

Challenges, Solutions & Results

Case 1 – Build a framework to provide support for 7 recently acquired businesses. Leverage the similarities while recognizing and accommodating the differences.

Challenge:

1. Numerous corporations acquired in a very short period of time
2. Dissimilar in:
 - a. business type
 - b. technology platforms
 - c. application tools employed
 - d. operating systems employed
 - e. management skills and experience
3. Similar in:
 - a. Level of financial distress
 - b. Lack of Vision
 - c. Lack of Strategy
 - d. Desire to grow and prosper
 - e. Desire to become part of the solution
 - f. Technology being key to success
 - g. Technology being somewhat disenfranchised from decision-making processes
 - h. Gaps in tools, technology, services

Solution:

To meet these challenges, I organized a worldwide group of “Tiger Teams” from a variety of disciplines (not just IT) pulling resources from 7 companies within the parent’s portfolio of companies. These were located in 5 countries on 3 continents. Together, we established a Strategic vision which drove our tactical projects to implement those technology initiatives which had the highest probability for success, the largest return on investment and reasonable timelines for implementation. Some of these projects were:

- Solution - Telecommunications
Primarily, migration to Voice Over IP.
Result –
In the first 45 days, we saved over \$150,000 by implementing VOIP in just one facility. We planned and executed on many more implementations after this proof of concept was judged to be successful
- Solution - Centralization
Migration from distributed technology to centralized.
Result –
This led to reduced staffing, consistent maintenance, increased security posture and better utilization of real estate
- Action – Shared Staffing
I established teams of enterprise resources who would serve all portfolio companies.
Result –
This allowed us to level resource utilization and provided for flex in times of extreme need for an individual company. This also allowed us to provide services to companies which they had not been individually able to afford – such as Security experts, System Administrators and a Help Desk that operated 24 x 7 x 365.
- Solution - Application platforms

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- We established a common standard for industry recognized development tools and methodologies
- Result –
Ensured consistency of product, ease of training, most economical use of resources, enhanced career paths and easier recruitment practices
- Solution - Quality Assurance Consistency
I created a common QA team with one set of standards/methodologies for the entire enterprise.
- Result –
This led to increased speed to market while simultaneously increasing quality, reduced at-fault re-work and higher customer satisfaction
- Solution - Database platforms
The 2 largest (MS-SQL & Oracle) were retained and the smaller ones were phased out.
- Result –
Future development rollouts were planned for MS-SQL primarily because of the cost-savings this solution represented when compared to Oracle.
- Solution - Licensing strategies
I centralized the management of all licensing.
- Result –
We saved over \$750,000 in the first year by leveraging the buying power of 7 companies
- Solution - Disaster Recovery and Fault Tolerance
Each company had its own data centers. I folded some of the smaller technology installations into larger ones. I established cross-company DR and FT contingencies.
- Result –
This gave DR and FT capabilities to companies whom had never had these critical business capabilities at a cost far below market

Case 2 – Excell Contact Centres – Win or go home

Challenge:

- In 2002, Scotland-based Excell Contact Centres was attempting to rebuild itself after having suffered crippling losses of their 2 largest customers, who had themselves fallen on hard times
- The US-based owners of the company who had numerous ownership interests in companies across the globe contacted me concerning Excell
- As the owner described the situation, Excell had once:
 - Employed over 500 staff
 - Operated out of 3 facilities
 - Generated over £25MM/year in revenue
- When I was recruited, Excell was:
 - Employing fewer than 2 dozen staff
 - Mothballed 2 of its 3 facilities
 - Generating less than £1MM/year in revenue
- There was a sense of hope, tempered by a somber sense of reality.
- Excell had won an opportunity to perform a large amount of work for one of the world's largest providers of pensions, life insurance and investment products. Being awarded this contract would not just restore Excell to the position they had once

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been in, but would easily propel them well past it. However, they had a challenging task in front of them. They had to build a Customer Relationship Management system which had to meet strict client requirements and successfully pass a rigorous certification process.

- The owner was blunt – if Excell did not pass the certification process, thereby guaranteeing a bounty of work, he would be forced to take his losses and close Excell forever.
- The client had allotted 12 weeks of preparation to Excell
- When I was recruited, 6 weeks had already passed.
- Despite the fact that 3 teams were working on the project, they were no closer to completion than they were when they had started.

Solution:

- When I landed, the CEO suggested that I take the day to adjust to the new time zone.
- I declined when I learned that the lead managers from the 2 external companies were to be on-site after lunch for a status meeting.
- I spent the morning familiarizing myself with the project details, the installed technology and the technology staff.
- When the leaders of the three teams were assembled, after introductions were made, I gave them my assessment that the situation was dire and the cost of failure went far beyond the pounds and pence. The community at large who had invested heavily in the company in the form of tax incentives for jobs, would lose when those paychecks stopped coming. The vendors who supported Excell through credit terms and generous payment terms would lose when the well ran dry. I asked each leader to commit that they would not leave the meeting without working with me the balance of the day to create a timeline for success.
- They stayed for then next 8 hours working with me to create a schedule to complete our work in the 6 weeks that remained to us. I imposed only one deadline – the final one. The individual way-points were negotiated.
- We set protocols for communicating progress. I insisted that each stakeholder escalate all risks immediately to all parties and that we share contact information to ensure 24 x 7 access to decision-makers.
- All team members worked 6 days a week, 10 hours per day.
- Select players also worked on Sunday, as needed.

Result/Benefit

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- Excell passed the certification test on time
- After passing the certification, the Operations Department began, limited pre-launch work under the guidance of the client, the IT Department and its vendor teams worked to expand the product set we would be supporting. The HR department recruited and trained to ensure that 120 Full Time Equivalent agents would be prepared to take calls on Launch Day.
- I was offered full-time employment
- My Agreement called for me to be on-site in Scotland for 2-3 weeks followed by a company-funded flight home for 1 week where I would manage my responsibilities remotely.
- Epilogue –
 - I continued with Excell into July of 2002, travelling back to the US on occasion for a week at a time
 - On one of my returns to the US, I was recruited into the CIO role at TeleSpectrum. As much as I loved Scotland and as proud as I was of what I had accomplished, a 14 mile commute was a lot easier than 3,259 miles.
 - Within 2 years, Excell filled its facility and re-opened the 2 previously mothballed facilities.
 - Today, Excell is an anchor property for a global provider of Call Centre and Business Process Outsourcing solutions formed by the owners who originally sought my assistance. Excell operates within a network of 17 outsourcing centres across Australia, UK, USA, Canada and the Philippines.

Case 3 – TeleSpectrum – Salvage the deal with Verizon Mega-Center at the 11th hour and 59th minute

Challenge:

At the beginning of my third year at TeleSpectrum, 2004, a particularly large and strategically important deal was in its final stages of a long and competitive process. I was on vacation when I received a call from the Chairman of the Board (COB) who informed me that the deal was coming unraveled as a result of the departure of our CEO. Our competitor had used the unexpected departure of the CEO to raise

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confidence issues with the Client who accelerated the schedule for our Final presentations by two weeks.

Solution:

The COB was very anxious to have me come along to ensure that we had all the horsepower we could muster to win the contract. He picked me up in his private plane at a local airport; we flew to the client location and spent the day getting the deal back on track for TeleSpectrum.

Result/Benefit

We won the bid which was valued at over \$25M per year for the next 3 years.

Case 4 – TeleSpectrum – force majeure December 2004

Challenge:

A force majeure event caused a catastrophic failure of TeleSpectrum's predictive dialing systems across the enterprise which threatened resumption of work for over 3,500 agents on the next business day.

Support from the vendor would be unavailable for 5 business days.

Solution:

Mobilized resources from all departments to find a solution or alternative and created a virtual command center.

Result/Benefit

After 42 hours straight, the team had created and installed a solution making us ready for business.

Revenue Loss Experienced:	\$ 113,400
Revenue Loss Avoided:	\$1,587,600
Benefit:	\$1,474,200

Case 5 – TRG – Support iSKY

Challenge:

- December 2004
- I was CIO for TeleSpectrum
- CEO for sister company, iSKY, had been struggling with numerous IT problems

....such as:

- Major security breach
- Dysfunctional IT organization
- High IT costs
- Major delays in implementing even limited change
- No maintenance on critical equipment
- No licenses on critical software
- No backups
- No network administrator

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- Major slowdowns in segments of their 500-seat facility which prevented them from filling seats beyond 300
- Inability to take advantage of available offshore resources for voice work at one of our offshore facilities who had been authorized to perform for an onshore client
- Business-hours-only Help-Desk
- TRG CTO asked my to lend a hand by spending a few weeks at iSKY's facilities to assess and recommend a road-map for the future

Solution:

- Spent first week analyzing landscape
- In second week, brought in a SWAT team of resources to create very detailed documentation of the most serious issues.
- Created a budget for immediate remediation as a proposal for continuing support services.
- Presented plans to TRG CTO as well as iSKY CEO.
- iSKY CEO bought into the plan, but the remainder of the organization strongly resisted.
- Spent several weeks "selling the plan" to the company. Made some minor changes, mainly in positioning the plan as a collaborative effort which allowed iSKY input to the processes under my direction.
- Created a support organization for iSKY which augmented their staff with resources from TeleSpectrum
- Was appointed CIO of iSKY while retaining CIO title for TeleSpectrum
- Led the remediation of the Security breach, including interacting with the affected clients' representatives
- Led the remediation of the slowdown issues in their largest facility which allowed them to expand into the 200 seats which had previously been unusable
- Led the remediation effort to correct the VOIP issues which had prevented the use of offshore resources

Result/Benefit

- In the end, iSKY gained much:
 - Functional backup equipment at no cost to them, saving them \$50,000
 - Functional Storage Array Network, Saving them \$100,000
 - 24 X 7 X 365 Help-Desk at a fraction of the cost they had been spending for their Business-hours-only Help-Desk, saving them \$60,000 per year
 - Restructuring of their telecommunications assets and contracts saving them over \$400,000 per year
 - Remediation of security breach saving them incalculable goodwill with their customer base. Retained the customer who was our largest, generating over \$20,000,000 per year in revenue.
 - Created savings of 30% through labor arbitrage once the VOIP was remedied
 - Increasing seat ability in the largest facility allowed iSKY to immediately perform on two contracts which were collectively worth \$500,000.

Case 6 – TeleSpectrum – Assist Nationwide Telecommunications giant

Challenge:

Received a call at 6:30 PM. A Nationwide Telecommunications giant had received notification that one of their vendors was unexpectedly shuttered overnight as a result of

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bankruptcy proceedings. They needed our assistance to take over for the bankrupt provider in time to take calls the next morning.

Solution:

I established virtual command post, planned a skeleton solution which could be accomplished in the 16 hours available to us by working closely with the client's network and telecommunications engineers.

Result/Benefit

We were ready at 9 AM to take calls.

Case 7 – TSA

Challenge:

- I began work as CIO of TeleSpectrum on July 8, 2002
- Prior to my start, TeleSpectrum had won a sub-contract to assist the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) in its Congressionally mandated mission to develop, implement and execute an overarching qualification, assessment, staffing, and placement system and to provide on-going HR services for airport Security Screeners, Law Enforcement Officers (LEOs) and other TSA personnel in compliance with federal law, regulation and policy allowing TSA to meet or exceed dated mandates and other legislative requirements of the ATSA.
- In the wake of the September 11, 2001 tragedy, the goal was to fill 56,000 airport screener positions to provide security at 429 airports in the United States.
- TeleSpectrum was required to be prepared to take calls by July 17, 2002.
- The staffing mandates set by Congress were required to be accomplished no later than December 17, 2002.
- TeleSpectrum's Information Technology Department was required to prepare all necessary technology to support 400 Full-Time Equivalent staff members to process candidate applications/inquiries on the basis of twenty-four (24) hours a day, seven (7) days a week.
- TeleSpectrum's Information Technology Department was in a state of Zero-readiness.

Solution:

- To fully familiarize myself and my staff of the scope of the project, I conducted an intensive review and planning session with the Information Technology Department along with representatives from both the Sales and Client Service Departments.
- I created a dynamic and quick-response decisioning system to address issues, overcome roadblocks and to ensure continuous progress.
- Within 24 hours, I held a conference call with the prime contractor's representatives to make them aware of our readiness state.
- I informed the Prime Contractor that my assessment was that although we weren't ready to meet our responsibilities, there was only one fairly significant roadblock to being ready on time. That roadblock was telecommunications. Dedicated communication facilities had not been ordered by TeleSpectrum and would take 45 days, minimum, to be provisioned to connect our network with the Prime Contractor's network.
- I then followed with a proposition for still meeting our commitment timeline. I suggested that we establish a Virtual Private Network (VPN) between our two facilities which would allow us to access the systems that resided there. Very little equipment was required for this that was not already part of our inventory or theirs.

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- The client was at first reluctant. Although VPNs existed at that time, they were more commonly utilized within a single corporation's Wide Area Network and were rarely found between two unrelated corporations.
- The CIO for the Prime contractor and I agreed to take the question offline for a more in-depth discussion. The conversation became more of an effort to build confidence in each other and in the plan.
- Being so close to the start of this initiative, the Prime Contractor was under the gun to deliver on-time.
- The initiative was operating under intense scrutiny of the US Congress, and by extension, the US Press.
- TeleSpectrum was to be responsible for approximately 30% of the effort.
- The initiative would fail without TeleSpectrum's efforts.
- The CIO for the Prime contractor and I built a trusting and respectful relationship very quickly and we encouraged our superiors to move forward with the VPN solution with assurances that the solution did not in any way compromise the quality, security or performance capabilities of the originally conceived communications transport.

Results for TeleSpectrum over 5 months:

	Revenue in \$MM
Revenues	\$8.30
Gross Margin \$	\$2.62

Gross Margin % 31.55%

- Combined, the Prime Contractor and their Sub-Contractors:
 - assessed more than 328,000 candidates which led to...
 - more than 56,000 people being hired by the TSA
- TeleSpectrum was responsible for over 30% of the effort.
- The success of this program was a significant contributor to TeleSpectrum becoming profitable for the first time in its existence

Case 8 – TRG - FEMA Deploy 1,000's of respondents for Katrina-Like disaster

Challenge:

- In the wake of failed service delivery following the Katrina disaster, Congress mandated FEMA to create a robust support services process/infrastructure to ensure that services and support could be provided in a streamlined, efficient manner to meet the needs of affected citizens.
- The Resource Group was seeking to create a winning bid to perform sub-contractor services to FEMA.
- TRG was being asked to create a business plan which would provide for the following:
 - Within 24 hours of notification by FEMA, provide 1,000 agents who would be capable of taking phone calls 24 x 7 x 365 from citizens who have been impacted by disaster
 - Within 48 hours of notification by FEMA, provide another 1,000 agents
 - Within 72 hours and continuing until the emergency is declared to be over, provide another 1,000 agents

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- TRG's efforts to create a winning bid were stalled by unavailability of a leadership resource who possessed the skills and experience to:
 - manage contract negotiations with the client as well as support vendors,
 - coordinate the design of groundbreaking technology solutions,
 - manage multiple, cross-functional resources in the planning and eventual execution of the project
- The clarity of the documentation which was provided or prepared was entirely inadequate
- All of the resources who participated in the early interactions with this process had been re-assigned to other duties
- This opportunity was projected to conservatively represent over \$15MM per year

Solution:

- When the resource who had been leading this effort resigned, I was asked to step in to assist
- I began at the beginning by reviewing the original RFP
- I spoke to all of the early participants
- I spoke to my predecessor
- I spoke to the client's operational representatives from whom I received much clarification
- Once I had all my background information, I began my contract negotiations with the client's legal representatives as well as representatives from a key support vendor

Result/Benefit

- Although we won the bid, TRG was later released from the list of participants as a result of belt-tightening at FEMA, a contingency provided for in the FEMA contract.

Case 9 – RMH – AT&T system for sales/service

Challenge:

I was influential in winning the opportunity for our company to build a prototype Customer Relationship Management System for what was then the largest telecommunications company in the world. I assisted the Sales Team in cultivating this opportunity by frequently meeting with client representatives to review the requirements, discuss their goals and expectations and white-board processes. The many hours of meetings gave the client the confidence that we could proceed to the next step, which was to build a prototype system which would then be required to pass a strict certification process.

Early on, it became evident that our core platform would be inadequate to the task. It had severe technical limitations which were not just minor inconveniences, they were show-stoppers. The client interactions for which we would be responsible were fuelled by extraordinarily complex data relationships and numerous data collection points. The type of data we were required to collect and the relationship of these various data elements were infinitely variable and constantly changing - sometimes on a daily basis.

Solution:

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Fortunately, I had introduced object-oriented programming languages and enterprise relational databases to the organization the previous year, knowing that a day like this would come some day.

These more modern systems were being used to replace our antiquated back-end systems for processing data collected by the primitive system. The problem was that the modern systems were essentially de-coupled from the primitive system. The two systems only communicated with each other in offline, batch mode.

The primitive system was critical for its telephony capabilities. The modern systems were critical for their flexibility and relational data power. The challenge was to find a way to couple the 2 systems seamlessly. The manufacturer of the primitive system had been promising for years to provide an API to extend the utility of its interface, but it was nowhere on the horizon.

I conceived of the idea to build our own interconnect between the two systems.

Result/Benefit

The incremental cost of this solution was approximately \$15,000. The incremental revenue of this opportunity was \$16,000,000 per year.

When it came time to certify the application, we passed with flying colors and our efforts were described as representing the model by which future agencies would be measured.