



# TAKING DIVERSIFIED TEAMS ALONG ON A QUEST FOR EFFICIENCY

## Abstract

Michael, the chief data officer of a diversified multi-national conglomerate based in the Middle East was experiencing a lack of efficiency in business processes within its finance and HR functions. Some of the major causes for these inefficiencies included; a high degree of manual effort in processing data and reporting, no central document repository, an absence of a workflow management tool and a lack of integration between data sources. The organization decided to partner with Infosys BPM and embark on a large-scale transformation initiative which, through automating the numerous time consuming, repetitive, and manual tasks, resulted in increased efficiency, reduced costs, improved operational visibility, and insights-driven decision making.



## Inefficient processes in siloed functions

Most complexities in business processes across HR, order to cash (O2C), and record to report (R2R) were caused by years of rapid expansion and the introduction of multiple information systems which required additional resources to ensure information was processed correctly and accurately. Michael knew that the increased reliance on manual processing made it inherently prone to inaccuracies and resulted in delays which had an adverse knock-on effect on sub-processes as well. Due to non-standard processes and a lack of real-time visibility of key business metrics, Michael saw increased overheads and was struggling to make timely

business decisions, produce accurate forecasts, improve cashflow, and elevate customer experience to name a few.

Michael had tried in the past to bring technological solutions; however, their adoption was stalled or not effectively implemented due to the siloed operations of various departments, which failed to share best practices. Besides, Michael's IT resources were stretched, making it difficult to take on a large-scale transformation.

Considering the scale of the company's operations, and to avoid technology implementation issues of the past,

Michael decided to bring in an external service provider who not only had a practitioner's approach, but also industry and domain expertise with a proven track record delivering solutions in a similar organization bringing in IT and BPM (Business Process Management) together.

to automate and streamline processes. After much search, Michael decided to partner with Infosys BPM due to its strong heritage of technology-led accounting and HR process transformations for multiple large global firms.

## Establishing a mindset of transformation

In December 2020 the team from Infosys BPM began a six-week-long, high-level end-to-end business process discovery exercise of all major processes across O2C, R2R, AP, and HR within three major business divisions. The aim of this

exercise was to identify opportunities for standardization, connecting data sources and automating manual processes and reports.

After the initial investigation, roughly 50 opportunities were identified. Those

opportunities which would result in maximum benefit for the client and could be delivered with the least effort and hence the shortest time were prioritized and presented to Michael. After detailed discussions and a cost benefit analysis,

Michael gave a go-ahead for 39 of the 50 opportunities.

In February 2021 the Infosys BPM team began a detailed feasibility study of the 39 opportunities to identify the nuances and details of each process, after which the proposed improvements could be implemented. The process maps were presented to Michael for his agreement and sign-off for the implementation. This was an iterative process due to the

inconsistencies identified within each division which was trying to achieve the same result using different methods.

The implementation of proposed process improvements was not without some specific hurdles. The key resistance came from functional SMEs who feared that automation could be a threat to their jobs and that it would lead to a change in the way they were familiar with. In addition, the IT department also expressed

concern that the transformation should have been done by them rather than being outsourced. Michael had to work with Infosys BPM team to make these functional teams understand the benefits of the proposed solution, and ultimately align them to the organizational vision, after which Infosys BPM began the implementation. The automation and project delivery approach involved six phases, as shown below

## Approach summary



These phases involved key milestone deliverables by both Michael's team and Infosys BPM in each phase. Throughout these phases, the client's IT team faced resource crunch due to other ongoing

engagements in the organization. Infosys BPM performed mitigating steps to ensure successful deployment. Post deployment, Michael wanted Infosys BPM to hand over the new business processes along

with necessary training using actual data. This gave his operational teams more confidence on the automated solutions.

## Embarking on a journey of efficiency

Although some process took longer to implement, Michael began to realise the benefits early in the deployment phase as the higher priority implementations were

completed and transitioned into the live environment. As the data transfer was now automated across the three divisions, the period-end closing process was quicker

now; in addition, critical decision making was easier for the leadership, with the analytical dashboard. The key benefits of the solution are as follows.



## Key benefits



The circa 30% efficiency achieved provided the organization's staff with an opportunity to redeploy their time from manual activities to more value-added tasks thus

providing further benefits at no increase in resource expenditure for the organization.

While the quest for efficiency is long-term and ongoing, the more modernized,

efficient processes, together with the increased visibility of their business processes, Michael's organization took a huge stride in a positive direction with the help of Infosys BPM.

*\*Names have been altered to preserve the identities of the people involved.*

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