

Out with the old, in with the new.... almost.

In my last newsletter article, "Let us help with old when bringing in the new" I mentioned that outsourced support of legacy applications had become an important service line for us as our customers embarked on strategic system replacement projects such as Java, Oracle or SAP.

I don't know whether it's because we cover both old and new technology or because we work in the traditional style of IT consultancy (we are 30 years old next year by the way :-)) as we hope that customers trust us to look after their business as usual whilst they embark on more leading edge work. Whatever the reason this trend continues, but with a at least one twist.

As we all know, replacing systems that are 20 years old, have years of investment and customisation, millions of lines of code and most importantly were developed to fit closely with the business in terms of processes and business practice, is not so easy. In fact for some applications it is almost impossible and that's where our skills really come into their own.

Integrating legacy with modern systems using web services, or data integration is a growing capability required of the legacy support team! Good for us that although we still do the old...we also do the new. :-)

PS: Another twist that I will cover in our next newsletter is that.... not all Legacy Applications are looked after by IT !!!



Managed Services take responsibility

Winter and Spring have passed already and time has flown by since we began 2013 or should I say for anyone who ventured out during those seasons 'blown by' on a bitterly cold north easterly wind. It's easy to dream now summer has arrived that we can look ahead to a more settled period going forward. It's got me thinking about the challenges IT departments and suppliers like OCS face trying to maintain a steady and consistent flow of delivery and service whilst being buffeted by changing requirements, priorities and demands.

Over the last few months, this has been particularly true at OCS where we have found increased demand from our customers to support them through the taking on of Project and Service responsibilities to delivering new systems, new platforms, outsourced support or major changes to business critical systems.

What seem like well-defined needs in terms of business requirements and well laid plans in terms of project initiation and governance, quickly seems to come under a head of high pressure. Foreseen and unforeseen disturbances, dependencies not being hit, changing requirements, resource problems and of course budget restrictions, such that multiple strategies, mitigation exercises and commercial flexibilities need to be brought to bear to ensure a smooth running and strong focus on delivery.

Perhaps this why we have seen an increase in companies asking us to take 'responsibility' rather than provide skills and resources.

It was always the domain of IT services companies like OCS to take responsibility for delivering IT services, that was/is our business, managing resources, keeping a focus, making the difficult decisions and ultimately shouldering the strong winds of change that come from the customer, business and market.

Services strongly in demand 10 years ago, were for many years usurped by the customers desire for resource alone... perhaps the wind of change is taking us back to that place. If it is, OCS is ready for that challenge. The recent strong growth of our managed service business has sharpened our Programme, Project and Service Management pencil. With PRINCE2 and ITIL 3 supplementing our already structured approaches to waterfall, agile, service establishment and support processes as some of the following examples demonstrate.

So, as if it seems the winds have dropped and you have time to think, why not consider letting someone else take the strain of delivery and see how outsourcing responsibility to OCS can work rather than insourcing capacity. Give us a call, we'll be happy to tell you about our managed service way of working, we would be delighted to hear from you.

In the meantime, wishing everyone a relaxing Summer and we hope to see you at our BBQ in August.



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The traditional homes of OCS have for nearly 30 years been north of London, and for 15 years South Holland.

These have been regularly supplemented by regional offices opened to support and service local customers as part of our strategy.

This has included offices in Scotland, northern England, the Midlands and Switzerland. Now we are venturing down to the south coast and are pleased to announce the opening of a fully serviced office in Horsham, West Sussex to support customers based south of London and the south coast.

If you happen to be in the area please don't hesitate to pop in and say hello to our team who currently can provide services in Business Analysis, Testing, Oracle, Java and Microsoft technologies as well as some of the more legacy flavours.

Customer experiences

Helping Customers Self-Serve with Device Independence

For those who have followed OCS for some years will know that one of our solution areas of expertise has been the development of a software platform to enable the delivery of device independent solutions for self-service which enable consumer or industrial strength hardware estates to be managed independently of the business process software solution.

Successful applications of this technology can be found throughout UK and Europe in the areas of Retail POS and Financial (Cash) Automation solutions.

We are now also proud to announce that this technology has been further reapplied in the Pharmaceuticals industry in Holland with the live implementation of a hand-held Dose Control System for the Research and Development of drugs.

Power to the PowerBuilder

Some technologies just won't go away and for us PowerBuilder remains a strong service line as ever before.

A number of our most important customers today started working with us on PowerBuilder over 15 years ago and many of our most loyal contacts come from those roots.

It's nice therefore that although these customers have moved on and us with them (although most are still trying to replace their legacy platforms :-)) there are others that come to us occasionally for both development and support services.

Currently we have a team of 5 PowerBuilder developers and if you haven't considered how to utilise our strength in depth for some time then maybe now is the time to see whether we can't add some power to your team.

Summer breeze . . . OCS Summer barbeque invite



We would be delighted if you can join us for riverside drinks and BBQ at:

Doggetts Coat & Badge (The Terrace Bar)
1 Blackfriars Bridge, London SE1 9UD
(nearest tube/mainline station: Blackfriars)

On Tuesday 6th August 2013

From 6.00 p.m. 'til late

(please feel free to pop in at anytime)

RSVP: lindso@ocs-consulting.com

020 8236 7714