30 years of making IT happen – the celebrations!

Not only are we immensely proud of our 30 year history, but it was also a good excuse for a party or three! I'm delighted that many of our customers were able to celebrate with us at some great sporting events…. like the World Cup… our Dutch colleagues enjoyed a better result than we did, however nothing could dampen our enthusiasm that day!

And those who couldn't make it sent some really heartfelt messages – thank you so much for those, many of which are listed on our Anniversary website www.ocs-consulting.eu ☺.

I was also really pleased to be able to celebrate a number of events with our fantastic staff. We have such a committed and passionate team with an average eight-year tenure that is truly remarkable in this industry. Without them, we could not have built our reputation for a customer-centric focus and highly responsive service, flexibility and high quality delivery.

For years our customers have told us the reason they work with us is because of the way we operate and the staff we employ. Quite simply, they like us! The calibre , professionalism and commitment of our staff, I believe really sets us apart as they will do what it takes to deliver on time.

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Positive Transformation

What great fun it's been this year, celebrating our 30th anniversary with friends, colleagues and customers. It's given me a wonderful opportunity to get together with so many of you to reminisce about the changes we've seen over the last 30 years as well as talking about what we will face in the next 30. That's what I love about this job and the IT industry - it's constantly changing, evolving and transforming how we work, rest and play!

Talking of change, as I look back over this last year, one thing we have noticed is a significant increase in OCS' involvement in corporate transformation programmes. But what does this mean? The Oxford Dictionary describes Transformation as a marked change in form, nature, or appearance. These few words do little to prepare one of the effort, resource and time required to affect such an impact, as nowadays, these tend to be about enterprise-wide changes encompassing the whole spectrum of business functions as well as IT.

Of course, such major change always comes with risks. For those planning and implementing the change programme, we have seen there are a number of key principles that are being adopted to smooth the way. Firstly, stay true to the heart of the business and its objectives. Secondly, utilise the most appropriate resources, providers and solutions to ensure the best fit and thirdly, manage carefully to ensure delivery is high quality and on time to avoid impacting the business.

These are also principles that we hold dear at OCS. As you can imagine, we've had to adapt and transform ourselves over these last 30 years. We wouldn't exist if we hadn't! We've stayed true to our culture and way of working, remained flexible and responsive and kept up-to-date with the latest IT.

Indeed, staying true to our strengths has been widely reflected in customer feedback this year. We are known as professional, easy to work with, aligned to our customers needs with a strong delivery and quality focus. Every member of the OCS team embodies this spirit, which is critical to our business and, quite frankly, your business. Excellent service is standard and is reflected in the longevity of our customer relationships, many of whom have been working with us for ten years or longer. It just goes to show that not everything in IT changes ☺

As mentioned earlier, Transformation programmes can be big and complex and as such our speciality is to deliver key streams or components of the programme such as supporting legacy systems, delivering highly specialist expertise and providing cost effective solutions in the areas of integration and systems development. And that's why our customers love working with us, we deliver what we commit to and make it happen as we have done for the last 30 years. It may sound a cliché but we are genuine partners in all the work we do. So, If you are going through a transformation project , then do contact us to discuss how we might make your life easier.

Wishing you all the very best this springtime and many thanks again to all of you who have been involved with OCS and celebrated with us over the last 12 months.

Maurice

Maurice Aroesti
Group Chief Executive

OCS 30 YEARS

30 years of making IT happen
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Customer experiences

Here is just a small selection of some interesting transformation programmes we've supported recently. Do these ring any bells with upcoming projects that you're involved with?

Post-acquisition rationalisation

After hitting the acquisition trail quite hard in the last few years, one of our new customers in the insurance industry decided to evaluate and rationalise all the diverse systems it had inherited. Ultimately, leading to a number of systems being decommissioned. To mitigate the risks inherent in a project of this nature, we created a flexible support agreement to manage the old systems whilst they were being run off – no matter what the system is., including Progress, Legacy Java & Microsoft, …. and some technologies we don't even know yet!! This approach allows the customer to use OCS as a cover for these systems with the benefits of full service level support, cost control and flexibility. With our customer centric approach, we gave them peace of mind that it could be business as usual during this big transition.

The big upgrade

It's that time to upgrade your software infrastructure – sometimes it's straight forward, other times it's not that easy. There's a lot riding on it when you have to install, configure and upgrade complex, business critical software, like SAS, for example, the leading Business Intelligence Platform. The SAS platform is often global and in use constantly by a wide range of business users who are responsible for managing the business and if anything goes wrong, then the outcome can be extremely costly. For nearly 20 years OCS has been a specialist in this area and over the last year has worked with numerous organisations taking responsibility for and assisting in everything from Installation to Migration. Our success has led to numerous on-going support agreements both with on-site and off-site teams supporting the SAS software infrastructure for major banks and organisations.

Evaluating cost-efficiencies

What happens when an unfortunate situation presents itself where the current team supporting a legacy application decide to leave the company? One of our customers called last year with just this problem and after looking at different options including recruiting a direct replacement, they decided that a local responsive outsource was the solution. OCS delivered a rapid and effective service establishment and support service to take on the systems built in ASP.NET, VB6 and SQL Server within agreed budgets and Service Level requirements. It's in the early stages and everyone is happy – the CFO as they have firm control of the costs and CTO who has the reassurance that it all just works. Oh and OCS for a job well done!

Replacement - Out with the old and in with the new

Being able to deal with any system however old or new and complex has meant that we've worked with a lot of companies who are looking to replace multiple legacy systems with new solutions be they SAP, Oracle or indeed Java. We are currently providing support to a number of customers in this situation ranging from teams on and off-site undertaking the whole range of support activities. OCS' broad technical expertise provides a low cost approach to supporting the business as usual whilst the replacement process takes place allowing customers to deploy the in-house resources to work on the new IT transformation projects.

Getting up to speed with brand new technologies

Sometimes it's an upgrade to newer technologies that can be more difficult than expected. One customer recently completed a significant database infrastructure upgrade implementing Oracle Exadata. This was a brand new technology for them and after deployment there were a number of performance problems. With major challenges faced, the customer knew this was the kind of area that OCS excel and so we were asked to provide a consultancy service with lightweight third line support that is helping to smooth out the problems and ensure future success. The customer has really appreciated our skills as well as our flexible approach that got the job done.

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30 years of making IT happen – the celebrations!

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As well as football, we enjoyed other sporting highlights including rugby and cricket. In particular our staff and a number of customers and their families enjoyed a thrilling day of Twenty20 Blast cricket at the home of cricket itself, Lord's. With some luminaries such as Eoin Morgan and Kevin Pieterson on display, a good game was expected and that's certainly what we got…. A last ball result!

One of the other popular events we ran internally was the monthly staff anniversary raffle. Hotly anticipated after some early prizes of iPad Airs and theatre tickets, lucky winners have been off paragliding, driving VERY expensive cars round a track and shopping sprees galore – more than one person has suggested it should be an on-going thing…hmmm…

So, a new financial year awaits us, as do the next 30 and beyond. What will it hold in store for us? What will be the changes we see? One thing is for certain though, our staff and our customers are at the heart of everything that we do and we aim to keep that very much a part of our Company.

OCS 30 YEARS