

CASE STUDY

RETAIL GIANT BRINGS ITIL[®] INTO PLAY

“

In just a short period, Pink Elephant enabled the IT team to begin implementation of a significant organisational change programme. Everyone was clear about the objectives, the ultimate destination, and the long term business benefits of a mature ITSM model, based on best practice processes.”

BACKGROUND

Operating a shared service model across Europe, the UK-based IT department of this leading European PC and video game products retailer supports a complex mix of applications and multi-channel retail architectures that include 1,000 outlets in six countries and five e-commerce websites, as well as the provision of desktop, server and application support to 500 employees at four UK office locations.

A programme of new store openings, burgeoning online e-commerce demand, plus the acquisition of a major competitor some 18 months earlier, had all placed significant pressure on existing structures and created an urgent need for change.

The challenge

As part of a major project to integrate the recently acquired competitor business and to support its vision of delivering reliable fit-for-purpose services to the business, the IT department took the decision to adopt an IT Service Management approach to ICT and introduce IT Infrastructure Library (ITIL) best practice processes to enable the delivery of high quality IT services.

The creation of a unified estate of IT applications and support, underpinned by consistent business processes, would significantly enhance both business and retail operations.

The race was on to fast track ITIL implementation within the new IT organisation. As a first step the IT management team wanted to complete the design, implementation and evaluation of a new IT service management function in just 12-weeks, and turned to leading ITIL specialists Pink Elephant to help propel its journey to ITIL.

The solution

A benchmarking exercise was the first critical stage of the process, as Graham McDonald, Business Development Manager, Pink Elephant EMEA explains: “The first essential step is to gain a real understanding of ‘Where are we now’ and ‘Where do we want to be’ before you can start to plan a ‘How will we get there’ strategy.”

Service Desk/Incident Management, Problem Management, Change Management, Configuration Management and Release Management, together with Service Level Management, were the first processes to be put under the spotlight. Using PinkScan – its IT Service Management process maturity evaluation methodology – Pink Elephant was able to establish where the IT organisation currently was, and provided recommendations on what needed to be done to achieve the stated objectives.

Next, Pink Elephant developed a route map to achieve this objective. Containing identified service improvement opportunities and ‘quick win’ recommendations, it would become the immediate focus for process owners. To sustain fast track implementation, Pink Elephant consultants worked alongside process owners to support the redesign and definition activities.

“Ensuring the alignment of critical processes with business needs is a key principle underpinning ITIL,” says Graham McDonald. “We needed to give process owners an opportunity to ‘vision’ the business holistically, gaining a better understanding of IT and business relations and how these impact the entire service management lifecycle.”

To achieve this goal, process owners participated in Pink Elephant’s high impact business simulation game. Facilitated in the fast world of online global retail, the Polestar ITSM simulation

game lets participants experience what’s involved in keeping a highly dynamic business running. Mirroring the real world interaction between IT and the business, the ‘players’ progress through defined service transition phases and plan for strategic and operational continual service improvements against a backdrop of increasing budget constraints.

“The exercise gave people a very practical experience of process development and the business benefits this delivers,” confirms Graham McDonald. “The exercise engendered a real sense of ownership and commitment to ITSM, spurring on the desire of process owners to apply ITIL in their own highly complex environment.”

Creating the foundations for success

In just 12 weeks, an IT Service Management strategy for the successful implementation of ITIL was completed and initiated. Key stakeholders had been identified and aligned to the objectives of the programme. They had engaged in a visioning exercise and built links with the business to enable the bi-directional communication of needs and service delivery capabilities against expectations.

A prioritised road map, giving process owners a measurable implementation strategy with defined key stages and transition goals had been established. Furthermore, with its inbuilt cycle of continual improvement the new ITSM model would enable the IT organisation to progress its vision of evolving its services to meet changing business needs.

“In just a short period, Pink Elephant enabled the IT team to begin implementation of a significant organisational change programme. Everyone was clear about the objectives, the ultimate destination, and the long term business benefits of a mature ITSM model, based on best practice processes,” concludes Graham McDonald.

Turning vision into reality

Having scoped the change programme, and defined its parameters, the IT organisation next engaged Pink Elephant to fast track its ITIL implementation with an intensive ‘quick wins’ programme that would kick start the development phase.

In just six weeks, over 40 deliverables were undertaken and completed, including creation of a fully defined core Service Catalogue — populated with 23 identified services and enshrining agreed delivery standards, the catalogue provides the bedrock for ongoing service negotiations with the business. Additionally a number of fully evolved Service Level Agreements were created, and most significantly, implemented a fully-fledged cross functional Incident Management process to enable the speedy restoration of normal service operation or respond to service requests.

“In just months, the IT organisation has been able to redesign its service delivery infrastructure to enable a more cohesive and faster response to the needs of the business,” confirms Graham McDonald. “From being able to evaluate where it is, to identifying where it wants to be, it has now successfully implemented a new IT service management function in a spectacularly short time frame.”

The outcomes

The journey to ITIL has enabled the IT organisation to become a cohesive and unified operation. Working together to create a unified estate of IT applications and support has overcome previously siloed working approaches — everyone now speaks a common ITIL language, are jointly engaged in achieving common standards, and are united in a common way of working – regardless of the IT function they operate within.

To ensure ITIL continues to be a way of life, and enable the ongoing ITIL culture, the IT organisation is committed to an ongoing programme of education, development and mentoring to support its management teams.

The organisation is also planning to communicate proactively with business leaders within the organisation, opening the way to an evolving service delivery. New Change Advisory Boards are being introduced to enable the organisation to plan, design and manage future service transitions in conjunction with business leaders.

“The IT organisation has revolutionised the way it works and communicates – both internally and externally,” explains Graham McDonald. “It’s now well positioned to respond in a cohesive and unified manner to the fast changing needs of the business and has established clear standards against which it can manage a programme of continual improvement, with the ongoing support of Pink Elephant.”

EMEA HQ
 Pink Elephant Ltd. Atlantic House, Imperial Way,
 Reading, Berkshire RG2 0TD United Kingdom
 Tel: +44 (0) 118 903 6824
 Fax: +44 (0) 118 903 6282

For further information please contact:
info.europe@pinkelephant.com
www.pinkelephant.com

Worldwide Locations:
 Africa
 Asia
 Australia/
 New Zealand
 Brazil
 Canada
 Europe
 Mexico
 Middle East
 USA

**Pink Elephant –
 Leading the way in IT Management Best Practices**
www.pinkelephant.com