



Case study

Name: Computacenter
Sector: IT Infrastructure Services
Location: Cape Town, South Africa

Project Cheetah – Getting South Africa up to Speed

Following successful performance improvement projects within the Global Infrastructure Organisation division of Computacenter UK and Germany, there was the desire from Computacenter to re-engage with Managementors for support within their IT Infrastructure services team in South Africa.

Managementors supported Computacenter to quickly develop and implement a solution to measure the performance of 300 people within their second and third line engineering teams, whilst also working with Team Leaders and Operations Managers. Furthermore, there was the need to implement this solution so that it aligned with Computacenter's pre-existing systems. Specific activities around reporting, implementing a culture of active management and establishing an effective Management Operating System (MOS), improved the visibility of engineer performance, reduced the cost of service delivery and resulted in significant financial gains.

Key challenges

- A desire to align systems and tools with those used in other locations
- Requirement to measure the performance of the South African operation against other parts of the business
- Managers required improved visibility of staff activity and more specific performance data
- Control of resource requirements needed improvement

Key gains

- Better alignment with other parts of the business providing similar services
- Full implementation of Management Operating System (MOS)
- Accurate resource management with clearer visibility of actual requirements
- Clear understanding of engineer activity and performance
- Improved performance putting the South African operation in an ideal position to take on more work

Background

Computacenter is a leading independent provider of IT infrastructure services and advises businesses and users on IT strategy, technology implementation and performance optimisation, as well as managing customers' IT infrastructures. The company provides user support, the best devices, and secure provision of applications and data to support individual working styles and improve collaboration with consulting, as well as the implementation and operation of networks and datacentre infrastructures on or off customer premises and in the Cloud.

Computacenter combines global reach with local expertise through Service Centres worldwide, from which employees provide user support in 18 languages. The company provides local services in over 70 countries.

"We definitely wouldn't have achieved the same outcomes doing this on our own – it would have taken us two months longer to achieve half as much – we wouldn't have driven the change as quickly and effectively as Managementors did."

*Paul Norris, Managing Director
South Africa – Computacenter*



Challenge:

Having worked with Computacenter for a number of years, Managementors was asked to support the team in South Africa within their IT Infrastructure division. Detailed studies were carried out on-site, at both operative and supervisory levels, to identify the current issues and challenges within the team in South Africa.

Following the successful implementation of an effective MOS within the Infrastructure divisions of Computacenter in the UK and Germany, Paul Norris, Managing Director South Africa, recognised the lack of a MOS in South Africa as one of their biggest challenges, “We didn’t have a MOS implemented in South Africa and we wanted to get this standard operating system process in place so we could deliver a consistent level of service across the group.”

Within the division, another key issue was that the managers didn’t have visibility of what activity was happening or what was being delivered. Paul Norris adds, “There was no true productivity measurement, monitoring or control across the infrastructure team”. As a result, workforce management wasn’t being effectively applied.

Furthermore, due to this lack of control, bad habits were prevalent in engineers’ behaviour. Therefore, it was apparent there was a fundamental need to quickly develop and implement a solution to measure the performance of their first, second and third line engineering teams within this division.

Consequently, Project Cheetah was initiated, with Managementors bringing together internal resources, key stakeholders and a team of consultants to implement the changes needed for Computacenter to match the consistent level of service delivered across the rest of the group.



Approach:

Managers worked alongside Team Leaders and Operations Managers in order to gain full visibility of engineer activity, ascertain headcount requirements, reduce the cost of service and improve SLA performance.

One of the key challenges of the project was changing the behaviour of the team in South Africa. Paul stated, "South Africa has operated in such a way for a long time; they were entrenched in a certain way of working. If we asked people to change, you'd get the usual human behaviour and resistance." Therefore, it was important to gain acceptance by altering the overall cultural behaviour of the team and developing strong relationships from the beginning of the project. Once the team were exposed to the project, Paul comments that "In the main, there was a positive reaction. When comparing this engagement to previous engagements with Managers, this team were most accepting at such an early stage."

The project consisted of three phases, which each followed a similar process. The process included development of PGL's, training on the newly implemented MOS and the new Project Tracker Tool, which Paul suggests was more than just a simple means of driving productivity; "It was about creating an operating system that drives the process of continual improvement, in the forecasting and planning of the issues and taking the opportunity to resolve them."

There was also a focus on Team Leader coaching, which gave the Team Leaders the skills to identify issues which could then be analysed on a daily basis. Once the Team Leaders were exposed to the issues and the data, they were able to comprehend and interpret it, leading to an understanding of where improvements could be made. "This data was interpreted through the right coaching, enabling them to see the opportunity for change and the benefit for the company and the customers," comments Paul.

For Paul, another key aspiration of the project was with the employees – he not only wanted to enhance job satisfaction, but also ascertain headcount requirements necessary for each job. "We wanted to increase job satisfaction for employees and make sure we were not under or overloading the workforce," he added. The key to this was to drive quality by giving the leadership more skills and forecasting workload smarter, by being more effective with resource planning.

Paul stated that "One of the successes of the project was how the Managers team developed strong relationships across all levels of the business – from Operations Managers to Team Leader level." This support and focus from Managers enabled the Operational Management Team to successfully implement the required controls and mechanisms in order to effectively run the business and drive out inefficiencies and issues within the service delivery.

"The proof is in the pudding, when looking at the results that have come through. The fact we are engaging with Managers in other areas is testimony to our satisfaction with this project and how the MOS was implemented in the service desk."

*Paul Norris, Managing Director
South Africa – Computacenter*



Outcomes:

The full implementation of the MOS and Managementors' delivery has had significant impact on the team in South Africa, who have now received the right coaching to continue with the governance of the MOS. This implementation, alongside specific training to develop management skills, has helped to deliver the project objectives and benefits in a sustainable manner. Consequently, the development of the MOS will carry on post project. Paul states, "We feel that we will continue to develop and evolve the MOS – with the rigour we have put in place, the team are empowered to be accountable for the governance of the MOS moving forwards."

The shift in culture and visibility of data enabled informed decisions to be made, which is a significant gain for Paul, "Before we weren't always making the right decisions due to a lack of meaningful information, but now we are driving a culture shift of implementing change to stop us being complacent. We are constantly looking at what the issues are and working them through – we have created different behaviours and now have more of a forward look on service."

In addition to the substantial financial benefits, the understanding of the processes, data and PGL's were other key benefits resulting from the project. Paul added, "The education of the team on how to use data to better proactively manage a service team is invaluable and will underpin the behaviours we want to engender about driving continual improvement."

Paul recognised there were inefficiencies in how the team in South Africa were operating and remarks it was the right decision to engage with Managementors, seeing how well the project turned out. "We weren't as knowledgeable about the service as we could have been, however I knew there was wastage. We learnt how to work smarter, not harder – Managementors gave more than what we were expecting!"

Paul concludes, "The Managementors team engaged well with the team in South Africa, aligning their own personal approaches, behaviour and attitude with our teams. I would recommend Managementors from an engagement, capability and results point of view – I'd implement the MOS elsewhere in the business without a second thought."



Contact us to find out what Managementors can do for you

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