



Transformational IT

Aligning technology capability within UBM
to support and drive the transformation
of the enterprise

UFI ICT Award Submission 2014

"What have you done to fit your IT team to the future"



Transformational Skills for Serving Customers

UBM is a global events-led marketing services and communications company. We help our customers make connections, communicate their proposition and conduct business effectively. We have implemented a new organisational structure, and capabilities, of our IT team to engage in all business processes.

The focus of our new organisational structure is to deliver business outcomes, not just systems and technology solutions. We achieved this delivery of outcomes by creating transformational skill sets throughout the IT team, and introducing IT resource at every level of customer engagement. Through our restructure we are putting the practices and methodologies in place so that IT engages during the initial customer contact through to the final deliverable. Under the new organisational model we have positioned to allow technology, and our IT employees, to

be involved in customer insight, customer experience, and product delivery.

At UBM, we are constantly collecting feedback from our customers, and the undisputable results state they are looking for digital solutions to be able to connect, communicate and conduct business effectively. We recognise this need and as such were driven to restructure our IT team, and capabilities, to be scalable along with innovations both within our organisation and in the wider technology sphere.

The new organisational structure of our team serves two main purposes: first, to optimise our ability to deliver innovative products and new capabilities in an efficient and effective manner, second, to have the back end support within our organisation to ensure customers have a smooth and seamless experience in their transactions.

Programme Objectives

We began our IT evaluation by asking the UBM business leaders, “What new business capabilities do you need to serve your customers?” The answer was unanimously centred around five inter-related capabilities: content management, mobility, digital marketing, customer relationship management, and customer insight.

Although, previously, our divisions operated under a federated structure, it is becoming increasingly common for our businesses to work collaboratively on products supporting the same customers, with up to 30% of revenues jointly generated cross-divisionally. Therefore, we needed to change our processes to reduce the “friction” in collaborating across organisational boundary on customer opportunities. However, we are also being cautious not to swing the pendulum too far, so we are strategically balancing divisional priority setting with horizontal IT capabilities.

Actions to Achieve Objectives

Moving from a federated model for IT delivery to a coordinated cross-divisional capability involved four main areas of focus

- **PROCESS.** We implemented governance mechanisms to optimise decision making and reinforce transparency and accountability. This was termed the IT Target Operating Model (IT TOM)
- **PEOPLE.** We created a few highly leveraged central roles to provide the cross-divisional “glue”
- **SKILLS.** We developed and grew the transformation skills needed to better support the scale of change required
- **CHANGE.** We engaged with business leaders and staff members to win the “hearts and minds” needed to make such a change successful

Process.

The IT Target Operating Model (TOM) performed two functions. Firstly it enables cross-divisional optimisation within a local IT resourcing model. Secondly, it provides transparency and accountability to ensure that decision making is both optimised and linked to maximum business impact.

People.

Centralised resourcing has been implemented for two main functions. Firstly, IT Shared Services delivers common technology services (for example hosting, networks, telephony, web hosting) and exploits the inherent scale in commodity services. Secondly, a central systems and oversight group provide ownership for cross functional IT systems as well as driving the global “glue” functions of procurement, architecture and governance.

The business outcome for the new organisational IT structure was clearly defined by the survey of UBM’s divisional management. The business capabilities identified (content management, mobility, digital marketing, customer relationship management, and customer insight now guide the portfolio management and prioritisation processes. These capabilities are integral to our success. UBM has a very clear content and community strategy that seeks to deliver face to face and digital conferences, digital lead generation and networking capabilities for our customers, and news and blogs to serve our communities. By implementing the IT capabilities we are giving our businesses the tools they need to better serve our customers with the content and events they are demanding.

While the value and path of our objectives was very clear from the beginning, it was not as simple to accomplish our



goals. Our primary challenges included the fragmentation of business processes coupled with the challenge of cross-divisional collaboration. The implementation of the hybrid TOM model helped us to overcome this by facilitating a global view of our products, while still ensuring our local needs are being served. Our second challenge revolved around funding. The changes needed to be self-funding and this was achieved three ways (1) by exploiting the scale synergies in global shared services (2) using strong portfolio management to reduce spend in non-strategic areas and (3) through strong procurement and vendor management processes.

Making change on this scale is a journey, not an overnight event. It takes employees both within and outside IT to learn and mature the operational processes. Similarly trust can only be earned through delivery of results rather than fancy PowerPoint slides. To date, we have been effective in creating successes that give our business owners the confidence to commit to more cross-divisional projects.

Results Obtained

Many of our first objectives have been achieved. It's important to note that with the continual building of our transformational skills we will consistently improve our offerings to better serve our customers.

One of our earliest achievements was the creation of a corporate governance role that sits within the central IT department and acts as ‘global glue’ to arbitrate how our systems deliver. This role, CIO of Global Systems & Governance, regularly interacts with divisional CFOs and CIOs to ensure our systems, procurement, and portfolio management is meeting the business needs. The biggest achievement of this role is having a consistent view of the business. We now have a single vantage and dashboard metrics for the observation and measurements of system capabilities, customer feedback, and process adherence.

Another early achievement was the integration of our North American and European shared services. By creating a unified IT support shared services team, we are now able to offer 18 hours of service desk help to our employees by providing “follow the sun” cover. This increase has been an incredible improvement for travellers and flexi-time workers. Further, the merging of our service desks has allowed us to have consistency in wireless networks, password management and broader infrastructure. A worker from London can now sit down and log in to the network in New York without needing any additional passwords or system configurations.

We have also achieved more consistency in message collaboration. Historically, we operated with fragmented capabilities throughout the business. As a result of our efforts, regional hubs were created in North America, Europe, and Asia to enforce consistency in their territory. Our next step is to merge our hubs to create a global structure. We are working to ensure that UBM employees

can instant message, email, and see free/busy schedules across divisional boundaries. Additionally, we will have each employee working with the same software and internet versions, so that we are able to collaborate globally with ease.

Further, our biggest achievement to date is the cross-divisional roll-out of large show sales, finance and HR applications. Enterprise systems were completely new to UBM, so to achieve this implementation a completely new set of skills was required. We had to create a culture of transformation to be able to achieve this roll-out. We called this, CORE, and it’s an on-going project which embodies the goal of transformation and innovation to serve our customers. Everyone in UBM became involved in the CORE project, from Finance to HR to product teams and everyone in between; all of UBM adopted new technology and upgraded their skills. By achieving our first system roll-out with CORE, we have established the confidence, the skills, the culture, and the roadmap for enterprise level projects. This monumental culture shift gives us a robust support system from which we can continue to innovate and improve to fulfil our customer’s needs for years to come.

Ultimately, our customers are both the biggest stakeholders in our new IT organisational structure as well as the primary beneficiaries of our achievements. By having global governance roles we are now able to quickly innovate and adapt capabilities worldwide, our shared service desk allows our employees to engage with our customers with ease anywhere in the world, and our consistent messaging systems allow for our customer service teams to address our customer’s needs quicker and more efficiently. The biggest improvement to our relationships with our customers is a result of our CORE project. We now have unified billing, unified purchase ordering, unified HRIS, and unified reporting. Having seamless processes has resulted in a more streamlined process for our customer interactions, and allowed our employees to focus on creating the best possible experience when interacting with UBM. Finally, having a culture of transformational skills throughout the business has given us the opportunity to pursue unprecedented solutions for our customers and communities into the future.

