



Case study

Name: Telent Limited
 Sector: Telecommunications
 Networks & Broadcast
 Infrastructure Provider
 Location: Warwickshire, UK

Productivity Programme Rings in Improved Efficiency at telent

A 90-day performance improvement project in the External Network Services Division at telent helped reinvigorate management practices to deliver greater field workforce efficiency, boosting productivity by more than 12 per cent

Background

Formerly the UK and German services business of Marconi Corporation plc, telent Limited supplies a range of communications support services to telecommunications operators, large enterprises and public sector agencies.

telent's External Network Services Division plans, delivers, implements and supports wireline and wireless networks for leading UK operators and vendors. Providing economies of scale in an arena that is traditionally knowledge and resource intensive, the division's field force of 900 telecom engineers undertakes the installation, commissioning and maintenance of multi-vendor telecommunication assets into live networks.

Key challenges

- Maximise the output of a 900-strong field engineer workforce
- Generate efficiencies that translate to increased profitability and improved service delivery
- Transform management practices, working smarter to resolve operational challenges

Key gains

- Boosted engineer field workforce performance by over 12 per cent and performance in business-critical back-office operations by over 20 per cent – in just 90 days
- Improved field productivity generated a corresponding fall in fleet costs – maximising profitability
- Smarter, more collaborative working has been achieved thanks to newly clarified roles and responsibilities and an organisation-wide visibility of operational performance indicators

The challenge

As a sub-contracting business that undertakes around 8,000 jobs per month, maximising engineer productivity is central to optimising operational profit and delivering against the tightly defined service expectations of customers.

“This is a highly margin-driven business,” explains Martin Giles, General Manager, External Network Services. “As a management team we continually seek to challenge our current ways of working in order to improve service, reduce costs and drive better levels of efficiency.”

The engineering teams are paid on a per-job basis, so it was difficult to see how productivity could be improved, which was why telent appointed Managementors to review its Central Control Office (CCO) and depot functions – and examine in detail the resource planning, job allocation and engineer scheduling activities in these business-critical areas.

“Our objective was to work with an external specialist to identify areas of operational wastage, implement a change improvement programme to address these and reinvigorate the skills of our supervisory management level,” confirms Martin Giles.

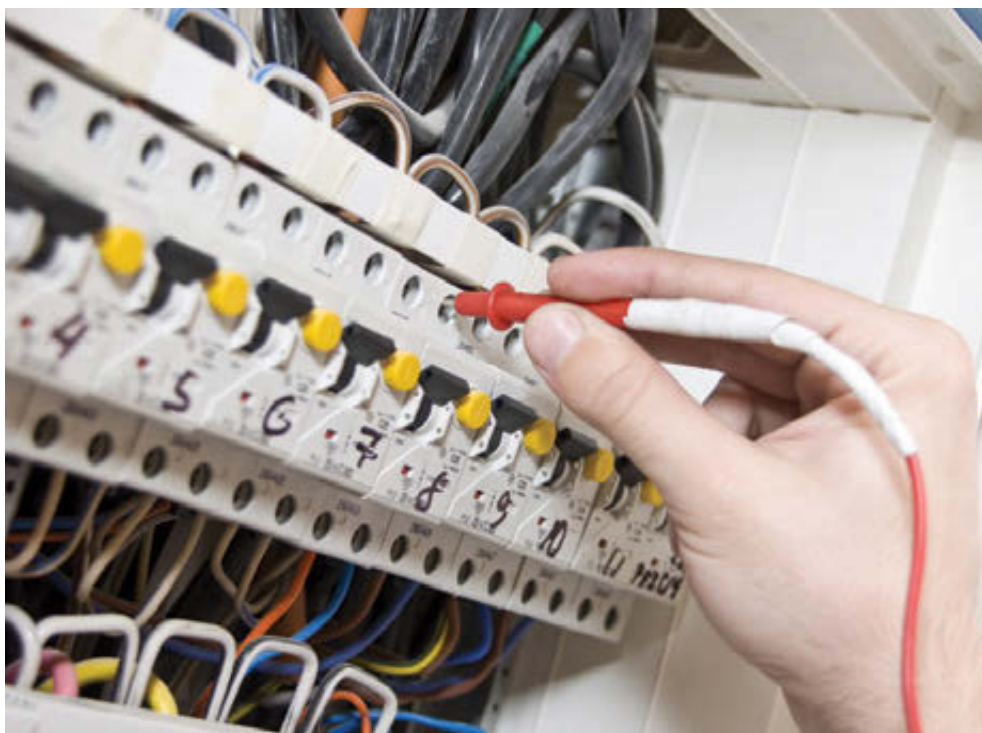
The need for change

The analysis undertaken by Managementors revealed current wastage was being incorporated into the assumptions used to forecast resource requirements. As a result there was a continual overestimation of resources – further reinforced by a belief that the ‘unpredictable’ nature of the work, which was driven by customer directives, precluded meaningful planning.

A significant finding for Martin Giles, however, was the prevalence of institutionalised attitudes and acceptance of day-to-day planning and work allocation issues, which ultimately hampered engineer productivity. As a result these remained hidden, rendering management powerless to act.

“Managementors pushed our organisation to measure productivity and effectiveness, introducing management tools that make it possible to maintain a cycle of sustained productivity improvement.”

Martin Giles
General Manager,
External Network Services, telent



“Perception surveys undertaken by Managementors revealed that while team leaders, supervisors and staff recognised things were not as they should be, there was a common belief that the solution lay elsewhere in the operation or with the customer,” he says. “In addition, there was little active management of work flowing into the areas, as the view was held that the teams in effect ‘managed themselves’.”

Managementors recommended the creation of an integrated Management Operating System (MOS) incorporating a more effective method of forecasting and operational planning to support an active style of management.

“Our goal was to give all management tiers greater understanding and control over critical internal and external interfaces,” confirms Martin Giles.

Building the solution

A ‘Quick Wins’ programme was initiated to bring target areas under control and prepare the way for longer term process, system and people development to take place.

Within the COO, a new job validation process – incorporating increased supervisory controls – was designed and piloted. Meanwhile, at the depot a process was developed to progress jobs and ‘survey’ these prior to scheduling jobs to engineers. In both instances issues were captured and logged, and managers

were coached to take action with appropriate departments to resolve these.

“For the programme to be effective, all management levels had to be involved and become ‘architects’ of the solution,” explains Giles. “Managementors ensured everyone understood the scope and goals of the project and their role within it.”

Managing for success

As well as improving communications between departmental interfaces, the introduction of a new MOS increased everyone’s understanding of key operational drivers, as Martin Giles explains:

“A greater visibility of issues was matched by a new-found confidence in tackling these. We saw the emergence of cross-functional creativity when it came to problem solving.”

Supervisor and manager roles and responsibilities were refined and clarified, and one-to-one coaching and training workshops ensured everyone could work with the new management tools and processes being put in place.

“Team leaders and supervisors became competent at measuring actual performance against plan and identifying ways to drive improvement,” says Martin Giles. “Managers were coached to push issues to internal service providers and work to achieve an effective resolution.”

“A greater visibility of issues was matched by a new found confidence in tackling these. We saw the emergence of cross functional creativity when it came to problem solving.”

Martin Giles
General Manager,
External Network Services, telent



Counting the gains

The reinvigorated management team has already generated an overall performance improvement of 12 per cent within the field operations and more than 20 per cent within the CCO.

“Managementors pushed our organisation to measure productivity and effectiveness, introducing management tools that make it possible to maintain a cycle of sustained productivity improvement,” says Martin Giles.

The improved field productivity has in turn generated an additional reduction in fleet costs – all of which contributes to ensuring the division is better positioned to weather challenging business conditions.

“The performance improvement project allows us to absorb the inflationary pressures that characterise today’s marketplace and maintain profitability – in the current economic environment this represents an excellent achievement,” concludes Martin Giles.

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