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BIC Task & Finish Working Group
Project Briefing Document

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BIC Committee Review

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BIC Committee Approval/Sign off

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Karina Luke	Karina Luke	*BIC*	28/01/14
Physical Supply Chain Committee		*BIC*	05/07/16
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0.9	Document updated with recent experience of e4libraries accreditation review T&FWG	Draft 0.9	28/02/15
0.9.1	Document updated by Karina Luke	Draft 0.9.1	13/06/16
1.0	Deliverable added (marketing plan in advance of new scheme) in response to feedback from Operational Board	Final 1.0	05/07/16

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1.   PURPOSE
This project will carry out a formal review of BIC's Supply Chain Excellence Award accreditation scheme to ensure it reflects BIC priorities and structures and is fit for purpose.

2.   BACKGROUND
The e4books project (2004 to 2008) encouraged organisations in the book supply chain to invest in supply chain efficiencies in a number of areas and an accreditation scheme was set up to reward those that did so. When the e4books project ended, the accreditation scheme was reviewed and renamed as the Supply Chain Excellence Award. Over the last few years, this scheme has been updated on an ad hoc basis, to include new technologies and supply chain processes. This project will now carry out a formal review of this accreditation scheme to ensure it reflects BIC priorities and structures and is fit for purpose. It will also look at increasing the appeal of the scheme to the industry to boost take up and look at the benefits of the scheme to BIC members /non-members and their trading partners. In 2014, the project was shelved for over a year on the urging of Simon Davidson of Waterstone's. He felt that the BIC Physical Supply Chain committee should have time to settle in, decide its priorities, set some projects in motion and only then work on an accreditation scheme to encourage and promote the BIC Physical Supply Chain's agenda. With the launch of the new BIC website scheduled for late 2016/ early 2017 and the end of the e4libraries accreditation review Task and Finish Working Group (T&FWG) on 31st March 2015, the time is now right to address this area and design a new accreditation scheme for 2017/18.

3.   PROJECT DEFINITION

3.1.   PROJECT OBJECTIVES
A successful supply chain accreditation scheme should encourage and reward organisations who invest in supply chain efficiency. The award must be attainable and a successful scheme would have many accredited organisations but the pass mark must also be challenging and ensure that the organisations have implemented supply chain best practice and industry standards as recommended by BIC. This project will review the existing Supply Chain Excellence Accreditation Scheme and refine or redesign it. The successful scheme would:

- reflect the latest developments in the book supply chain
- encourage supply chain participants to invest in the appropriate beneficial technology and best practice
- be simple to understand with clear criteria
- be easy to apply for with a simple form or online process
- be widely recognised and acknowledged as a desirable award

It is not easy to define the success of an accreditation scheme because it must strike a balance between take up and difficulty, but at the moment there are many organisations which are not accredited under the current scheme but who are capable of achieving the award. There are others that have been accredited for a number of years but have not progressed since. The project needs to have a target and a way of measuring success

against that target. One way of measuring success could be to quantify capable but unaccredited organisations and set a target of accrediting a certain percentage of them.

Then there are many other organisations which are not up to the same level and a brief survey of their capabilities perhaps with data provided by their major trading partners would set a bench mark against which future accreditation success could be measured. This activity will be for the T&FWG to define and commission under guidance from the BIC Physical Supply Chain Committee.

3.2. PROJECT SCOPE

The T&FWG will need to decide on the exact scope of the project.

One option is for the project to be a BIC Physical Supply Chain Committee project delivering a "print only" supply chain accreditation scheme. This would include metadata, EDI, returns, systems integration, print on demand, social media, data sharing and so on but would not include digital work flows, ebook production, promotion and marketing.

A separate scheme could be commissioned by the BIC Digital Committee to reflect the latest developments in the digital supply chain and digital best practice. A digital accreditation award could then be promoted by BIC as the digital equivalent of the supply chain excellence award for print. On balance, this seems to be the wrong approach and a better way would be to have an integrated scheme managed jointly by the BIC Physical Supply Chain Committee and the BIC Digital Committee.

If a joint scheme is proposed, then there needs to be some liaison between the two committees to cope with defining and managing the Task & Finish Working Group.

Major deliverables are:

- Scheme description and methodology

- Award criteria

- Pass mark (and advanced levels if appropriate e.g. commended)

- Scoring mechanism

- Application forms and questionnaires

- Application/renewal schedule and process

- Communications and feedback promise from BIC

- Website description

- Scheme certificates and logos

- List of target organisations by category

- Promotional briefing document for TEC committee/marketing plan

- Judging panel criteria

- Marketing/promotion/comms plan in advance of launch of new scheme. Those unaccredited would benefit from early insight into the new process, and those

who have been long term accredited need to understand what this means in future to the process of remaining accredited.

- Terms of reference and rules (e.g. confidentiality and participation) for judging panel

The scope of the scheme should reflect BIC's diverse membership (Note that the previous scheme omitted printers and shipper/freight forwarders and there was no questionnaire for systems and service providers) and should be available and appropriate for:

- printers
- publishers
- distributors
- wholesalers
- shipper/freight forwarders
- booksellers
- library suppliers
- systems and service providers and other intermediaries

The scope should also cover the whole flow of data and the movement of books (and ebooks etc.):

- product metadata
- EDI including print EDI messages
- web services/BIC Realtime
- returns (IRI)
- sales, stock and other data sharing
- print and production
- print on demand/Ultra short run/auto stock replenishment
- social networking/technology marketing
- Shipping, tracking and delivery data

The major dependencies are:

- Commissioning the project and agreeing management structure and scope (involving BIC Physical Supply Chain, Metadata, and BIC Digital committees)
- Appointing an appropriate Chair
- Involvement of major trading partners in providing usage data to BIC
- Forming a qualified and committed panel to provide accreditation decisions

3.3. OUTLINE PROJECT DELIVERABLES AND/OR DESIRED OUTCOMES

In General:

A new updated and BIC approved Supply Chain Excellence Accreditation Scheme

An accreditation panel to run the scheme in the future

Increased applications and accreditations

Establish the accreditation scheme in the industry and increase recognition

Specifically:

- Scheme description and methodology

- User guidelines

- Award criteria

- Pass mark (and advanced levels if appropriate e.g. commended)

- Scoring mechanism

- Application forms and questionnaires

- Application/renewal schedule and process

- Communications and feedback promise from BIC

- Website description

- Scheme certificates and logos

- List of target organisations by category

- Promotional briefing document for TEC committee/marketing plan

- Judging panel criteria

- Terms of reference and rules (e.g. confidentiality and participation) for judging panel

- Regular project update reports from the T&FWG to the interested Committees

- Timeline for implementation/go-live.

3.4. CONSTRAINTS

Accreditation schemes have to respect business confidentiality.

Panel workload can be quite time consuming – reading applications, meeting to give judgement.

Trading partners must be willing to share usage and capability data with BIC.

Potential applicants tend to ask "what's in it for me and my business?" The scheme needs to address this question.

INTERFACES

The scheme could benefit from more promotion and involvement with external organisations such as trade associations, magazines, websites etc. Key players could champion the scheme as best practice in trading with them.

4.   OUTLINE BUSINESS/INDUSTRY CASE

The accreditation scheme already exists and runs quite successfully. The opportunity is to increase roll-out and so boost understanding of BIC activity and ensure relevance and reflection of current workflows. The scheme acts as a reward for best practice and should enable BIC to encourage certain outcomes. e.g. if BIC identified say an EDI message as very desirable for certain organisations and if that EDI message was mandatory in achieving accreditation, this is a way of encouraging organisations to develop and utilise this message. This forms part of BIC's role in encouraging the industry to use beneficial technology and standards in reducing costs and improving efficiency. BIC helps the industry to understand the benefits of a course of action e.g. the use of a standard or beneficial technology, BIC campaigns in support of this and an accreditation scheme is a part of this campaign, rewarding organisations that follow BIC's lead.

Over the past 10 years, BIC accreditation schemes have certainly influenced behaviour and been beneficial to the success of the book industry but it is not possible to quantify this benefit with any accuracy.

5.   QUALITY EXPECTATIONS

The quality and perceived value of the new scheme is crucial. It needs to be accessible yet challenging. It also needs to be very widely promoted. In the past the scheme has been worked in two or three different ways and the new scheme needs to learn the lessons from these. The scheme needs to measure the right areas and reflect BIC's objectives.

6.   ACCEPTANCE CRITERIA

Members of the BIC Physical Supply Chain Committee, the BIC Digital Committee and Metadata Committee, should be able to tell how the new scheme would be received within their parent organisations and how easy or difficult it would be to apply and to be accredited. If it is too easy it will not stretch applicants and it could lose credibility. A successful project will deliver a scheme accepted by members of these committees.

7.   RISKS

The current scheme could continue as is. This would avoid the extra cost of the T&F WG and the current scheme was last updated five years ago and could be updated by the existing panel by fine tuning the questionnaires to reflect the latest changes. For example, three new questionnaires could be developed, one for shippers, one for printers and one for systems and service providers. This would encompass membership of the BIC Physical Supply Chain Committee and be more inclusive for BIC membership. This could be done as a piece of work for the BIC Physical Supply Chain committee or a T&FWG could be commissioned to do this work. The problem with this is that the BIC Committees may prefer a full review and analysis before setting up a new scheme. A review commissioned by these committees will enable them to construct a scheme which suits the way that BIC and these committees are run. It will also fit in with the promotional effort from the Training, Events, and Communications (TEC) committee.

There is a risk inherent in any scheme and over the last several years a number of issues have been raised (Note most issues involved only one of these questions at a time):

How can an organisation be accredited if they
    a) won't supply data to x
    b) won't join a beneficial organisation e.g. batch.co.uk
    c) won't do returns
    d) won't do digital
    e) won't join BIC

These questions can threaten the scheme and it is important that the new scheme is prepared for these issues to be raised. It is clear from the variety of these issues that to have a single questionnaire and scoring mechanism to cover all these areas in sufficient detail will be challenging. It may be that to solve this problem an overall questionnaire could be used with detailed sections for specialists to reflect different business models.

It is also a risk if the pass mark is raised over time by BIC. This is because when the pass mark goes up there is obviously a chance that an existing accredited organisation will now fail. This can be very useful in persuading them to move forward with beneficial technology. But it can cause disaffection and opposition to the scheme. This needs to be understood in advance so that accredited organisations know that their accreditation is a one off for a limited time period and that they have to continue to strive for excellence to remain accredited. And conversely if the pass mark stays the same, applicants are not being encouraged to move forward.

8.   OUTLINE PROJECT PLAN

- The T&F WG will need to be commissioned by the BIC Physical Supply Chain Committee, Metadata Committee, and the BIC Digital Committee.
- A chair will need to be appointed.
- Members of the T&FWG will need to be invited to take part.
- The T&FWG will then need to meet to initiate the project. There is a fair amount of historical information and detail from previous and current schemes and this could be useful in informing the T&FWG. Further discussions could be done by conference call.
- The BIC consultant involved in this project will need to take in the ideas and requirements of the T&FWG and then write up a report detailing the new revised scheme.
- The T&FWG will need to meet to discuss the report and finalise any details.
- Other deliverables will need to be written e.g. questionnaires, scoring mechanisms etc. Certificates will need to be commissioned from designers and agreed.
- The deliverables will need to be presented and signed off by the BIC Physical Chain Committee, Metadata Committee, and the BIC Digital Committee.
- The new scheme will need to be signed off by the BIC Executive Director before the scheme can move to the TEC committee for promotional activity.
- A suitable launch mechanism should be considered e.g. an existing conference etc. publicity in the press etc.

This process is likely to take approximately 9- 12 months. The T&FWG will also need to produce a full project plan for the BIC Committee(s) to agree.

BIC Costs will be:
- BIC Business Manager's time booking people to attend project initiation meetings
- Room hire
- BIC Consultant's time and expenses over the period of the project
- Possible designer fees for design of a new scheme logo/certificates

Suggested timing for the project.

1. This briefing document should be reviewed by the BIC Executive Director by mid-June 2016.
2. A decision on governance should be made and the appropriate committee(s) should approve the commissioning of the T&FWG by 1st July 2016.
3. The T&FWG will need to be recruited, they will need to meet and put together and agree a project plan and this will need to be signed off by the BIC Executive Director and the members of the managing committee(s) ideally by the end of October 2016.
4. The first meeting of the T&FWG should be in August/September 2016 if possible.
5. Depending on the above decisions and timings, the project will then run until October/November 2017 with a spring launch in March 2018.
6. Note that the BIC Website might need some further development to accommodate online facilities e.g. online questionnaires etc.

9. BIC BUDGET/COSTS
BIC Consultant's time is estimated at: £6500 plus expenses of about £200

Promotional costs depend on the promotional plan for the scheme and the efforts of the TEC Committee.

10. AUTHORITY RESPONSIBLE
BIC Executive Director

11. PROPOSED TASK & FINISH WORKING GROUP LEADER/PROJECT MANAGER
It is assumed that one of the existing accreditation panel may be willing to act as project leader for this T&F WG. If not, then Simon Edwards could do this role as well as the consultant role on the project.

12. CUSTOMERS AND USERS
- Current accreditation panel:

    Noel Ferrin (RHG)
    John Garrould (Bertram's Group)
    Matthew Hogg (MDL)
    Stephen Long (Nielsen)
    Chris Peck (Publishing Technology)
    Simon Edwards (BIC Consultant)

Karina Luke (BIC)
Jim Reed, (Waterstones)

- BIC Digital Supply Chain Committee

- BIC Physical Supply Chain Committee

- All existing accreditees may have an interest in how the scheme develops although this may be limited to their retaining the existing accreditation.

- Additional BIC members may be interested in serving on this T&FWG.

13. REPORTING

The T&FWG will report to the BIC Physical Supply Chain Committee, Metadata Committee and the BIC Digital Committee. It is suggested that the T&FWG would become an agenda item for these committees for the duration of the project.

The committees will want to know that the project has started and then will want to see a draft report of the final proposals and options being discussed. They then need to sign off the T&F WG's draft report. Progress will be reported at each committee meeting.

A regular update to the interested BIC Committees listing the progress on the project deliverables is envisaged with a confidential annex reporting consultancy and other project costs to the Executive Director of BIC.

END