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November/December 2010

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### Partner Corner by Kent Lamb

Yes, it is hard to believe that another year is in the books. I will consider 2010 a great year....compared to 2009. This past year has been an exciting year for Titan. We have seen good growth in the market as well as added head count. The good news for you readers going forward is that starting in January, you will get a new writer for the Partner Corner article. Chrissie Wootton will be writing the Partner Corner article next year, and I am sure her view on items will be impressive.

I always enjoy the end of the year recaps on different news shows, so this year I thought I would do a short recap for you. Here you go:



**Kent Lamb**

Oracle awarded \$1.3 billion in SAP lawsuit: [http://www.computerworld.com/s/article/9197887/Update\\_Oracle\\_awarded\\_1.3\\_billion\\_in\\_SAP\\_lawsuit](http://www.computerworld.com/s/article/9197887/Update_Oracle_awarded_1.3_billion_in_SAP_lawsuit)

Smartphone Growth: <http://feeds.bignewsnetwork.com/?sid=716006>

Texas Rangers make 1<sup>st</sup> World Series Appearance: <http://www.newser.com/story/103625/texas-rangers-head-to-1st-world-series.html>

BP Oil Spill: <http://www.time.com/time/health/article/0,8599,1987397,00.html>

Armando Gala raga nearly perfect game: [http://sports.espn.go.com/mlb/columns/story?columnist=crasnick\\_jerry&id=5245331](http://sports.espn.go.com/mlb/columns/story?columnist=crasnick_jerry&id=5245331)

Tiger Woods goes winless in 2010: <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2010-12-06/tiger-woods-s-winless-run-continues-after-mcdowell-wins-chevron-playoff.html>

2010 Deaths: <http://www.ranker.com/list/official-2010-celebrity-deaths-2010-famous-deaths-list/famous-celebrity-deaths-list>

We are also planning a big conference season starting in 2011. Here are the conferences we will be attending:

*Financials 2011/HR 2011/GRC 2011* - March 8 - 11 - Las Vegas, NV

*BI 2011/IT 2011* - March 15 - 18 - Las Vegas, NV

*Logistics and SCM 2011* - March 22 - 25 - Orlando, FL

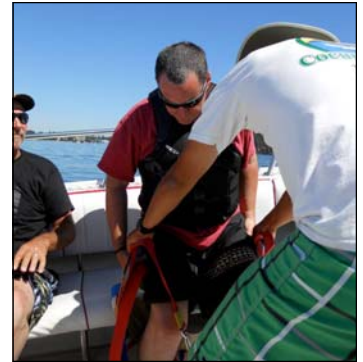
You can find more information on the above conferences at: <http://www.wispubs.com/sap/conferences.html>

Since this will be our last newsletter before the New Year, I would like to thank all of our customers and consultants for an outstanding year. I wish all of you a Happy Holiday Season, and a Joyful and Prosperous New Year.

*Unleash the power of together.* ®

## Q & A Consultant Profile

**Name:** Mark Whitted  
**Hometown:** Born: El Paso, TX. Current home: Allen, TX (2-3 days a week anyway).  
**Family:** Wife (30 years) Tracy, sons Duncan (14) and Christopher (11).  
**Number of years consulting:** 19 years  
**Area of SAP expertise:** ABAP in just about every module except HR. Mostly SD/MM/WM though. Some functional in WM and designing and developing custom RF transactions using SAPConsole.  
**Interesting facts about yourself:** I'm a Brown Belt in Songahm Taekwondo.



Mark Whitted

**Favorites:**

- **Movie:** A Bug's Life
- **Books:** Currently reading "What Dreams May Come" (Great movie too).
- **TV Show:** Dexter (Read most of the books also), anything Chuck Lorre (Big Bang Theory/Two and a Half Men).
- **Food:** Mexican, Thai, Steak, and Seafood.
- **Vacation Spot:** Hawaii (I lived there for 3 1/2 years as a teenager).
- **Sport:** Taekwondo, golf, and snowboarding.
- **Music:** Most kinds of music. I used to be a portable DJ, so I have a very large music collection.

**Funniest moment at work:** At my first programming job, one of the accountants and I were always trading friendly barbs. One day, I was in the accounting area hunting and pecking on a typewriter (Google it...) and he came by and jokingly asked, "What ya' typing? Your resignation?". I just looked up, smiled, and said, "Yep!".

**Favorite consulting tip:** Don't try to make the client's decision for them by telling them something can't be done or lie to them when you know it's probably not going to happen. Do your homework and present the alternatives and the costs. "We can do that, but this is what it will cost, and this is how long it will take."

**Name one thing you can't live without:** Besides my family... My iPhone! I COULD do without my iPad... but I'd rather not.

## Q & A Internal Employee Profile

**Name:** Jason Barker  
**Hometown:** Sour Lake, Texas  
**Family:** Wife, Kay. Three boys - Braxton (11), Brock (7) and Baron (2).



Jason Barker

**Interesting fact about yourself:** I was once a football coach. I coached in college, and was a head coach at the high school level in Texas.

**Favorites:**

- **Sport:** Football
- **Singer or Band:** Jimmy Buffet, Diana Krall, Prince, Carlos Santana, and Steve Ray Vaughan.
- **Vacation Spot:** Beach

**Hobbies:** Coaching my sons' football teams. I am a runner. I run marathons when I have the time to train. I love to travel, even for work.

**Funniest moment at work:** During my career I have flown hundreds of thousands of miles and I have never missed a flight...until my very first trip as a new Titan employee. (Thank you TSA!) My coworkers thought it was a whole lot funnier that I did. It is true that you never get a second chance to make a first impression.

## Birthdays

### November

Dave Howard	1
Joash Soh	9
Janifer Gmeiner	11
Morley Jack	11
Venkata Kalidindi	14
Ray Han	15
Marilyn Aquino	18
Curtis Callaway	18
Kent Veldhuizen	18
Kevin Campbell	25
Pauletta Marlin	25
Vijay Chand	28
Edward Davis	29
Chryselde Lewis	30
Chris Phelps	30
Nic Ramos	30

### December

Scott Burton	1
Surya Joshi	1
Mathews Sacharias	1
Prakash Suguna	3
Geoffrey Wiswell	4
Mark Homs	5
Douglas Trueman	5
Kevin Kirkland	7
Bob Hernandez Jr.	8
Richard Koch	9
Venkat Thandra	10
Douglas Chunyo	11
Arleen Cordova	26
Liz Hess	28
Sharron Wilborn-Sledge	30
Glenn Furth	31

## The Postmortem

by Bob Pawlick

Remember that every project has a beginning and an end. This chapter describes the end. It is sometimes called, "Project Closing." It consists of two parts:

1. Close all the books on the current project. This is public.
2. Pick your personal targets on what to do better the next time. This is private.

Please allow me a philosophical remark.

In each and every area of human endeavor, there are always at least two ways of looking at the endeavor, one positive and one negative. As a Project Manager, prepare for both. It dramatically reduces your risk of getting ambushed.

Ambushed is a strong term. In Project Management, the postmortem is the second most likely place for an ambush to occur. (The first is in getting project funding approved.)

The postmortem is neither a last shot at something or someone you disagree with, nor is it a last chance to recap the success of the project. Looking at the postmortem from another person's view, it is not the last shot at you.

At this point, your success is measured on how smoothly the project ran. Success is not measured on how the result performed in operation. That will take some time, say six months.

End of my philosophical remark.

Now is an opportunity to close the files on the project. If consultants were hired, they go home. If the company set up a project billing code, it gets closed. If it has open work orders, they get closed.

Our goal is to transition the project from a capital item to an expense item. Project closing is best thought of as the closing of a capital project. As the project goes into production, it needs to be supported in some way. Often for a large implementation, a Center of Excellence, COE, will be set up. The COE is chartered to support the production mode of the project. For smaller projects, the ongoing support blends into an existing IT support organization. Please note that the support either as a COE or an IT support group, is an operational expense, not a capital investment.

There is a big chasm between capital investment and operational expense. From finance, they are viewed very differently.

The purpose of Closing is to have an orderly transition from Capital Investment to Operational Expense. Functional enhancements are NOT brought forward as a support effort. GAP resolution is NOT brought forward as a support effort. All those little things that I complained about in earlier chapters as not having a measurable end and thus are not project tasks ARE brought forward. So, "monitor MRP runs on a weekly basis" become a support effort, as does "create new Material Master Records" or "Create new Customer Records."

So, what about little, but high impact, enhancements and resolution of high priority GAPs? You have three choices:

1. Forget them. This is hard to do. However, it is the most likely thing to occur.
2. Cost justify them as another project. Note that their value, cost justification, should have been removed from the business case when the item got moved to a GAP.
3. The very best projects keep a reserve, say, 20%, from which such enhancements can be funded. SAP did this with its development.

Finally, remember that the success of the project will be measured in about six months when the financial sponsor evaluates whether or not the operation of project met his goals.

...continued on page 4



Bob Pawlick

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### The Closing

“The Closing” is a nightmare to most projects. The reason is that most of the detail needed has become a vague recollection. However, if you have kept the project plan updated with actual, you are already done! Here is another reason to update the project plan with actual results. Closing has occurred as little pieces along the way. There are no surprises.

Conduct a “Project Closing” meeting with the stakeholders. Present two views of the project: statistical and operational. Solicit input from each member of the steering committee as to how they saw the project. Record their answers. Thank the group for their contribution.

Last, visit accounting and ask them to close the project billing codes.

### Personal Targets

I think that this is the most important point of Closing.

Think of yourself as a football coach. At the end of a season, you must call the season “over.” Whether it is successful or not, it is still over. You must begin to look forward to the next season. The question is, while thinking over the past season, what do you want to carry forward to the next season. In other words, how can you be your own best critic? How can you improve something that likely went very well?

Don’t overdo a good thing. Remember that a good football coach can build a winning offense from one play that can be perfectly executed again and again. If your list has more than three items, cut it down.

You already have a very good insight into the next season:

1. You know the schedule of whom you will play,
2. You know a lot about the coaches of the other teams,
3. You know the strengths and weaknesses of your upcoming personnel, and
4. You know the strengths and weaknesses of each upcoming opponent.

Now, the off season, is the time to formulate your strategy. A good coach will say that the game is won or lost on the practice field. An excellent coach will say that the game is won by the strategy developed during the offseason. Strategy comes first, practice comes second and winning will follow.

Carpe diem.

**Right (L-R):** James Hunt, Chrissie Wootton, Miltos Tzimourtas, Nic Ramos, Mark Vasinda, Kevin Kirkland, and Ivo Robbrecht.

**Below right (L-R):** Peter Ahlemann, Leigh Ann Pauly, Colin Norton, Mark Vasinda, Carmen Giles, Mike Igau, Nic Ramos, Bob Ayvazzadeh, and Troy Lucey.



### Upcoming Conferences

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March 8–11  
Las Vegas, NV

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March 22–25  
Orlando, FL

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