

Case Study:

Application Maintenance & Support



CDI reduces application support costs and completes transition in less than seven weeks.

Client Description:

A leading global provider of integrated avionics, engines, systems and service solutions for aircraft manufacturers, airlines, business and general aviation, military, space and airport operations.

Background:

In February 2008, our client announced an August closure of its IT support office. Repercussions of this office closure would be felt beyond the existing facility, as the IT support office not only supported its own operation but also supported one other location. To support the other location, our client awarded an IT support contract to CDI. The decision to choose an external service provider to provide support came late in the decision making process, giving CDI a mere seven weeks before the designated facility would close, and little time to transition the existing operations and enter into steady state support.

The client's IT support office was an enigma in terms of IT support. The organization lacked IT disciplines and processes, yet provided very effective support to its internal customers in both locations, achieving extraordinarily high customer satisfaction. The underlying reason being that the existing IT organization was over-staffed for the required support, resulting in rapid response times and a personal touch to any problems that arose.

Business Issue:

Despite high levels of customer service, our client needed to significantly reduce IT support costs and therefore settled on disbanding its over-staffed IT department. The client needed to find an external service provider who could transition support from its old facility where legacy applications were supported by the same IT support team for 20+ years, and create a steady state support environment off-site within the short window of seven weeks.

Complicating this task, and a major project risk, was that no documentation existed and all knowledge remained in the heads of the incumbent IT support team.

CDI Solution:

The narrow transition window meant CDI needed an accelerated approach to transition the IT support from the incumbent team. Implicit in this approach was the need for a constant CDI presence at the closing location during the short transition period.

CDI had to assess the current IT staffing levels to determine what staffing levels were required to support the user community. To mitigate knowledge transfer risks, CDI put two incumbents on retainer, bringing them on as part-time CDI employees to protect the client from losing undocumented tribal knowledge necessary to successfully transition and enter steady state support.

The CDI transition team followed a carefully charted transition plan of knowledge and processes to bring the support operation into CDI's Application Center.

Phase one of the CDI solution was to transition the operation from the existing facility to CDI's location as seamless as possible, without any impact to the business. Phase two was to identify persistent failure points and perform the appropriate root-cause analysis to create a solution to eradicate them. Phase three was to sustain the high level of IT support delivered to the client's remaining user community and surpass those levels over time.

Results:

The transition was achieved in seven weeks. Included in the transition was the transferring of the remaining work-in-process (WIP) and the subsequent closing of the books of the old facility and backlog.

Three months into the steady state support, the transition was

seamless and transparent to the client's business community as all service levels were met or exceeded. Our client has expressed satisfaction at both the transition itself and also of the quality of support that has ensued.

Weekly Change Management meetings have been introduced, to determine which production changes are approved to be implemented. Sign-off by the business is mandated, including documented acceptance test results. Prioritization is now carried out weekly at minimum, to ensure that the CDI priorities stay in-line with the focuses and needs of the client's business community.

Technologies Used:

- COBOL
- VM/CMS
- IDMS
- ADS/O
- UNIX / Shell Scripts
- ORACLE
- SQL SERVER