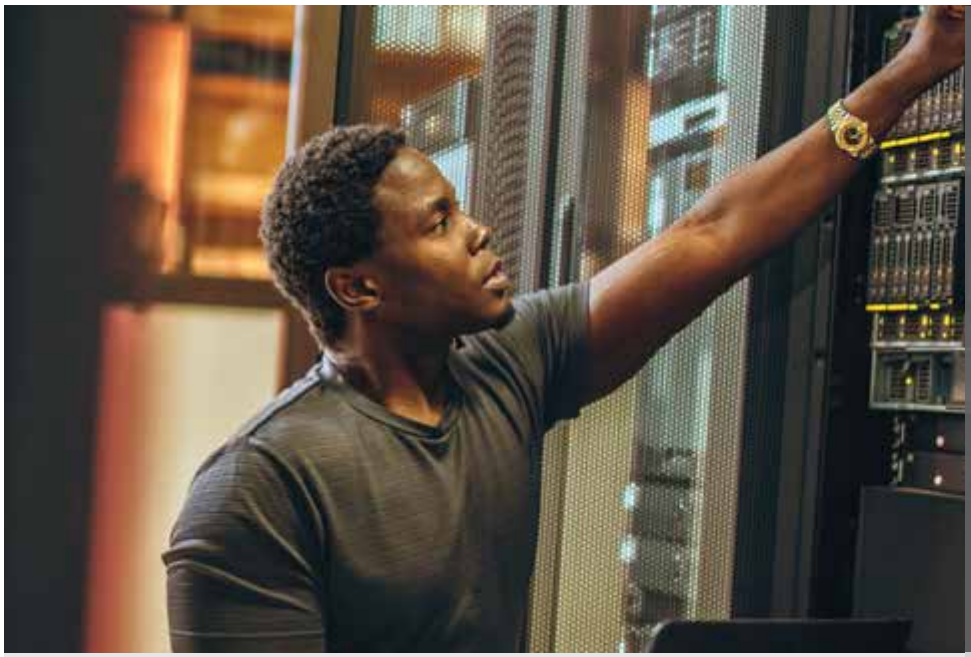
m² managementors

creating sustainable business advantage

Computacenter



Case study

Name: Computacenter
Sector: Information Technology
Location: UK Wide

Managementors with Computacenter – Project Puma

Computacenter is one of Europe's leading providers of IT services. In a highly competitive market both cost and quality of service are vital to customers. To stay ahead of the competition, Computacenter has been redesigning its delivery model to move as much work as possible to self-service and automation. There are, however, always calls that require an engineer visit and, as part of the improvements in this area, a technology solution was specified to get the correct engineer to the job at the correct time.

Key challenges

- To get the business in shape for technology rollout
- To reduce cost to serve whilst improving service to customer
- To align processes and behaviours with new ways of working

Key gains

- Improved control over field engineers
- Reduced cost and improved service to clients
- Foundations for new ways of working in place for technology rollout
- Significant cost savings realised

It wasn't all about technology though and work was required to ensure that processes and people supported the new way of working. As a precursor to the technology implementation, Managementors' experience in working with remote workforces was sought to help understand and shape the environment in readiness for implementation. Following a field study, it was decided that whilst there would be value in technology, there was also an immediate gain to be achieved through a wider programme of behavioural change, management coaching and process re-engineering. Project Puma was born, and through a 48-week programme focusing on management skills, tools and process re-engineering, Managementors ensured the ground was prepared for automation whilst delivering over £4m of annualised cost savings and improving service.

In a competitive environment where service and cost are key, Computacenter had been looking at introducing technology in order to improve the offering to customers. A lot of this had already been delivered under the PASS12T banner by preventing issues, automating resolution and, where this had not been possible, resolving the problem at the earliest opportunity remotely. Where this resolution was not possible a visit (touch) was required, with deskside engineers being controlled by a team of schedulers on a contract-by-contract basis. There was a desire to move towards a shared delivery model, with centralised scheduling allocating the most appropriate resource to site on a task-by-task basis.

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.

Analysis

Having worked with Computacenter for a number of years, Managementors was asked to review the existing deskside services in order to understand the situation within the engineering community and help develop the route map for the proposed solution. Detailed studies were carried out on-site at both the operative and supervisory level, to identify current levels of performance and the issues affecting this performance. A study was also conducted on Team Leaders to identify how they were actually managing their teams and how much of their time they spent carrying out technical roles. Both they and their managers were also asked about their current role and future aspirations, in order to understand the work required to move them into true supervisory roles. Staff were also surveyed on their perception of the organisation's current performance, in order to gain an understanding of their willingness and ability to change.

During the course of this analysis it became evident that there were a number of activities that could be undertaken which would support the eventual rollout of a technological solution whilst, in the short term, delivering significant benefits through better management of the resource on-site, together with the development of a more effective scheduling organisation in the centre to drive performance. This needed to be aided by intensive coaching and through the realignment of processes, tools and structures to support it.

As a consequence, Project Puma was instigated, with Managementors bringing together internal resources, key stakeholders and a team of consultants in making the changes which would lay the behavioural and process foundations for FFA. Service is key to clients and a significant challenge was to maintain or increase the existing performance whilst also make significant cost savings.

"The one team approach taken by Managementors was pivotal to ensuring the changes implemented would become embedded within the organisation. The benefits of working with us to implement the change, rather than Managementors enforcing the change upon the teams, was twofold. First of all, people were more accepting of the change and, secondly, they took responsibility to ensure the changes became embedded in the way we worked".

Paul Norris, Director of Service Management – Computacenter

Key Activities and Scope

Project activities were focused around three main areas – process redevelopment, management operating system development and training to develop supervisors' management skills. This was further refined with a series of quick wins designed to bring about initial change, to build momentum in the project and to show managers that change was something they could influence. The project scope encompassed field based engineers working on client sites, together with the schedulers who managed their workload.

Project Activities

The project focused on two areas of the business – the central scheduling function and the on-site delivery function. The 48-week schedule included a pilot to demonstrate proof of concept, followed by a multi-phase rollout.

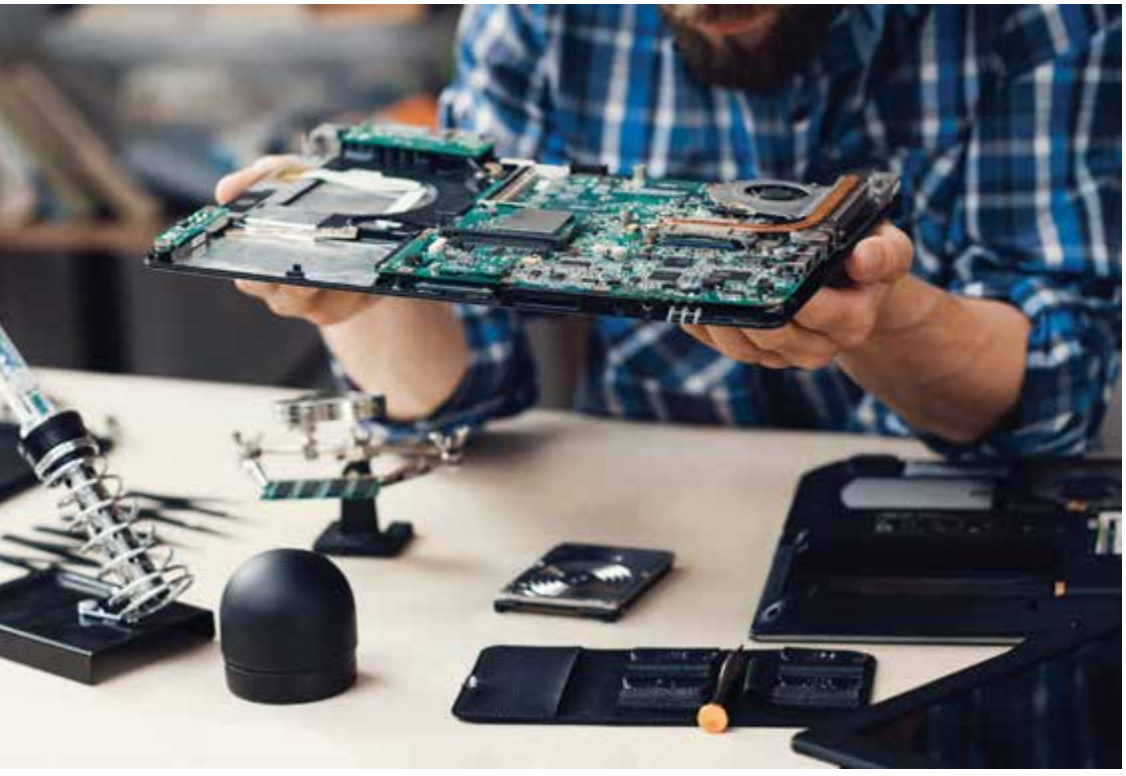
As a first step the existing end-to-end job scheduling process was mapped and critiqued using key members of staff. Following this a revised process was created and job roles redeveloped to support this process. New reporting metrics were created and daily performance review meetings instigated in both the centre and the field. The focus on process, people and tools enabled managers to quickly uncover and take action on the issues that were causing lower than optimum performance. Within central scheduling, the focus was on maximising engineer utilisation through an improved planning process, which ensured engineers had enough work to keep them occupied during the day, that these jobs were planned in an optimal manner and that service level targets were achieved. In the field, the focus was on ensuring that the planned jobs were completed when due. This was achieved through coaching managers on-site to review performance effectively and address issues appropriately.

Consultant activities were, therefore, split between roles that were largely coaching/mentoring positions and roles that were more involved in process/tooling redesign. Members of the internal team were initially placed in a support role but, as the project progressed and their skills developed, they took on more of a lead role in smaller contracts. Field managers were regularly assessed, with extra coaching given to those who were struggling with the new behaviours.

Throughout the project workshops were held with key members of the business, including support staff and frontline delivery teams, to ensure they were fully aware of the changes and could implement them across their contract.

"When you undertake a project like this, it really shakes the norms of the business. The project had to carefully handle all the stakeholders on initially explaining the problem many didn't see, the size of the prize but then getting deep behavioural changes to occur. Managementors' resilience and capability in driving this change must be strongly commended, as so many others would have considered it too hard to achieve."

Chris Hanson, Group Industrialisation Director – Computacenter



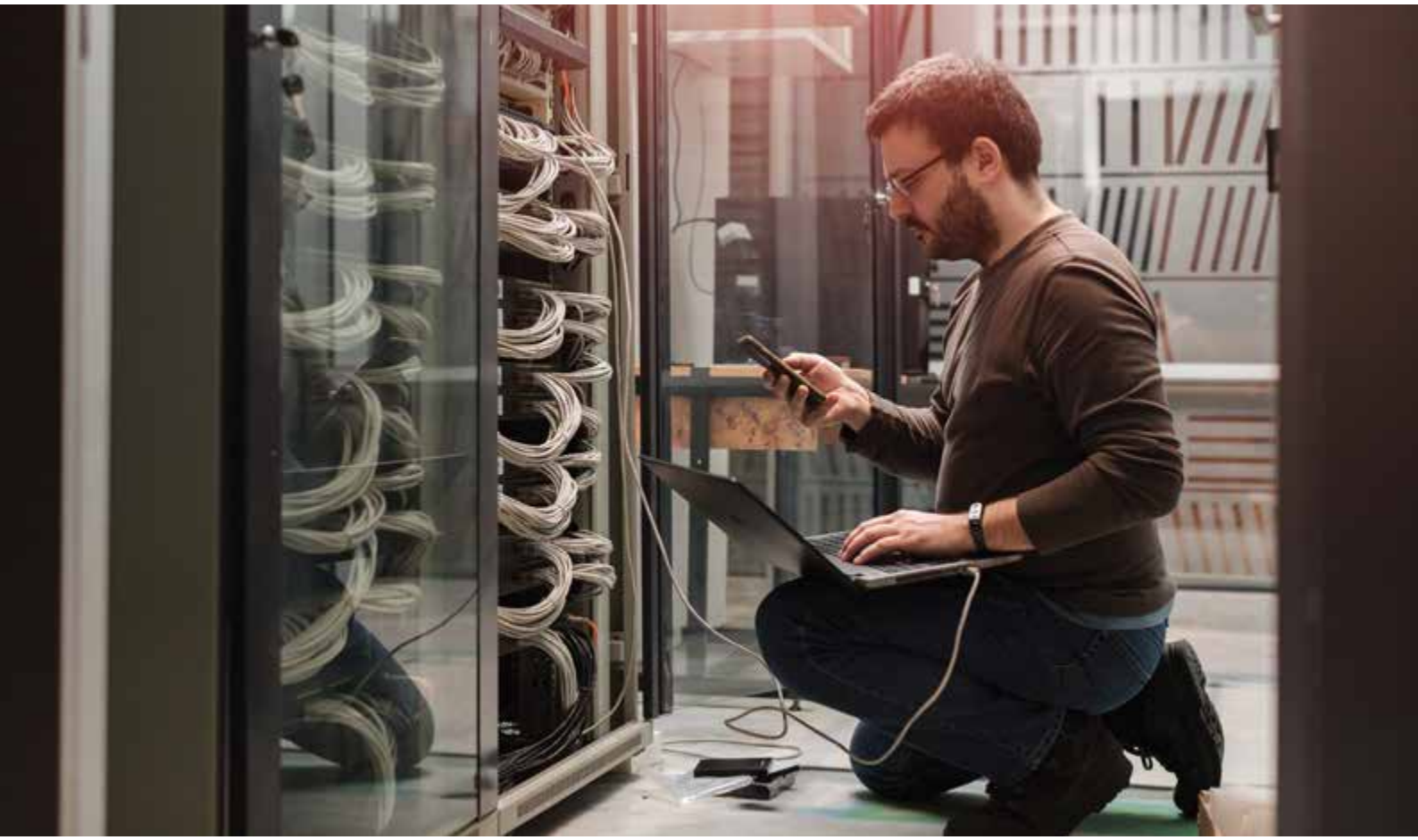
Key Challenges

Within the centre there were skills issues amongst the existing schedulers. Significant training was undertaken by both Managementors and Computacenter staff at both a conceptual level, ‘why schedule’ and a technical level, ‘how to schedule’. This was backed up with coaching throughout the project to support the schedulers in the new way of working.

In parallel to this, a revised job description was created and a recruitment process commenced to both recruit for the increase in schedulers required and to backfill those schedulers who were unable to step up to the new roles.

“Project Puma achieved all its objectives and in some areas over-achieved in implementing new management processes, driving new behaviours and delivering significant cost savings. Importantly, it hasn’t just ended with the formal closure of the project. The success of Puma in delivering its immediate goals will soon be dwarfed by its legacy of driving future opportunity”.

Andy Moffitt, Group Professional Services Director – Computacenter



Outcomes:

By the end of the project central scheduling had increased in size, allowing greater control over the operation. In addition, better controls had been put in place on-site to drive improved levels of service, with team leaders now focusing on service and engineer performance.

In addition to the financial benefits, there were significant improvements in service seen throughout the life of the project. A substantial increase in call volume also seen over this period was handled successfully with fewer resources.

Within scheduling, considerable training and coaching took place throughout the project, which combined with a revised recruitment specification, has seen a significant improvement in the output of the team, with real value now being delivered to the business.

By the end of the project the business was in the position where a technology solution was able to be rolled into a pilot team to support further productivity improvements. The new behaviours were now being supported with improved technology, allowing a further wave of improvement to take place.

"The impact of Managementors' actions has dramatically helped us in our short term aims, including a huge annual saving. However, it goes much further in helping set out far reaching changes to how Computacenter will remain competitive and a key delivery partner to our primary stakeholders – our customers. I'm delighted with how the project has gone and as a catalyst it has been instrumental to our future."

Chris Hanson, Group Industrialisation Director – Computacenter

Contact us to find out what Managementors can do for you

Call +44 (0)1256 883939

e enquiries@managementors.co.uk
w www.managementors.co.uk

managementors
creating sustainable business advantage

MCA
A POSITIVE FORCE FOR THE ECONOMY
ACCREDITED FIRM