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“Like having this one big brain that’s the sum-total of our experts’ knowledge”

Your experts are reliable, but not always accessible. Documentation is accessible but not always reliable. XSOL solved the problem by giving them a “big brain” - expert and accessible - a knowledge-rich environment that has released the handbrake on collaboration and self-reliance.

FRUCOR :

Peter Lamb - CFO
Mark Palmer - IS Program Manager
Courtney Wilson - Accounts Payable Manager

TECHNOLOGY PARTNER:

XSOL



PETER LAMB - CFO

As part of our information systems disciplines we have backups in place so if the system goes down we can eventually get up and going again. But the biggest database in the company (and for us is our biggest asset) is the shared knowledge-base of our people. And that system wasn't backed up.

Actually – you could only extract valuable information if you knew the expert (super-user), they were still at the company, at work that day, not busy, and you did a good job listening to them.

Also, our dependence on experts meant we relied too heavily on a few heroes. But heroes are for disasters, not business-as-usual. So we had to do something to mitigate this risk.

We knew that documentation wasn't the answer to the risk posed by not getting people's knowledge pooled and accessible. You pay a significant amount to document everything, but the day it's complete it's out of date. So we went looking for an approach that would stay both accessible and up-to-date.

It was a big ask, but XSOL gave us that. It's like having insurance against human capital loss.

“Heroes are for disasters, not business-as-usual” Peter Lamb, CFO Frucor

There have been unanticipated benefits too. We believe that if you aren't improving, you are going backwards. And this technology helps us to continuously improve. For example, if a process isn't being followed, we can audit it and find out if it's a training issue or some other factor. This makes everyone highly accountable.

Now, anyone can get an answer to any aspect to those of our processes we have completed without dependence on “the expert”. That means new people learn and get up to speed fast. People have become more self-reliant and, as we continue to add more processes the self reliance will increase.

There is now tighter collaboration between teams, including marketing and finance from the transparency that XSOL brings which has meant better sharing of information, and better understanding of what each team is doing.

MARK PALMER – IS PROGRAM MANAGER

Removing one of the most expensive mistakes

In IS, one of the most expensive mistakes that happens is breakage to a system because a process wasn't included in the testing plan. Unfortunately, this is all too common. The issue is compounded when you rely on outsourcing, as we sometimes do, because those project people don't have the same tacit understanding of your company.

In the past we have had a lot of disruption, sometimes serious, to our business systems because of changes affecting undocumented processes. This caused frustration, wasted time, lost trust in the IS team, and of course customer impact. With over 900 people in our business, there was simply too much complexity and risk to leave information in people's heads.

For us, using XSOL has not only de-risked outsourcing, it's mitigated the danger and cost to the business of oversight during any IS project.

Return on Investment for any IS project

If you don't have an adequate understanding of what the underlying business processes are, you might build something believing you are implementing the best solution, spend a whole lot of money on that IS solution, and find out you haven't improved a thing.

People “get” process

I would say that using XSOL, everyone here from senior management down now “gets” the importance of documenting business process. They see it's a business concern, not just an IS concern. That's because they know the cost of not getting it right, and the advantage we have now we have a system that allows us to “get it right” each time a new project happens.

“Using XSOL has mitigated the danger and cost to the business of oversight during any IS project.” Mark Palmer, IS Program Manager

Mindset shift

I'm beginning to see our level of communication has gone up a notch. We are talking to people in other teams far more about changes that might affect each other.

But even more importantly, I'm beginning to see a mindset shift. Now, whenever someone sees something that isn't working, the attitude is “let's look at the process and sort it out and get it working”. They now have the tools that allow them to see and understand the process of making any change, and then execute it, which can benefit whole-of-business efficiency, without risk of an adverse impact.

COURTNEY WILSON – ACCOUNTS PAYABLE MANAGER

It's changed the way we behave

What's different since implementing XSOL is that we can see the answers to things that previously were in people's brains.

Before, we just had a folder full of what we call "scripts" for our ERP system. The problem with these scripts was that you didn't know how they fitted together, and you didn't know the steps within each step.

"Each department is now using a common language, which means we can communicate across departments more effectively" Courtney Wilson, Accounts Payable Manager

That meant it was impossible to work out a process without consulting some super-user, or bringing in an expensive ERP consultant each time something was unknown or broken. Now, it's like having this one big brain that is the sum total of our experts' knowledge. Whether they are here, busy, or on another project – we can always access this. It's very powerful, and it's eliminated key-person risk while spreading knowledge throughout the company.

RESULTS ACHIEVED

1. Ability to continuously improve
2. Become more self-reliant
3. Collaborate better between teams
4. Use a common language across departments
5. Provide oversight to high-risk IS projects
6. Eliminate key-person risk

Common Language

Making information accessible is the easy bit. Any documentation system can do that. Getting it reliable is hard. We now have that reliability. That means we are constantly referencing it. As a result, each department is now using a common language, which means we can communicate across departments more effectively.

Improved ROI for every future project we run

If you are going to spend six months and a considerable sum of money on a project, then you want to know exactly how it worked for the business going forward. Otherwise, each time you run a new project, you have added expense, risk and complexity for everyone to understand the necessary detail: none of which you needed to incur.

Every new project, you might spend the first few weeks working out "where your starting point is". We don't have to do this anymore. XSOL tells us.

So the return on investment for a project is significant and ongoing.

To find out how XSOL can benefit your business visit

www.xsol.com or contact enquiry@xsol.com



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