

CASE STUDY

IT SERVICE MANAGEMENT LEAPS AHEAD AT ZURICH



“
We knew we were moving in the right direction – availability is consistently higher, KPIs are much improved, backlogs are significantly reduced, and incident resolution is much faster, all of which has been backed up by positive feedback from our business customers. Pink Elephant’s PinkSCAN process maturity assessment gave us a ‘proof of concept’ external stamp of authority and demonstrated the reality of our transformation achievements.”

Juan Antonio Conde
Head of Service Management,
European Centre of Excellence
Zurich Financial Services

BACKGROUND

Zurich is one of the world’s largest insurance groups and one of the few to operate on a truly global basis through a worldwide network of subsidiaries and offices in North America, Asia Pacific, Latin America and other markets.

Founded in 1872, today Zurich has 60,000 employees servicing customers in more than 170 countries. In Europe its presence is anchored by major operations in Germany, Italy, Spain, Switzerland and the UK, as well as significant operations in Austria, Ireland, Portugal, Russia and Turkey.

Committed to systematically evolving its infrastructure to deliver world class service to customers, in 2006 Zurich Financial Services took the decision to establish a new European Centre of Excellence (CoE). Alongside delivery and support of a common software platform to support Zurich’s European businesses – which includes the online Zurich Connect direct sales brand and the innovative online Zurich HelpPoint customer guidance, solution and service offering – the CoE would also be responsible for the development and local country tailoring of software services

The challenge

The newly formed CoE, located in Barcelona, had to get up to speed fast. But by 2008 it was clear that two years of rapid growth had resulted in a fragmented service delivery model. What’s more, plans to migrate a number of support processes – including the helpdesk – to IT outsourcing partner CSC were on the horizon.

If the CoE was to maintain its position as a valued business enabler, and manage a major outsourcing transition smoothly, it needed to rapidly evolve its ITIL® processes to a higher level of maturity. In doing so it would optimise the performance of its processes and boost IT service delivery performance.

Before embarking on a planned improvement project, the CoE turned to leading Service Management and ITIL specialists Pink Elephant. Alongside evaluating the current status of its existing IT service management processes, the CoE planned to use Pink Elephant’s findings to inform the direction and scope of its internal service transformation plan.

The solution

For Juan Antonio Conde, Head of Service Management at the CoE, the decision to benchmark was an important one. “We’d already begun to initiate ITIL but while we’d achieved a level of success we had ambitions to go further, faster. The first step in our journey was to understand precisely where we stood today.”

Employing external expertise was crucial as Conde explains: “We wanted a truly objective ‘outside’ viewpoint of our process maturity and performance. By drawing on the insights of independent ITIL experts we recognised we’d gain a deep understanding of how the processes should be working in reality, and confirmation as to whether we were indeed following ITIL best practices.”

In October 2008 Pink Elephant visited the CoE to benchmark Incident Management, Change Management, Problem Management and Availability Management processes in the organisation’s Production and Development environments. An assessment of Service Asset and Configuration Management, and Service Level Management in the Production environment alone was also undertaken.

Using PinkSCAN™ – Pink Elephant’s IT Service Management process maturity assessment service – the selected IT processes were assessed against a 5-scale capability maturity model (1 = initiation, 2 = awareness, 3 = control, 4 = integration, and 5 = optimisation). Structured interviews with operational and strategic personnel were also conducted to deliver understanding of the culture of the organisation, its service ‘outlook’ and its responsiveness to change.

At the close of the evaluation, a comprehensive assessment report was generated for the Service Management team at the CoE. Alongside the baseline maturity levels of each process, and observations of current operations, the report contained detailed recommendations on how to take each process forward.

“The results confirmed we had good foundations in place to build on,” states Conde. “More importantly Pink Elephant’s findings highlighted where we needed to focus our efforts, what we needed to prioritise, and gave us a template of actions we needed to pursue as part of our transformation programme.”

The outcomes

Armed with the findings of the Pink Elephant PinkSCAN assessment, the CoE Service Management team embarked on a high impact process improvement project. Using the recommendations provided by Pink Elephant to signpost the way to achieving enhanced process maturity, the team set itself tough new targets. But keeping the CoE organisation motivated through a demanding transformation programme was important if momentum and enthusiasm was to be maintained.

“Fortunately, as part of its review process, Pink Elephant outlined a number of ‘quick wins’ that would deliver maximum payback for our teams while visibly boosting service delivery to our customers,” explains Conde.

Just 18 months later, the Service Management team was ready to benchmark its process maturity once again and contacted Pink Elephant to undertake a second PinkSCAN assessment. The results were truly impressive. Maturity scores for the majority of processes across the organisation had risen by at least one level, demonstrating the CoE was moving well beyond control and achieving truly integrated ITSM processes.

“We knew we were moving in the right direction – availability is consistently higher, KPIs are much improved, backlogs are significantly reduced, and incident resolution is much faster, all of which has been backed up by positive feedback from our business customers,” says Conde. “However, the PinkSCAN process maturity assessment gave us a ‘proof of concept’ external stamp of authority and demonstrated the reality of our transformation achievements.”

“Seeing the difference made by the staff at Zurich CoE in just eighteen months, purely by adopting the ITIL Best Practice approach clearly demonstrates that following formal, standardised and agreed processes really does work, giving you the ability to deliver real value in the form of services to your organisation.” commented Luci Allen the lead consultant working on the project for Pink Elephant.

Looking to the future the CoE is currently working on recommendations contained within the second PinkSCAN report to power forward with the next phase of its ongoing service improvement project.

“We’re determined to enable Zurich’s European insurance businesses to achieve leadership in their selected markets utilising a standardised and centrally coordinated IT infrastructure. High quality processes equate to productivity and efficiency gains – as we’ve already demonstrated – and Pink Elephant has given us a template for our next stage of the ITIL journey,” concludes Conde.

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