

The history of the project

When a large European company purchased an American services company in 2006, a concern during the acquisition process was how to consolidate and integrate the acquired company's data, systems and IT infrastructure into the parent company's system without disruption to the regular course of business. The overall integration was budgeted at \$10 million, allotted 18 months for completion and included the following projects: order management consolidation, internet firewall, service desk integration, disaster recovery, hardware refresh, employee records management system, server consolidation, procurement and MS Office migration.

To accomplish this, the parent company created an independent subsidiary – a data center in the US – to act as an outsourced IT group responsible for managing and implementing the integration.

Two years into the project, months past the original completion deadline and amidst much corporate political strife due to the delay, Concentric3 was called in to perform an audit of the integration. As a trusted advisor to upper management in the parent company, Concentric3 was being counted on for its honest evaluation of the situation.

Continuity is key to success

FOR any company, a period of downtime – regardless of the cause – can wreak havoc on profitability, cash flow and customer relations. But, for a company operating in a real-time environment, heavily dependent on its own precise scheduling, business continuity is everything.

In 2008, Concentric3 Strategic Solutions took over a stalled project for such a company and ultimately saved the client millions of dollars by planning and implementing a major IT transition that allowed the business to operate during the transition “business as usual” with no interruption.



Concentric3's audit of the project

Concentric3 performed a Project Management Maturity Assessment and discovered that the data center had made no progress in the integration. Some examples of the problems Concentric3's consultants found:

- No project manager accountability
- No project charters to determine overall scope and details of each project
- No dates established for delivery, testing, approval or final conversion
- Disregard of parent-company project management standards
- Disregard of the subsidiary's own service level agreements with the acquired company
- Inability to supply the goods and services for which the data center had already received payment



Concentric3's management & completion of the project

Recognizing that the project managers at its subsidiary data center were not capable of handling the integration on their own, the parent company hired Concentric3 to become the organizing, staffing and management force behind the integration.

A first step was to create a statement of work defining the various parts of the integration. Having one in place had a positive effect on the project because it supplied everyone involved with a clear picture of how to proceed and a roadmap to establishing a functioning project management office.

From that statement of work, three main projects were shown to constitute 80% of the work needed to complete the integration.

Using the project management skills and standards Concentric3 is known for, the lead consultant created an environment of trust and accountability that allowed the organization under him to meet deadlines, lower costs and complete tasks – all things that were not occurring under previous management.

Under Concentric3's guidance, the IT integration completed early and well under budget. Most importantly, Concentric3 maintained business continuity for its client. Though the IT integration was extensive, affecting all departments and functions throughout the food services company, the transitions were seamless and non-disruptive to daily tasks and routines.

DISASTER RECOVERY • The acquired company was operating with no disaster recovery plans in place. For a company servicing the a highly regulated, tightly scheduled industry, it was unacceptable for the company to continue without a DR plan.

Objective – Determine what systems and applications were critical and create a reliable DR plan

Accomplishments – Following the project charter developed by the Concentric3 project manager, Concentric3 directed the efforts that lead to the building of a cold site facility where a fail-over test / disaster simulation was passed.

SERVER CONSOLIDATION • The acquired company was using 20-year-old obsolete servers and software for its most critical applications.

Objective – Assess current infrastructure and develop a comprehensive, structured migration plan to update / replace servers, operating systems and applications

Accomplishments – By putting a plan into play, the Concentric3 project manager communicated milestones and timelines that all parties could agree and adhere to and be accountable for. The consolidation included replacing 34 servers, making a major operating system update and planning and implementing the update of 32 applications throughout the organization.

HARDWARE REFRESH • The acquired company operated 50 North American business units, each with its own functional groups and personnel. Each group and individual was operating with out-of-date and non-standard hardware and applications.

Objective – Develop a defined and standardized list of users and applications, source the new equipment and manage the transition for all units.

Accomplishments – Using the methodology of a pilot, user acceptance testing and phased rollouts, over 2000 PCs were sourced, imaged and installed for this project. Software across the board was upgraded.



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Focused on providing its clients with business-improvement strategies, the consulting firm of Concentric3 uses a variety of analysis techniques to formulate and implement the best unique IT solutions for each client. Contact us to talk about your specific needs.

