

LESSONS FROM THE FIELD

Part 9: Whatever It Takes

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Clientek has long operated by the motto: “whatever it takes”. We do everything in our power to assure our customers achieve project success. While it may sound like just a catchy marketing slogan, it is actually something we take very seriously. Today’s lesson from the field involves code and design reviews – who should be involved and how critical they are to project success.

Many years ago, we engaged in our first field service mobile application project and had selected one of our best young developers to lead the charge. We worked with him to create a design that managed the message coordination between both the service technicians and dispatch team. The service techs needed the ability to make changes to the system from their mobile devices while the dispatch team would make similar changes from their own desktop-based system.

As new requirements came to light, significant accommodations needed to be made to the project’s implementation. Over time, the project began to stray from its original intent and morphed into a complex and fragile solution. This fragility was realized while investigating production issues and highlighted the root cause of the problems.

We quickly came to recognized that these changes had not been properly managed through the code and design review processes that we had in place. With that information, instead of prioritizing these changes with the existing team and passing the costs on to our customer, we needed to spin-up a separate team to make the changes on our own dime. It took this secondary team 2 sprints to complete the necessary changes and get them into our testing environment.



The key lesson we learned: a process is only as good as the people executing it. We have since updated our code and design review processes to include both our lead architects and leadership team. This ensures that we are all owners of the implementation of our solutions. It was a great reminder that Clientek signs up for projects as a team and if we can successfully manage them as a team, we can identify and mitigate these issues quickly and effectively.

This lesson remains foremost in our minds today on all our projects. When we say “whatever it takes” we mean it. While we have Project and Technical Leads that act as the focal point of each project, we bring the experience of Clientek in its entirety every project. We do this to ensure that our customers get the benefit of all we have to offer.