



Case study

Name: SCC
Sector: IT Infrastructure Services and Solutions
Location: Birmingham, UK

Changing for the Better

Implementing a transformation programme at SCC's service division enabled the business to 'survive and thrive' during one of the most challenging economic downturns experienced in the UK.

Background

Founded in 1975 by Sir Peter Rigby, today SCC is a £3 billion business that employs 7,500 people in five key European countries. As a best of breed technology solutions provider, SCC has established an enviable track record helping European based companies and government organisations to achieve technology optimisation – and more – for less.

In a bid to become more responsive to customers, the UK service division embarked on a journey to transform the performance and efficiency of its operations. Alongside assuring its capabilities in relation to customer SLAs, working smarter would enable SCC to boost its service margins and put the business on track to achieve new profitability goals.

Key challenges

- Reinvigorate workforce management and scheduling practices to increase engineer performance and workloads
- Introduce new processes and procedures designed to boost field productivity and improve 'first time, every time' service delivery to customers
- Review stock control procedures to ensure right parts were available 'just in time' for engineering teams and unnecessary 'over gearing' was reduced

Key gains

- The UK services division today handles 44,000 hardware incidents a month, confident it can resolve these within customer SLA targets
- A new management operating system now provides detailed performance reporting on every aspect of the business and enables teams to identify exceptions and resolve these
- Integrated resource-to-work planning supports realistic engineering performance targets
- Overall operational performance increased by 25%, enabling SCC to achieve challenging profitability targets despite a severe downturn in the UK economy

The challenge

When Mike Swain took charge of the UK services division at SCC, he was determined to reinvigorate the business. Dealing with the consequences of historical operational inefficiencies meant the division had become locked into a resource intensive cycle of responding to service events. If the business was to attain cost reduction targets then entrenched working practices had to be addressed.

“Management and staff were heavily focused on mitigating potential SLA ‘misses’ rather than proactively driving productivity to prevent such scenarios occurring in the first place,” confirms Swain. “We needed to make sure we got the right engineer and part to the job, at the right time, and with the right information, first time – every time.”

Working in reactive mode meant operational teams found it difficult to tackle the issues causing under-performance, and with little centralised visibility of engineer loading or scheduling, efficiently matching engineer resources to calls was complicated. As a result, duplication of effort, multiple site visits to resolve issues, and excessive use of same day couriers to collect spare parts were adding to the cost base of the business.

Communication across the entire services division, which incorporates 800 engineers based in 15 service centres and client sites, plus 150 support staff in the UK and Romania, needed to become better coordinated and integrated.

To assist with its programme of transformational change, SCC turned to Managementors.

First steps

Mike Swain knew it was important that the services division was on board with the transformation programme and understood Managementors’ role in supporting the organisation achieve improved performance.

“We initiated a major communication programme with key personnel, outlining the project objectives, and what would be expected in terms of participation and commitment to change,” he says.

“It was encouraging to find that many accepted things needed to be different but had become disheartened coping with day-to-day operational realities. The communications programme gave people an important message ‘You’ve got a problem – we’ve now got a solution. Together we can make change happen’.”

“We’re in the business of managing problems on behalf of our customers. Today we do that better, faster and more efficiently than before.”

Mike Swain, Managing Director of Services, SCC

Building a Management Operating System

Working alongside teams in the Midlands region, Managementors set about bringing the regional operation under greater control to enable process, system and people development to take place.

New metrics were developed to capture performance within the business, and standard times for engineering jobs were developed using historic data. These guidelines would form the basis for the introduction of new planning and scheduling metrics and productivity measurements to support service optimisation, ensuring SLAs were always met.

The entire call flow, from initial logging through to completion, was mapped and critiqued. As part of this work, roles and responsibilities were defined to better support the new process, and scheduling was aligned to the new engineer planning guidelines to maximise productivity. Finally, SCC’s contact centre in Romania took responsibility for call management and the control and scheduling of engineering resources, working closely with team leaders in the UK to drive performance in the field.

Team leaders and managers in all functions were trained to work with the new Management Operating System, utilising operational standards and reporting data to actively manage and forecast more effectively. Meanwhile, engineers were coached in the new processes and ways of working.

Applying the principles

"The 12 week pilot project in the Midlands demonstrated proof of concept and created a template for success which we could apply in other regions," says Mike Swain.

"The Management Operating System gave everyone a common framework and shared point of reference to work towards increased productivity."

"Within weeks we'd begun to maximise our ability to achieve first time fixes thanks to improved fault validation, greater cohesion with logistics and stores, and improved engineer skills matching to jobs. As a result unnecessary engineer visits fell and workloads were managed with appropriate resources."

As team leaders and managers became more confident in actively managing operations, reviewing performance on a daily, weekly and monthly basis, the business was able to tackle the issues that had created an additional workload burden.

"Engineering efficiency increased, thanks to improved scheduling and call logging. What's more, engineers recognised that they could escalate issues to team leaders and managers who now had capacity to investigate and resolve," explains Mike Swain.

The new approach to working meant everyone across the business was now clear about their roles and responsibilities, and trusted colleagues to make the right decisions. With improved communication and reporting, duplication of effort was eliminated and cross departmental interactions were more timely and effective.

Outcomes

Once the Management Operating System and new ways of working were instituted in all UK regions, the business began to reap the benefits of a 25% increase in performance.

"There's been a huge change around in terms of culture and attitude," confirms Mike Swain. "What's more, we're in control of our workloads, and the days of reacting to events rather than planning for them are over."

As a result, the business has been able to maintain profitability and margins during the UK economic crisis.

"Tackling inefficiencies in the business ultimately put us on a strong footing to thrive and survive the economic downturn," concludes Mike Swain.

"It's a simple fact that if you've always done things the same way, making the move away from entrenched working practices can be difficult. Managementors gave us an outside perspective on what works, what doesn't, what we needed to change, and how to make that change happen."

Mike Swain, Managing Director of Services, SCC

Contact us to find out what Managementors can do for you

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