How to write a project requirement document

(Shot of group of PMs around a table)
A project requirement document, or PRD, is needed for any new feature or software change that your client may request. A PRD is a collaboration between you, the client, and the developers. By writing the PRD, you'll be helping the client move from a vague idea to a working, well-defined feature.

Before you create a PRD, you need to ask yourself these questions:

(Display each on the screen)
Have we done anything similar before?

How will this project impact other areas of the software?

How will we test this feature?

(Shot of person talking to other people)
To find the answer to these questions, you need to do some research. You need to involve developers and other PMs who might have experience with similar projects.

Now that's you've gathered your information, you're ready to write the PRD.

(In Box, navigate to Departments > InfoTrax Central Documents > Implementation)
You'll find a blank PRD form in Box which you can download and complete.

(Zoom in on the product description)
The first thing when writing a PRD is to fill out a project description. The project description should be a short description explaining what the intent of the project is. You'll notice here that there aren't a lot of details about the project. That's because details of the project should be outlined later in the document.

(Zoom in on Requirement/ Scope approval)
Make sure to have the solutions architecture team review the PRD. They can give you time estimates on options, so we can have accurate cost estimates in PRD.

(Zoom in on Project requirements)
Next are Project Requirements. Not only should project requirements be more detailed, but the project requirements should break down into smaller features. This allows developers to break the features down into sprints and get better projections on time.

In this example, the project is broken into four distinct features with details on what needs to be done. Breaking the project into four distinct features allows you to give the client specific timelines for deliverables and costs. This makes it easier for the client to sign off on the project.

(Scroll down to the Note: of Project Requirements)
You need to be aware of previous projects and research how we've done things before. If there has been similar work on another project, refer to that Workflow in this section. This saves us time and development resources.

You'll notice that there are not details about how the project should be coded. You should leave those details up to the developers. This allows the developers to have creative freedom to program the features as they see fit.

(Cut to footage of commissions PMs talking. I'd love a shot of someone drawing a diagram on the white board)
If you are creating a PRD for a commissions feature, you will need to include more information than a regular PRD. You should add items like charts and diagrams detailing theoretical distributor's qualifications, sponsor trees, placements trees, and payouts.

(Back to PRD. Scroll down to Notes from the Architect and zoom in)
Within the Project Requirements, the Solutions architect team will help clarify ambiguous parts of the PRD, and specify technical concerns.

(Scroll down to Mockup and zoom in)
If the feature request is to be accessed through the UI, you should add a mockup or example of what you expect the UI to look like. You can add the mockups by including a screenshot in the PRD or links to actual wireframes. Work with our UX team to get these mockups.

(Scroll down to Data Security for 'Sensitive Data')
If there is a possibility that the feature may expose sensitive data, you need to make sure that you address those security concerns in the PRD.

(shot of someone looking over a piece of paper)
Once you've written the PRD, look it over. Have you organized the information that you've presented. Is the PRD clearly written from the reader's perspective? Did you explain everything that was not universally obvious? Have you cross-referenced the PRD with other workflows?

Remember, a well-written PRD saves money, saves development time, and saves headaches with the client down the line.