

# END TO END DELIVERY

## Part 3: Defining Solutions

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# Defining Solutions

*Written by: Craig Vosper, Chief Delivery Officer*

Over my last couple of articles, I have talked about what pieces of information our customers require for project success. Just to recap, these include:

1. Timeline
2. Cost
3. Business Value
4. Quality

Last week we focused on [defining success](#) - "How do you know the solution worked?".

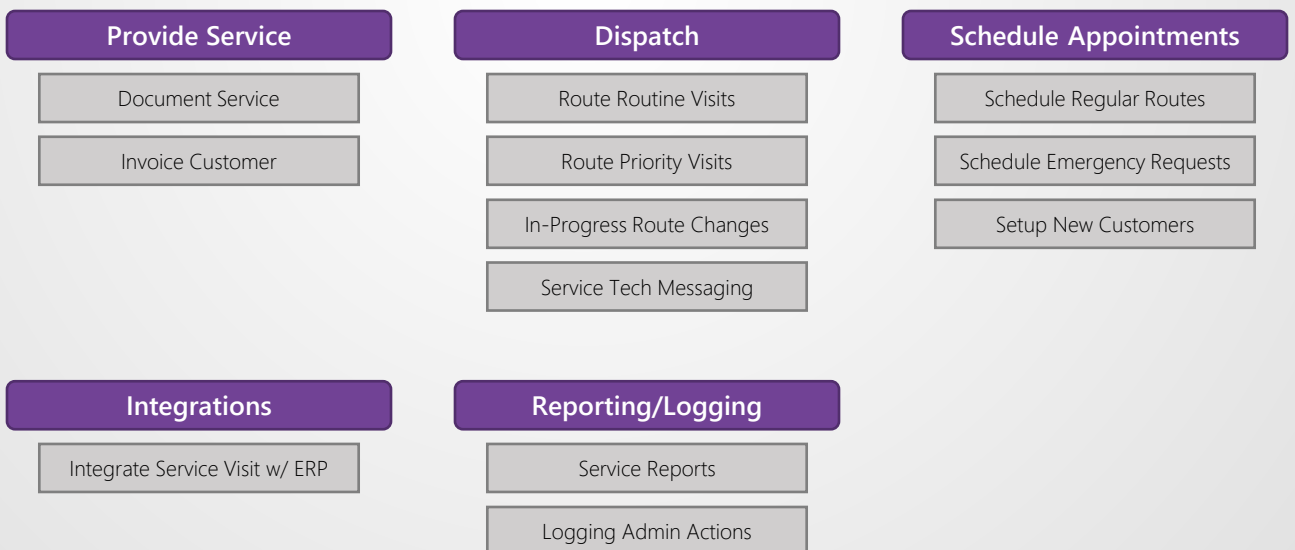
Today, however, I'd like to begin talking about timeline and cost. This effort starts by defining all potential solution approaches and selecting the most suitable option. We like to evaluate at least two options for every engagement. This ensures we give equal opportunity to all possibilities and brings to light any hidden objectives or constraints that may have not been identified previously. Last October I wrote an article titled [Choose a Course of Action](#); it explains how we've used military techniques to help us select the most appropriate solution to a problem.

Building from that article, I'll focus on one specific component we work with our customers to accomplish: *"Develop one or more solution options/approaches that meet the goals based on current state"*

There are numerous ways to develop and document solutions, but I'll focus on the 3 main questions we feel must be answered for project success:

1. What is the impact of the solution against your [success criteria](#)?
2. What are possible release points within the solution roadmap and when can you release them to production? (we will review how we use the capability map to decompose and identify this next week!)
3. What does it cost to develop the solution and make the impacts defined in question 1? (we will review how we use relative sizing to develop the costs soon!)

At Clientek, we utilize a tool we call a capability map. In this, we decompose any given solution into a list of capabilities and features that must be delivered. This helps answer question 1 directly and aids us in our initial forecasting for question 2. With that information, we then develop an architecture/approach for how we would solve for these needs – allowing us to answer question 3. Below is a simplified example of a capability map we produced when defining solutions for a service technician mobile application.



By defining your solution(s) to answer the three questions above, you will provide all stakeholders and team members clear direction on how you intend to solve their business problem.

Next week, I plan to dig into how we compare solution options/approaches and provide the final answer for the timeline and cost asks!