be of any help with respect to various QA/QC concerns with loading ‘new’ software?

• VARSKIN 7 will come with its own JAVA package (no need to load and constantly update JAVA).
  Will that be any better?
  Will it be problematic?
Continued Open Discussion Regarding VARSKIN Development
Corvallis, Seattle, and Austin

Haystack Rock
Cannon Beach, Oregon