Information and Project Plan Proposal for Home Depot – Renovation Library
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Information and Project Plan for
Home Depot – Renovation Library

Project managers:    Sherrie Richards
Libby Graham

Tentative project start date:  February 3, 2002

Returned comments requested by:  December 15, 2002

Purpose of the Project

Home Depot has identified home renovation projects as their largest potential source of revenue for the next five years. The publication team of Write & Design Technical Communication Inc. will help Home Depot in their marketing objectives by producing a library of home renovation guides which will promote them as a preferred source for home renovation supplies. By selling easy-to-use and reliable home renovation guides Home Depot expects to increase their business in renovation supplies. Customers will associate Home Depot with easy and successful projects that will lead to more projects and the sale of more renovation supplies.

The purpose of the project, therefore, is to produce a library of easy-to-follow home renovation guides that will promote Home Depot products. The three home renovations areas that are targeted for this project are
- bathrooms
- basements
- kitchens
Purpose of the Publications

The publications will consist of a series of seven books, broken down into specific tasks that target bathroom, kitchen, and basement renovations. The purpose of the publications is to provide home renovation resources that will

- provide easy-to-follow instructions for the non-professional home renovator
- provide convenient, step-by-step instructions for completing the various tasks
- provide simple messages with many illustrations
- provide a convenient boxed library set that can be added to as needed
- position Home Depot as the preferred source for home renovation supplies

Usability Goals for the Publications

The usability goals of the publications are users

- complete tasks with little or no supervision from customer services
- complete tasks with few errors, if the steps are followed as indicated
- find task procedures simple and easy to follow
- find many possible problems and solutions addressed in the publication
- experience reduced renovation stress and uncertainty

Product Description

Project publications will highlight and recommend only products approved by Home Depot.

Audience Profile

The audience profile is based on the following research:

- interviews with Home Depot management and staff
- survey results from Home Depot’s recent customer survey
- in-store interviews with 20 random Home Depot customers
The audience for the renovation guides have a vast variety of backgrounds and education. The audience consists of

- 85 percent men, 15 percent women
- 60 percent have done amateur home renovation projects before
- 97 percent have a good knowledge of the tools that will be used for the tasks
- 73 percent understand the terms to be used

We learned that the audience expects

- Home Depot staff to guide them in their purchases of the correct tools and equipment for completing a renovation project
- procedure publications to be easy to follow, convenient to use, clear, and accurate – no surprises!

Task Description

We identified the following tasks as essential for completing a kitchen, bathroom, or basement project.

- **Tiling** for floors, bathtubs, sinks, counter tops, and walls
- **Plumbing** for toilets, showers, bathtubs, sinks, and dishwashers
- **Lighting** and **Electrical**
- **Flooring** that will include carpet, linoleum, and hardwood
- **Walls** that will include insulation, framing, and dry walling
- **Cabinets**, cupboards, and shelf installation
- **Painting** and **wallpapering** ideas and techniques
**User - Task Matrix**

The user - task matrix in Table 1 shows the likelihood of the audience, from each of the four user groups, to use each publication in the renovations library.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tasks</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Women</th>
<th>Amateurs</th>
<th>Previous Experience</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tiling</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plumbing</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lighting &amp; Electrical</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flooring</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walls</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cabinets</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Painting &amp; Wallpapering</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 1: Audience profile for each Home Depot renovation publication**
(On a scale of 1 to 10, where 1 is least likely to use the publication and 10 is most likely to use the publication)

The Lighting and Electrical publication is one that amateurs are unlikely to use as much as some of the other publications. For this reason no special provision of the topic will be addressed beyond noting that all electrical work must be inspected by a qualified electrician. More detailed steps and a heavier glossary will be used for Tiling, Flooring, and Painting and Wallpapering.
**Design Implications**

The seven groups of tasks identified in the user task matrix are part of most bathroom, kitchen, and basement renovations projects. We propose to publish seven publications that will guide users through each task group. The benefits of organizing the library this way are that

- it allows users to use a publication in any project where it applies
- it allows users to build their library as they progress from one task to another in their home renovation projects
- it makes the publication small and easy to use during the execution of each project

Each publication would

- have a coil binding so it can either lie flat or flip back to be self-supporting (easel style)
- have laminated pages so it is cleanable and durable
- be 9” wide by 5.9” deep, with the coil binding along the 9” length (at the top of publications)
- be heavily illustrated
- be stored in a Home Depot labelled box containing an internal Home Depot bookend which keeps the existing publications in the library upright until the entire collection is purchased (additional boxes can be purchased when Home Depot expands the renovation guide library to include other renovation project areas)
- be printed in a suitable font size for easy reference
- use clear titling, bold colours and appropriate backgrounds
- be approximately 34 pages for each publication

Each publication will include the following sections:

- who can use the book
- how to use the book
- tools and equipment required
- what products are available
- how to complete project
- tips for success and how to get help
- glossary of terms

See Appendix A for page layout samples.
Publication Strategies and Concerns

Write & Design Technical Communication Inc. proposes the following strategies to align the publications with Home Depot’s goals and achieve the purposes of the publications.

Verification and Testing
Verification of the publications for accuracy and usability testing will be achieved by the following steps:
1. A basic outline and publication structure will be prepared.
2. Independent experts will provide process descriptions for each step required to complete the project.
3. All procedures and documentation will be verified for accuracy by Home Depot experts and staff.
4. Usability testing of the publications will be done prior to publishing to ensure maximum usability.
5. Each section of the publications will be tested for usability by Home Depot staff.
6. Usability testing, after the publications have been published, will be done by a customer survey.

Reviews
Publications will be continually revised, based on input and testing revealed in the review process. Reviews will be done at the following stages of the publication process:
- after the content specification pages are completed
- after the first draft is completed
- after the second draft is completed

Translation and Distribution
The Home Depot renovation publications will initially be prepared in English text only – using both metric and standard measurement equivalents. If feedback results for the publications are favourable, a French translation will commence three months after the English version is released. Home Depot will distribute the renovation guides to their stores in the United States and Canada. The publications will be released by May 1, 2003 to coincide with the launch of Home Depot’s new, two hour, in-store training sessions.

Publication concerns are the cost restraint of $100,000 and a scheduled released date of three months (May 1, 2003).
**Media Selection**

This project has no mandate to go beyond a paper publication format at this time. We have determined that

- simple photographs of each process will be used
- pictures and illustrations will be in full color
- coil binding will be the binding of choice
- a single box will hold the seven manuals for easy organization and reference

**Constraints**

Constraints affecting the completion of this project within the time and budget requirements are

- external dependencies:
  - subject matter experts – possible scheduling conflicts with staff members
  - reviewers – new to this type of project and will have to be trained to give effective reviews

- internal dependencies:
  - technical experience – Most of the concepts and procedures in these publications are new to our team, so we will have to rely heavily on the expertise of others. This reliance on outside sources could have a minimal effect on the timetable.
  - team experience – Our members have never worked as a team before and we anticipate a slow start until the team begins to move together as a single unit.

**Client project team**

The client project team will consist of the

- Senior Vice-President of Marketing – Rebecca Pierce
- Project Sponsor – John Freeman

**Client review team**

The client review team will consist of

- Seven (7) independent experts in total – one from each specialty field
- Fifteen (15) Home Depot internal experts chosen from randomly selected stores and in consultation with the Home Depot project sponsor.
Writing Project Team
The writing project team will consist of
- Two co-managers and writers – Libby Graham and Sherrie Richards
- One part-time writer – Louisa Jenkins
- Two photographers – Selena Davis and Dionne Michaels

Roles and Responsibilities

Roles and Responsibilities of Home Depot
The Home Depot project sponsor will
- set up initial interview times with their seven independent field experts
- ensure that interview times are readily available with internal experts and staff
- ensure the relevant Home Depot staff members are available to the publication team
- ensure the subject matter experts understand their responsibilities to review the renovation library for accuracy
- be responsible for setting up times for the photographers to complete their work
- be responsible for conducting the customer survey
Home Depot understands that any changes made to the scope of the project after the first draft will cause a delay in the delivery of the publications and increase the cost of the project.

Roles and Responsibilities of Write & Design Technical Communication Inc.
The project managers will
- be responsible for managing the project costs and timetables
- coordinate the photographers
- ensure that the reviews are conducted and signed off
- ensure that verification and usability testing is achieved
- prepare the customer survey
- produce the proposed seven publications in three months and within the $100 000 budget, unless Home Depot changes the scope or other parameters of the project
- will notify Home Depot of any outside factors that may significantly affect the proposed publications outlined in this project plan proposal
**Budget**

Table 2 shows the number of hours and resources allocated to each member of the publication team.

### Projected Hours - Home Depot Renovation Library

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hrs.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Hrs.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Hrs.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Co-mgr./Writer</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>$11,324</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>$11,324</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>$11,400</td>
<td>448</td>
<td>$34,048</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Co-mgr./Writer</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>$11,324</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>$11,324</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>$11,400</td>
<td>448</td>
<td>$34,048</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writer</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>$4,560</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>$4,560</td>
<td>152</td>
<td>$9,120</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Photographer</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>$6,325</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>$4,950</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>205</td>
<td>$11,275</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Photographer</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>$6,325</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>$4,950</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>205</td>
<td>$11,275</td>
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<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>528</td>
<td>$35,298</td>
<td>554</td>
<td>$37,108</td>
<td>376</td>
<td>$27,360</td>
<td>1458</td>
<td>$99,766</td>
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</table>

Salary Rates
- Co-mgr./Writer: $76/hr
- Writer: $60/hr
- Photographer: $55/hr

**Table 2: Project budget allocation**
Milestones

The milestones for each stage of the publication project are shown below in Table 3.

**Milestone Gantt Chart**

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<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wk 1</td>
<td>Wk 2</td>
<td>Wk 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interviews with experts are completed</td>
<td>6 days</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Photography is completed</td>
<td></td>
<td>30 days</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content Specification is completed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>12 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review content specification</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>12 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st draft is completed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>18 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review 1st draft</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Usability Testing on 1st draft</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>23 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd draft is completed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>15 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review 2nd draft</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final draft, printer ready</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3: Sixty day Gantt chart for the Home Depot renovations library

Write & Design Technical Communication Inc. will work on all seven publications concurrently. Some overlap of writing, reviewing, and photographing is scheduled as some components of the project will be at different stages. This should not pose any problems as the reviews will be done by seven different subject matter experts, and usability testing will be staggered for each publication.
Milestone Details

The following details show the tasks completed for each project milestone.

Interviews

Completing this milestone entails
- conducting extensive, detailed interviews with all experts in the seven topic areas
- gathering all the needed information to create the content specifications for all seven publications
- revising the project plan

Photography

Completing this milestone, by the photography team, entails
- meeting with each of the seven experts
- photographically documenting all aspects of every task for each of the seven publications
- providing the publication team with numbered photos depicting the correct sequence of the task processes

Content Specifications

Completing this milestone entails:
- selecting photographs for each publication
- designating most photographs for each page of the publication
- writing, in annotated form, all steps in every publication
- writing, in annotated form, introductory text, boxed text, and any additional text
- beginning the random usability testing of tasks
- revising the project plan

First Review

Completing this milestone entails
- the publication team:
  - coaching the topic area experts in providing a thorough technical review
  - revising the project plan
• the experts:
  o completing their reviews
  o signing off the publications

• the project sponsor:
  o reviewing the content specifications
  o signing off the publications
  o returning the content specifications to the publication team

First Draft

Completing this milestone entails
• changing the annotated content specifications based on the first reviews
• completing the random usability tests
• changing the draft based on usability test results
• writing text for all of the publications
• selecting and inserting photographs in the appropriate places in the publication
• completing the table of contents
• completing the glossaries for each publication
• inserting title pages and headings
• editing the publication
• revising the project plan

First Draft Review

Completing this milestone entails
• the experts:
  o completing their reviews
  o signing off the publications

• the project sponsor:
  o reviewing the content specifications
  o signing off the publications
  o returning the publications to the publication team
Second Draft

Completing this milestone entails
• changing the first draft based on the first draft reviews
• editing the publication

Final Draft

Completing this milestone entails
• making changes to the second draft based on the second draft reviews
• completing a final edit
• checking the publications for consistent format
• ensuring the publications are printer ready
• ensuring the customer survey is ready for Home Depot to execute
Home Depot will assume all responsibility for the accuracy of the publications through the review process as noted in the project proposal.

Project plan agreed to by

__________________________________________
Rebecca Pierce
Senior Vice-President of Marketing – Home Depot

__________________________________________
John Freeman
Project Sponsor – Home Depot

__________________________________________
Sherrie Richards
Co-project Manager - Write & Design Technical Communication

__________________________________________
Libby Graham
Co-project Manager - Write & Design Technical Communication
Appendix A

Page Layout Samples