

UK Airline Improves Efficiency with Streamlined Processes



A global, award-winning airline based in the UK was looking to modernise the way it uses technology to improve efficiency of internal HR processes.

Modern processes and outdated systems don't mix

Trying to modernise business processes doesn't necessarily work when the systems being used are outdated and no longer supported.

The airline took on the challenge of a significant HR transformation, specifically looking at process and system connectivity.

The struggles of process mapping in a large airline

One of the main struggles of process mapping in an organisation like this is the sheer size.

The business scale leads to each business area operating independently, diverging systems, processes, HR controls and expectations.

Process divergence leads to inconsistent expectation and increased cost and complexity.

The divergence leads to additional cost for the corporation and significantly more work to understand and bring processes together.

The workforce within this business is aging, this meant that there was a reluctance to change. Due to the aging workforce, there was a lack of understanding of technology that led to avoidance of the process and the necessary steps.

There was also a common belief that the project would uncover some cases of individuals whose role within the business was not providing value. This led to the business areas being unwilling and less accepting of the change.

Industry

Commercial Transportation

Aviation

Airline

Solution Components

Responsiv Consulting

IBM Blueworks Live

Key Benefits

Remote, real-time process mapping collaboration

Clear understanding and recording of business structures and processes

Near no process deviation

Project success provided strong business case for wider investigation for optimisation



Project blockers

The project uncovered many "rabbit holes" where certain aspects of the business needed to change before any changes could be implemented.

Change the policy to improve the process.

A key example of this is when mapping the process with the business, there was an outdated policy holding up the change, without the policy being updated no developments could be made.

Understanding where automation could take place was also a challenge, this is because there were several custom-built systems that were specifically configured to work in one way. This made automating and defining streamlined processes difficult.

The tool of choice

A capable solution was required to map these processes. The system needed to be intuitive, cloud-based and private. It needed to support distributed team working, to track changes, and allow "what if" analysis.

Microsoft Visio had been the previous process mapping tool of choice. The team were reluctant to change, due to wider business understanding of how it worked. The problem was that Visio only fitted the needs of the business at a time where basic process maps were needed.

IBM Blueworks Live (BWL) delivered on all measures and provided a clear route to production.

The transformation project invested in licences for BWL process mapping solution. The project was used as an opportunity to build a business case to increase the BWL user-base and expertise across the airline.

The embedded tutorials and starter templates gave the subject-matter experts a good foundation and the opportunity to get involved with mapping processes in the future.

BWL is a cloud-based SaaS solution that allows real-time collaboration and instant exporting options.

Because the airline was midway through a technology refresh, some members of staff were still using older devices. With BWL being cloud-based there is no installation required and therefore those using older devices were not limited to performance requirements of other systems.

Real-time collaboration allowed processes to be mapped and edited in workshops, this meant that less workshops needed to be run as iterations could be made on the go and it also meant people took less time away from their day jobs which was priority. The use of instant exporting gave the opportunity for those running the workshop to share the changes with attendees and therefore share with senior management more effectively.



The outcome

By defining a new taxonomy and design principles, the design thinking and global design workshops ran seamlessly. The outcome was that the HR domain was split into several manageable modules, each with an owner.

The multimillion-pound programme delivered over 200 processes, with near to no deviation of process. Exceptions of deviation had to be justified by a business case that was then presented to senior management.

This transformation was the largest the business had seen in decades. It demonstrated that an organisation of this size could adapt quickly and manage an ever-growing workforce.

The use of IBM Blueworks Live and integration of a cloud-based HR solution demonstrated the need for a cultural-shift within the business. The current custom-built solutions being used worked in the moment but would not allow the business to grow and adapt for the future.

Due to the success of the project, a strong business case was built to begin investigating what other areas of the business and processes could be streamlined.

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