

High performance in sight: Accenture helps pharmaceutical company achieve monumental workstation transformation



High performance. Delivered.

Business Challenge

In 2004, one of the world's largest research-based biomedical and pharmaceutical companies set an overarching goal to reduce operating costs. Within the IT organization, executive leadership examined ways to improve IT efficiency and effectiveness, while also reducing variances across diverse locations. Accenture's most recent research into High Performance IT reinforces this objective, indicating that high performers show highly developed capabilities in IT execution and consistently invest in IT innovation, especially to supply technology that meets employee demands for functionality.

Before setting its cost-cutting goal, the company's corporate IT group provided varied desktop

services at nearly 200 business and research sites—each following disparate processes to provide support. However, this decentralized model led to increased operating costs and often slowed the company's reaction time to global IT incidents. A lack of standardization also hindered the company's ability to implement change to its workstation technology.

In a deliberate stride toward high performance, the pharmaceutical company decided to standardize workstation technology across all of its sites. The company's objectives were numerous: to lower the company's IT risk profile, to more effectively manage technology by extending common applications globally, and to implement stronger security and simplify software updates.

• Consulting • Technology • Outsourcing

The company turned to Accenture for guidance on this effort—leveraging a business relationship shared by the two organizations for many years. Specifically, Accenture offered unmatched experience in the pharmaceutical industry, a track record of successful projects with the company, and a clear understanding of its clients' culture and organization. Most of all, the pharmaceutical company valued Accenture's pragmatic approach to the workstation transformation project, which emphasized both process and technology. Indeed, Accenture's holistic solution combined a strategic viewpoint with procedurally correct desktop management processes and advanced workstation technology.

How Accenture helped

To staff the project, Accenture stepped forward with a team from Accenture Technology Consulting, including deeply skilled technologists from the Workplace, Technology & Collaboration organization. This organization is dedicated to using information technology to automate common workplace activities to achieve workforce productivity improvements and efficiencies.

Working closely with the pharmaceutical company, Accenture defined a standard operating model for how desktop support services would be delivered globally. The model included:

Infrastructure services—Providing the architecture and tools for managing the new workstation environment.

Support services—Providing tools, industry leading practices and capabilities required to deploy software components, enabling the pharmaceutical company to transition from project-based deployments to a service level agreement-defined enterprise service.

End-user services—Standardizing the desktop support experience for end-users.

A pioneering aspect of the newly defined model was Accenture's approach to desktop support at the 200 sites. Using the Accenture Service Events offering, the team identified the most requested support services and diagrammed process flows for these service events. Accenture then devised a straightforward way to address common problems on-site and escalate exception cases to more highly skilled resources. This solution not only expedited resolutions for workstation issues but also helped reduce operating costs.

Accenture could also foresee that transitioning to a standardized desktop with a finite number of applications could make it difficult for certain employees, especially those in the research and development department, to complete tasks. To proactively address this issue, Accenture created an automated process, allowing employees to certify non-standard application functionality on the standardized desktop and to request a remote download.

When the pharmaceutical company approved the new desktop management services model, Accenture's role evolved to that of a project manager. One of its tasks was to manage sub-contractors as they traveled to each of the company's sites to deploy the new desktop processes and technology. To help its client realize the largest cost savings up front, Accenture started with the 60 biggest sites and then implemented the remaining 140 during the following two-year period.

At the same time, Accenture assembled its own team of change management professionals to conduct on-site meetings in Asia, Europe and the United States with the pharmaceutical company's business and IT employees. The meetings helped educate people about the impending change and how it would impact specific work processes, including several new workstation features designed to improve employee efficiency.

High Performance Delivered

With Accenture's help, the pharmaceutical company implemented one global standardized desktop environment for 75,000 workstations in more than 40 countries and in 20 different languages. Overall, the effort reduced the company's IT operating costs by \$15 million, which can be directed into critical pharmaceutical research and development.

A majority of the cost savings resulted from standardizing the managed desktop environments of more than 90 percent of the employees and from improving the way in which corporate IT provides desktop management services. To date, the pharmaceutical company has reduced desk side support visits by 25 percent and decreased help desk calls by 30 percent globally.

Other benefits that the project delivered include:

- Converted the pharmaceutical company to a more stable and secure standard architecture.
- Provided a systematic approach for deploying and maintaining security patch levels on desktops.
- Reduced impact to employee productivity by migrating desktops during off-hours.
- Decreased virus outbreaks.

Based on the results of the desktop management services project, the pharmaceutical company began working with Accenture to outline requirements for outsourcing infrastructure support services. This ensuing project, part of the pharmaceutical company's overall effort with Accenture to trim a total of US\$100 million out of the IT budget, puts the pharmaceutical company directly within sight of its goal: to become a high-performance business.

About Accenture's Health & Life Sciences Group

Accenture's Health & Life Sciences professionals deliver innovation and insight to both the private and public sectors of the marketplace, which includes integrated health care providers, health insurers, managed care organizations, public health organizations and pharmaceutical, biotechnology and medical products companies. With more than 8,000 professionals dedicated to serving the Health & Life Sciences industry, Accenture is committed to working with clients across the industry to help them achieve and sustain high performance. Accenture works with companies of all sizes, including 25 out of the 27 health care and pharmaceuticals companies in the FORTUNE® Global 500. Its home page is www.accenture.com/h&ls.

About Accenture

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