

The development of a Strategic Plan, Road Map and Business Case for consolidating 4 UK Data Centres into 2 Best in Class Strategic Data Centres

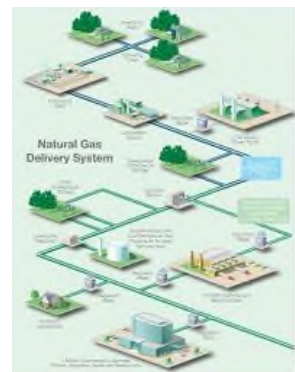
... providing staged costs & benefits and including the virtualisation of Wintel and Unix Servers

The situation

██████████ is a multi-national Utility providing Electricity and Gas on a global basis. The company is responsible for the High Voltage Electricity and High Pressure Gas transmission in England and Wales and has a turnover of £12bn, with an Asset Base of £4.7bn. The company has earned a worldwide reputation for robust business performance and operational safety. The company operated several Data Centres in the UK, hosting a range



of systems from the Critical National



Infrastructure systems to routine Office systems. The company sought to consolidate its UK Data Centres and to focus future operations on 2 strategic Data Centres. This required the closure of 2 of the existing Data Centres. Though the company had declared this as a

strategic aim, it had not developed a Road Map or Plan for change, and had not qualified the Business Case for making the change.

The problem

Though the company was committed to making the change from 4 to 2 Data Centres, some Executives were not convinced of the quantitative Business Case for change. The key questions that needed to be answered were:-

- Is it worth consolidating the UK Data Centres?
- What is the best way to consolidate?
- What sort of Road Map should we follow?

The company did not have internal expertise that was independent enough to carry out the work, so we were asked to undertake a review to provide guidance and Direction on the Way Forward.

The Credit Crunch in 2009 posed many challenges for all companies planning capital investment and a crucial element of this review was to develop a staged approach to investment, matching benefits to investment to ensure a good return on capital employed. Consolidation was crucial in achieving the overall aims of corporate mergers, and was supported by the Board.

The Executives sought the consolidation of the Data Centres with a sound Business Case, and very low risk to ongoing operations.

The solution

The company wanted clarity on the Way Forward for Data Centre consolidation and we delivered:-

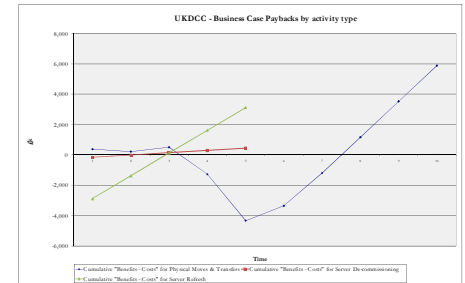
- A strategy for consolidating the Data Centres, utilising other programmes and changes to minimise costs.
- A comprehensive Road Map defining what needed to happen and when, including dependent initiatives.
- A rigorous Business Case that proved the benefit of undertaking the consolidation, albeit over a 10 year period.

The client took advantage of our general IT experience, especially in the Utility sector, and specific expertise in setting-up IT programmes.

One of the key approaches to the Road Map was its utilisation of other initiatives to provide the lowest cost for consolidation and to match the costs to the benefit realisation. Many complicated aspects and dependencies were distilled to provide a robust, coherent approach to change.

How we did it

We commenced our review with a thorough review of the existing material, and requested any missing information. Following this we conducted a range of 1-to-1 and Group interviews with key Stakeholders throughout the organisation.

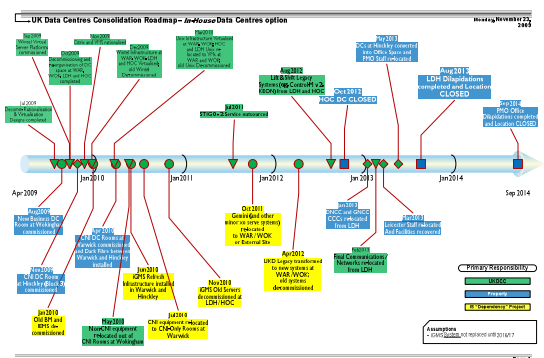


This enabled us to filter the data and identify specific queries to complete the picture of the current situation.

We developed an overall approach to the Way Forward and checked this with Stakeholders to obtain early buy-in.

We worked closely with the Finance Managers from all relevant departments to identify the benefits, and with numerous Suppliers to identify the costs.

We established a Project Management



Board to provide corporate governance and support the recommendations.



Our final designs, plans and analyses were accepted by the company and we were asked to proceed to set-up the early stage activities of the project, that included Decommissioning, Virtualisation, Citric rationalisation, External hosting planning, CNI Data Centre separation as well as the overall requirements for setting up an effective IT Programme.