

Intechnology plc

Business



Organisation description: InTechnology Plc provides innovative IT infrastructure solutions, products and services to businesses, through a network of value-added resellers, systems integrators and consultants. An AIM listed public company with annual revenues approaching £500million, InTechnology employs 500 people in France, Germany, Italy, Spain, the Netherlands, Portugal, and Switzerland, and is headquartered in the UK..

. Executive summary: Technology challenge: To create a unified solution to manage and analyse the billable and non-billable time and performance of consultants, engineers and pre-sales staff across the organisation. Solution: Business process re-engineering alongside an enterprise service automation (ESA) solution from Epicor – Epicor for Service Enterprises. Benefits: Browser-based application reduces deployment and operational costs? Real-time reporting and allocation of human resources? Consolidates a large number manual tasks leading to improved efficiency ? Provides ‘ hard numbers’ to allow better strategic planning? Increased number of billable hours leading to higher direct revenueSummary: By switching to Epicor for Service Enterprises, InTechnology has improved its capability to manage its highly technical staff. The ability to accurately expose human resource costs versus revenue generated has been invaluable to senior management in deciding strategic direction, as well as tactical decisions involving channel partners and customers. The new system pulls allocation of technical staff into a central location improving operational efficiency, increasing billable revenue and promoting accurate accounting.

The successful UK deployment is to be mirrored to InTechnology European offices over 2006. Body text: InTechnology Plc is a rising star in the UK

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technology sector; over its 22 years it has grown from a storage distributor to a specialist IT infrastructure provider delivering storage, security, software management solutions and a major provider of innovative managed data services. Today, it is widely acknowledged as being a market leader by the UK IT community and has strong relationships with all the major industry players including HP, IBM, Check Point, Nokia, Symantec, Microsoft and Network Appliance.

At the heart of the business is a 140 strong technical team of highly skilled engineers, trainers, consultants and product specialists. The management of this team was previously complex with scheduling and pairing of available skills to job requirements managed on an informal or workgroup basis. As Jason Firth, Professional Services Director for InTechnology explains, “ In the past, the most common tool we used was probably a collection of excel spreadsheets and the knowledge of key managers who knew which people had the correct skills or relevant qualifications.”” There were probably about 12 different people spread around the organisation who unilaterally assigned people to tasks and although most of the time it worked, it was very inefficient and did not provide us with enough information to make informed decisions on where best to use resources or for accurate billing or cost analyses.” In early 2005, Firth tasked a team within the professional services division to create a short list of software applications that could be used as part of a project to re-engineer how technical time could be better managed and to raise the level of accountability within the company. The software needed to be extremely flexible and preferably Web-based, which would

remove the need to deploy and maintain local clients and would help the rapidly growing InTechnology deploy the system to its European offices.

Any software solution would be part of a wider cultural and business process shift as Firth explains, “ Essentially, we needed to find out the revenue return on the time invested by our staff. With this information, we would be better able to make both tactical day to day operational decisions and more strategic judgements about the direction of the business.”” By consolidating this information, it also allows us to better develop our staff by finding out which skills they already have, what skills they want to learn and where we have opportunities for advancement within the company.” While one team worked its way through approximately 20 potential software applications to create a shortlist, Firth led another team to define a new set of processes and procedures for assigning time and human resources to partners and clients. By May 2005, the shortlist for potential software had been whittled down to just two, namely Epicor for Service Enterprises and QuickArrow Professional Services Automation.

“ Both applications were Web-based which was an essential requirement” explains Firth, “ But Epicor for Service Enterprises was a lot more flexible and it’s entirely standards-based, which was essential as our business tends to evolve quickly and we did not want an application that was unable to meet our future needs.” Another key consideration Firth sights was Epicor’s proven track record and its strong relationship with Microsoft. With a software solution selected and new business processes developed, April and June of 2005 were spent implementing the new system, which InTechnology did themselves as Firth explains, “ Lets not over complicate things, the software <https://assignbuster.com/intechnology-plc/>

is a database linked to an intuitive Web front-end powered by some clever business logic.”” We have a lot of technical people within the company, and we felt it would be best to implement the software ourselves so we could both support it in the future and understand its capabilities for any future modifications we might need. The structure of the software is relatively straightforward which allowed us to get up to speed quickly.

” He adds. By August 2005, InTechnology deployed the initial ‘ pilot’ of Epicor for Service Enterprises and was moving over to the new business processes.” Our storage group is a 20 year old business and there was strong acceptance of the new software and willingness to change as the old system was simply inadequate,” comments Firth. “ The software was easy to learn and the feedback we received allowed us to quickly make small changes to improve usability and reporting ahead of the roll out to the other divisions.” By October the software had been completely rolled out to the Storage and Security divisions and the detailed data was now starting to flow in that highlighted the key ‘ revenue return on invested staff time’ that was one of the initial project goals.

“ For the first time, we had highly accurate and valuable data on where our staff were investing their time on a partner, customer and product level, and it allowed us to make some strategic decisions on which engagement we needed to target and which should be ceased – it really was an eye opener!” The new reporting prompted InTechnology to sever certain channel relationships that were shown to be not profitable and more human resources to expand other engagements that were underserved or had potential for growth. On a tactical level, a core resource management team

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of four people now manage the assigning of 140 technical staff to various tasks such as client engagements, running training courses and partner projects. The software also passes both billable and non-billable hours into the accounting system that has led to an increase in direct revenue. The reporting of skills now allows for InTechnology staff to better utilise in-house training workshops and has allowed under-utilised staff to expand skills. The InTechnology board has deemed the project an overwhelming success and Firth adds, “ The new processes we have implemented alongside Epicor for Service Enterprises have had a profound effect on the decision making process for the business and allow us to see our true costs and margins across all the operational units.” “ It’s hard to put a ROI or increase in performance alongside the project as we simply did not have the metrics in place before.

But moving forward, the new solution provides us with a baseline by which to measure any future operational changes and to gauge the overall state of the business.” 2006 will see the solution expanded to other areas of the business including Product Development, MIS and operations in other European countries and Firth is confident of the long-term successes of the project. “ We have created a system that both meets the needs of the business today and will grow with us no matter which direction we expand in. It has been an overwhelming success that has led to a business able to make more informed decisions that has led to better margins,” concludes Firth.