# Questions and Answers

New Participants, Investors, and other Partners who have privileges to access this Intranet have frequently asked questions or will learn new terms that require a forum to democratize our “technology”. RPTS has a core belief that the democratization of “technology” is good, and the “eco system” concept is the heart and soul of our venture. RPTS practices transparency in operations and is based on the “co-op” model of interoperability and Earned Value Management. These doctrines are at the center of our DNA. Everything we do and say is explained in detail and subject to the very self-improvement loop we prescribe.

# What are Participants?

Participants are anyone who participates in the RPTS Eco System

# RPTS Eco System

The Eco System at RPTS refers to a “micro eco system” within the Microsoft Eco System. We are talking about the Cloud and all that implies. [See Microsoft Cloud](https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/enterprise/microsoftcloud/default.aspx). RPTS maintains a “leaderboard” of activity (AKA Business Workflow Activity). Within this dataset are all kinds of entities attempting to grow and establish their small business. RPTS has established methods and technology to exploit this dataset such that the participants within the dataset benefit from each other in profound ways.

A customer is either participating in some activity or we are recommending activity depending on their lifecycle stage.  The more customers exploit the eco system the more they grow.  When the customer grows then we grow.

RPTS has performed extensive research into the lifecycle management of small businesses and most recently performed cybersecurity research focused on their lifecycle related to NIST 800-53. The outcomes research exposed the need to create the NIST Eco Assist product. The development lasted over 5 years and includes several private production models. The initial dataset goes back to NIST self-assessments and excel workbooks developed and used during audits. Bottom line is that security and the eco system approach are both forms of risk management and all that implies. For that reason, the dataset has been extended to encompass an entire eco system using Azure as the platform. In this way we can provide a unified process that drives individual lifecycle stages while simultaneously providing a platform to identify noncompetitive strategic alliances that promote sustainable growth to all participants.

NIST 800-53

This refers to the National Institute of Standards and Technology Special Publications 800-53. There are hundreds of Special Publications that cover every aspect of what is referred to as “lifecycle”. The lifecycle of a company and its ability to remain profitable are directly related to risk management. Concepts of Earned Value Management and Six Sigma, Lean and other doctrines are all drawn from, and incorporated into, these abstract documents and work product. RPTS has spent over a decade curating these documents and democratizing the methods for incorporating these practices into the DNA of an organization. The outcome includes a dataset of approximately a dozen security contractors with thousands of activities in every stage of growth and maturity. One of the key messages from these doctrines is that profitability (or risk management) is not a checklist, but instead is a recurring self-improvement loop. There has never been a way to benefit from any sort of interoperability between organizational improvement loops until now. Using the Azure platform and Office 365 with SharePoint, RPTS can now provide Advisory Services to Clients within our Eco System and exploit the meta data.

Using the Activity List as Your Work Queue

When entering and managing Activity, it is important to understand how the process will work within a collaborative environment. Each Participant (be it technician, advisor, etc.) have their own Activity List (based on the Audience Feature). The process for adding and editing activity will be continually curated in the current version, and further defined into a relatively static process with dynamic functions automated by the ScrumBot.  New Activity is currently created by System Administrators only and assigned to individuals accordingly. New Activity Process includes:

* Name of the Activity
* Selection of Profile, Position, and Lifecycle Stage
* Assigning of a Resource to perform the Activity
* Determining the cost of performing the Activity
* Determining the Payout associated with having the Activity performed
* Acceptance of the Activity by the Participant
* Milestones recorded and Hours Logged for each Activity
* Cost Overruns are managed by Administrators

After completing the Form, the person Assigned is notified by email.  When you are Assigned an Activity, the notification can then be dragged to your Outlook Calendar.  On the other hand, you can mount the Calendar View of your Activity List in Outlook. Activity Assigned has an agreed upon fee associated with the Activity and the potential Payout to the Participant performing the service. The cost of the service and the potential payout are determined upfront but are not static. A process for reconciling overage is part of Updating Activity.

Updating Activity

When editing Activity participants are required to include details in the Milestones and Outcomes field and Log Hours. It is important to update and log hours to ensure participants get paid on time and that the customer agrees to any potential increase in the original fee. It is important to remember that the entire process is transparent and all participants are aware of how work activity is performed. Participants are required to log their time within 12 hours of the Activity being performed for several reasons including the use of the ScrumBot to perform quality assurance.

The RPTS ScrumBot is technology we use to groom activity data as it is processed in order to institute control measures.  New records and changed records undergo a review each time a record is added or changed.  The primary purpose is to change the scrum column variables to link to the record, depending on the scrum status.  Currently the administration staff will have to groom the business workflow activity but as we determine where automation can be inserted further functions will include:

* Bot style “leaderboard” for technicians and participants to coordinate outcomes
* Budget overrun control measures, notifications, and automated bot style reconciliation
* Identify common activity in common stages of lifecycle to provide suggested activity and guidance, also provide bot style remediation of activity where applicable
* Identify stagnant activity and provide control measures based on our analytics
* Recurring activity trending and record update based on these trends
* Updating records en masse or for other reasons
* Process analytics that identify or create new meta data (data about data stored as Outcome of a Workflow))
* Finding potential alliances, especially between participants
* Identifying potential vendors or service providers within eco system
* Add and remove items from a timeline