

customer: Bull Nederland – Managed Services & Outsourcing, Diemen
challenge: Access to clear cost and cost differentiation information for 'managed services'
objectives: (cost) effective work within SLAs, quality service
solution: PrioX Service Management suite, PrioX Business Intelligence Reporter

“Reducing the 'human error factor' to zero may seem a bit ambitious but you should at least strive for it”

Optimisation of primary business, especially at a time of high competition with discerning and demanding audiences, is crucial for businesses and organisations. Sometimes so much so that relatively small time savings within a complex process can make the difference between winning and losing or between satisfied and dissatisfied customers. Bull Nederland focuses on IT solutions in the sectors of government, healthcare, retail, finance, industry and larger companies within the SME segment. Bull offers a wide range of integrated open IT solutions based on managed services and outsourcing. Because in the sectors mentioned above there are many critical business processes, there are also strict rules and criteria for implementation such as stability, capacity and performance as defined in Service Level Agreements (SLAs).

To determine whether, and to what extent, compliance is within SLA requirements there is reliance on detailed monthly reports. These reports are also used for informing management and internal sources.



Sander Van Steekelenburg, a programme director at Bull PICTO Outsourcing and formerly manager of the Outsourcing & Managed Services Department, has been involved in numerous IT projects for various clients. One of the biggest challenges he and his team faced was to reduce the time taken to produce clear and informative reporting for both the customer and Bull.

Van Steekelenburg believes “The prompt production of detailed reports not only determines whether we are working within the SLA, but provides evaluation of the content process and therefore allows further improvements, thus making procedures more efficient. You must of course first have the right Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) defined.”

Besides this aspect of quality control there is a not insignificant economic incentive. At the very least there must be clarity regarding the use of available resources in relation to the final margin, the allocation of resources and their consistency with the actual work done. In other words: who is involved, doing what and could this be done better and/or more cost effectively?

The challenge

“At Bull we need the ability to continue to look forward to further understanding the real costs, both in size and by service category, related to the various services for managed services & outsourcing contracts” said Van Steekelenburg.

“Fluctuating personnel costs were a major influence on the overall costs. Changes in shared tasks, the use of contractors and a flexible permanent workforce were not fully included in any previous financial planning, so there was much uncertainty around these factors. Major elements of the cost effective deployment of people and their productivity (billable hours) were in delivering an extended 24x7 'service window', distribution of different tasks within 1st, 2nd and 3rd line support and the management of all ITIL processes. In particular the daily control of operations and monitoring of contracted SLAs was time consuming, leaving less time for analysing the results” added Van Steekelenburg.

The solution

A carefully prepared, phased implementation of the PrioX Service Management suite appeared to be the solution. This suite is modular, supporting the ITIL processes of incident management, problem management, change management, task management, configuration management, service level management (SLM), availability management and capacity management. In addition the PrioX suite of management control supports all managed services and outsourcing contracts.

The first step was to implement the incident management process so that the treatment of an 'incident' would run smoother, with better control being created for the handling of customer calls.

Once this proved to work well, management wanted to better understand the actual time spent on projects by the support teams, with a view to improving efficiency and gaining faster reduction in costs. Of the ITIL processes the most advantageous at this point were those of incident, problem and change management.

In Van Steekelenburg's words "An important advantage of the Priox Service Management suite is that it is a complete product. This means that not only are all of the supporting processes and procedures important for Bull and subsequently customers but that every detail can be specifically tailored to the way in which we support users: a kind of 'toolbox' with enormous possibilities, resulting in a very flexible and fully scalable whole."

A number of reports are compiled using the Priox Business Intelligence Reporter, combined with Microsoft Reporting Services. This concept highlights demonstrable improvements in the form of higher effectiveness and a better controlled organisation.

The monitoring screens in the Department continuously run the Priox Dashboard with KPIs. It is also possible to run some reports with a higher level of detail than the general reports. The web interface allows a large number of employees in different departments and (international) locations to make use of the Priox Service Management suite.

Bull has the expectation that the cost resulting from more efficient use of IT resources can be managed even better. In future it is intended to provide the 'live' KPI Dashboard to customers so they have the same up to the minute information as those in the 'control room' in Diemen.

Bull Nederland: IT is a means, not an end

Being part of the European Bull Group, established and listed in Paris with 8600 employees in almost 50 countries, Bull Nederland focuses on the sectors of government, healthcare, retail, finance, and the larger of the companies within the SME segment.

Bull has an extensive portfolio of solutions and services, the five main pillars being Storage/Data Lifecycle Management, Security, High Performance Computing, Outsourcing and Managed Services.

More than 50% of Bull's sales come from contracts for service and technology integration with flexible and open IT solutions in mind.

Priox: be in control

Priox develops 'smart' software that allows in depth and clear service management and outsourcing insight. The Priox Service Management suite (PSM) enables its users to continuously monitor processes around service management and outsourcing. This is based upon actual Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and allows proactive intervention where necessary. PSM will also generate clear, relevant reports in seconds rather than days, thus enabling rapid process optimisation. Combined with Priox' Business Intelligence software the PSM offers total control of the entire IT supply chain, both demand for IT and IT supply.

Besides the reports produced under the customer contract, there is a reporting site (mainly through Dashboards) for management information and internal control.

The result

With the implementation of the Priox Service Management suite 3.5 years ago, Bull's ITIL service management processes around its managed service and outsourcing contracts are now not only completely clear, but have also improved dramatically in quality. This better understanding subsequently led to further refinements of the different processes.



An important advantage is that KPI issues are dealt with much more quickly, resulting not only in time gain but also in early and appropriate management information.

Van Steekelenburg:

"Thanks to the capability of the Priox Business Intelligence Reporter, in combination with their Service Management suite, we have increased cost savings by at least 15% and productivity of the Department of Managed Services & Outsourcing has also substantially increased. Apart from these benefits we can also focus more on core business, that of optimising primary business with IT as a means."

Human error factor

"The 'human error factor' remains the biggest cause of error in most processes and whilst we cannot completely eliminate this, we continue to strive to improve. In this respect the Priox Service Management suite helps enormously" said the enthusiastic programme director.