



AN URGENT MAKEOVER FOR A BRAND-NEW F&A JOURNEY

Abstract

When a leading beauty products manufacturing giant separated from its parent organisation, Finance Transformation Director Frank Müller faced a tight deadline to set up a new system landscape for his global F&A processes. This case study details how Infosys BPM leveraged its proven implementation framework to set up new shared service centres from the ground up, delivering smoother operations, and a 30% increase in business process efficiency with minimal disruption to business workflows.



When separation marks a new journey of change

Frank Müller is the Finance Transformation Director at a leading beauty products manufacturing company with a presence in 127 countries across the globe. In this key role, he is primarily responsible for overseeing the company's widespread F&A operations, and spearheading initiatives to optimise them. But he would soon discover, a rather urgent, large-scale transformation project was about to fall on his shoulders.

In 2020, amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, the beauty products manufacturer had separated from the parent organisation and started to operate as a separate company. However, as decided over a temporary mutual service agreement, it continued to utilise the parent company's legacy systems and support functions. Consequently, parts of Frank's F&A activities — including Record-to-Report (R2R), Order-to-Cash (O2C), Procure-

to-Pay (P2P), and Tax and Statutory—were fragmented across the parent organisation's shared services centres across Europe, the Americas, and Asia Pacific. As per the agreement, the fledgling company was permitted to use existing legacy systems up until 2022—post which it would have to operate entirely independently, setting up its infrastructure, buildings, support functions, and more.

Operating with a strict deadline, Frank knew that he would need to carry out a full-scale transition and process migration as quickly as possible. After discussing the finance process flows with other company stakeholders, he laid out plans to set up Shared Service Centres (SSC) for handling the F&A operations in Europe and the Americas, while outsourcing the same for the Asia Pacific region. However, Frank was well aware that he needed expert external support for location selection,

staffing, office fit outs, and the other formal processes for executing the expansive plan flawlessly.

So, he decided to engage Infosys BPM, which had been the company's service provider for close to half a decade, as a partner for the transformation. Having worked with Matthew Rogers, the Infosys BPM team lead, Frank had great trust in his team's process transformation and transition capabilities. He immediately set up a series of virtual meetings with Matthew, where he detailed the existing processes, briefed him on the situation and the impending deadline, and enlisted his support for setting up the SSC and outsourced operating model from the ground up. Over these meetings, he also explained how he would also need help with staff augmentation and temporary management of the new SSCs.

A brand-new makeover

With the project objective clear and urgent, Matthew quickly rounded up his digital transformation team to conduct an in-depth assessment of the existing F&A process landscape. Post these assessments, they began validating the scope of the project and drafting a detailed transition plan.

Having set up several SSC projects in the past, Matthew and his team already had an internally developed, proven shared services set-up framework — to help them carry out the transition within the strict timeline. But, before beginning the transition process, Matthew sat with Frank and other stakeholders from the company to list down all their doubts and concerns

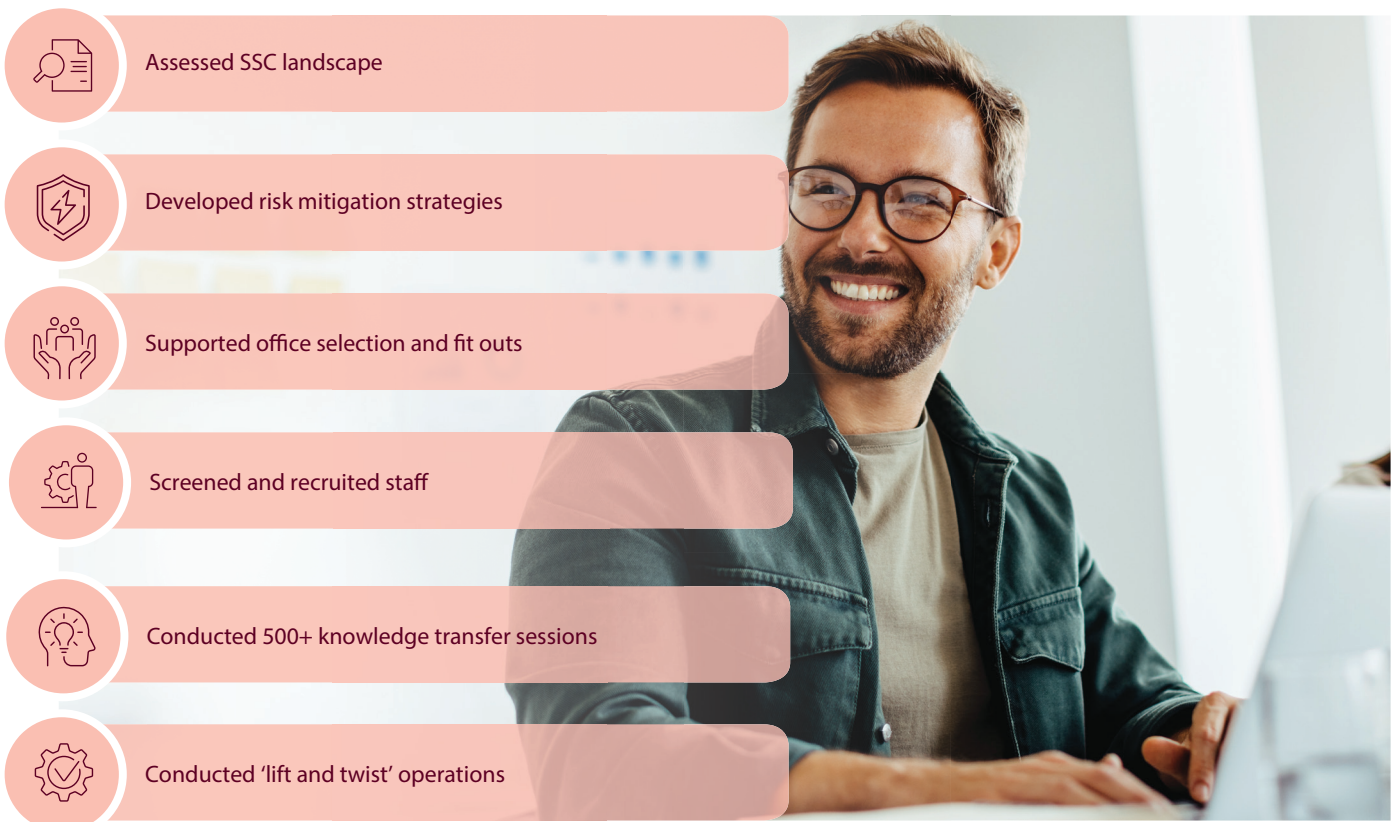
about potential risks, and then developed customised strategies to address them.

Then, the team proceeded to perform process due diligence, and system cloning and prepared for the transition, while Matthew collaborated with Frank to shortlist the optimal location for the new SSCs. Together, they met with respective city hall representatives to finalise the offices and fit outs. For Europe, Matthew and Frank mutually decided to temporarily sub-lease one of Infosys BPM's office spaces and IT set-up, helping them to mitigate risks and minimise the challenges involved in fit out plan deviations. Along with this, Frank and Matthew also agreed to business process

outsourcing (BPO), where Infosys BPM would temporarily support the SSCs from locations in the Asia Pacific region — thus blunting the immediate need for recruiting new resources in the transition period.

Matthew's digital transformation team then consequently began the staffing and recruitment process helping Frank find key talent for his new locations in an overheated, mid-pandemic labour market. Struggling to manage and review the profiles, Frank also requested Matthew's support in the screening process — who then roped in relevant experts from Infosys BPM to conduct domain interviews.

Approach summary



With the staffing complete, Matthew then worked with his team to conduct a large-scale, yet rapid knowledge transfer initiative. They conducted over 500 training sessions which also included general F&A process training, and set up a detailed, role-wise organisational chart for structuring the SSCs. At this stage, the team also ran a comprehensive lift-and-twist operation,

transferring, optimising, and centralising the relevant F&A processes. They also offered end-to-end support in cloning and testing the new system and workflows across the different centres and went on to set up KPIs for steady-state operations.

During the last phase of the transformation, the team reviewed the new systems, identified areas of improvement,

and set up plans to stabilise and optimise the operations. Matthew also provided actionable recommendations to Frank for implementing control and compliance frameworks in the new centres, as well as advised on opportunities for strategic process automation, which would set the stage for driving further process efficiency.



Looking better than ever before!

Despite the restricted timeline and COVID-19 waves, Matthew and his team successfully executed and delivered on the massive SSC set-up effort, well within the timelines, in just 12 months. This not only

exceeded Frank's expectations but also to his delight, the newly set up F&A processes across countries aligned perfectly with each other, creating a complete process harmony. What was more, the large-scale, global

transition did not cause any disruption at all to the cosmetic giant's workflows due to Matthew and his team's strategic approach, consistent efforts, unwavering support, and well-thought-out frameworks.

Key benefits



Zero T&E Costs



>30% business process efficiency and automation



200+ FTEs transferred successfully



Completed transition in <12 months



To achieve this, the team transferred over 200 staff across all F&A pillars spread across Europe, the Americas, and Asia — delivering over 30% increase in business process efficiency and automation throughout. Also, since they executed the transition via a fully remote approach

during the pandemic, they were able to eliminate all travel-related expenses, thereby reducing the company's overall operational costs.

Impressed with the high efficiency through the new SSCs and outsourced service

models, Frank applauded Matthew and his team's efforts, expressing his gratitude for their flexibility and quick turnaround. This project has not only been a success but has also deepened Matthew and Frank's partnership, making them a great team for future process optimisation projects.

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

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