

Retail Food Distributor Accelerates Software Selection Process

Case Study

Solution Overview

Industry

Retail Food Distribution

Business Functions

Supply Chain Operations, Finance, Procurement, and Information Technology

Business Issue

Facilitate the generation of requirements for an enterprise Order Management function from distinct business units with disparate systems.

Solution

Employed requirements definition methodology that innovated solution requirements, generated next-generation business processes, and achieved consensus amongst business units on business needs.

Benefits

The Encore solution achieved a comprehensive list of functionality and next-generation process framework in an accelerated period of time

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The task of selecting software applications to support specific process and organizational improvements can often be a long, arduous task for companies that do not perform these searches with any regularity. This case study examines a \$5B retail food distributor client that employed Encore Consulting to assist in the definition of the future state requirements and accelerate the software selection to support the consolidation of their Order Fulfillment (OF) processes.

The Challenge

One of the first tasks of the newly installed senior management team was to identify specific saving and revenue expansion opportunities. As part of a cost improvement and containment strategy, there remained a need to consolidate OF operational processes that had remained separate during a recent period of acquisition. This client had developed many 'process islands' in the OF area that were preventing the enterprise from realizing the benefits of their scale in terms of operational performance and purchasing power. The Chief Information Officer called upon Encore to provide the approach and management skills to:

- **accelerate** the collaboration between the different owners of the process islands
- **envision** the mission-critical objectives of the OF and logistics operations in terms of process and function

From this activity, detailed functional requirements could be defined, and a gap analysis between future and current capabilities could be authored. In addition to accelerating the selection process, the CIO recognized there was significant resistance in the organization to an enterprise OF solution. In support of the CIO's concerns, Encore employed a process that changed the organization's behaviors and habits as follows:

- **Challenge convention and current thinking** – The Encore team used a series of tools and techniques to teach the team to think differently and see opportunities that were otherwise hidden.
- **Build Ownership and Teamwork** – The approach leveraged the knowledge and experiences of the team members while creating interest and ownership.

- **Generate Actionable Results** – practical ideas were generated that generated meaningful results through the workshops and activities.

The Solution

The principle objective of this effort was to position solution alternatives for the client that would accelerate the selection and implementation of an enterprise OF solution. To envision the future state and innovate new process and functional capabilities, Encore facilitated a series of workshops with the business teams over a six-week period. These workshops employed various techniques to develop Mission-Critical Business Outcomes, OF Purpose Statement, and Ideas Blueprints. These outputs generated the following:

- **Future-state OF Requirements** – a destination business model was defined through a series of visioning sessions with the key order fulfillment constituents, including the CEO, CFO, and CIO.
- **Current State Gap Analysis** – upon completion of the future state requirements, a comparison against current process and systems capabilities was made to prioritize solution alternatives.
- **Position solution alternatives** – against a defined set of evaluation criteria, internal and external solutions were ranked and presented to the Executive Committee for final direction.

The final deliverable manifested itself in the form of an electronic binder containing all of the analysis, work products, deliverable documents, and a presentation for the CIO to the Executive team summarizing the findings. The problem summary and alternatives description resulted in an approval of the next step earlier than planned.

The Benefit

By looking at their business through a different lens, this client removed the façade of habit to find solutions for their enterprise OF process they had never considered in the past, in a timeframe that was considerably shorter than they had planned. By employing a different set of tools to think through their issues, the client developed a different set of answers to the problems that they had not been able to successfully remedy.

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