



Our ICT Practice

Dbi Consulting

Across the public and private sectors, ICT is the key enabler for ensuring an organisation's business success. From desktop PCs with simple word processing to complex applications for specialised business needs, achieving a successful link between business requirements, ICT strategy, ICT implementation, and benefits has never been more important.

Yet it is frequently difficult to make that successful link. Objectives may be difficult to agree, issues of migration and legacy investment abound, technical awareness may be limited in specific areas, it can be difficult to describe benefits in a tangible way, and implementation can often be fraught with pitfalls.

Dbi's ICT practice is experienced in the management of these challenges in the public sector. We are independent of specific IT vendors and our role is to provide our client with the support necessary to ensure successful ICT, not to promote any particular technology, product or approach.

ICT change will only be useful for an organisation if it delivers benefits, and we maintain a strong focus on these. Our consulting philosophy is that successful business change depends on success in three key areas: managing the benefits; managing the risks; and managing communications.



At Dbi we know that consultancy is a people business...

... so we have built our company, culture, and processes on this basis with confident, experienced people at the top of their game. Our clients can deal with real people who take a genuine and personal interest in you, your business and in helping you solve your problems.

Our services

We offer a full range of ICT services from service level specification and management through capacity and availability management to business continuity, contingency planning and disaster recovery. With our extensive knowledge of the ICT marketplace and our independence from vendors, we are well placed to provide ICT procurement and financial advice. Our services can include, for example:

- Providing a full project management team to scope an IT project, capture and document requirements, carry out a competitive procurement process, then manage the relationship with the appointed supplier, coordinate technical implementation with business process changes, conduct testing and user assurance, and ensure successful go-live
- Recovering a project that has run into problems—for example, when a previous project manager has left at short notice with no handover, or when the project's progress is significantly different from that expected
- Supplying an experienced individual as a programme or project manager, working alongside client staff to bring an external perspective, wider experience, and specific skills. This is often associated with transferring skills to client staff, helping them prepare for future projects without external support
- Providing an individual or a small team to run a project or programme support function
- Working with an organisation to help develop an appropriate in-house project management methodology, including process development, assessment methodologies, performance reporting strategies, staff training, management of the change and post-change evaluation.

“Dbi provide real deliverers. They perform to a high standard, apply themselves hard and with empathy for the client's culture. All their staff exhibit these strengths and have a strong awareness of, and experience in, taking forward the Government's efficiency and ICT agenda. They have made a real difference.”

Quote from central Government client

Our approach

The range of ICT services we can satisfy argues against a single, standardised approach. We encourage our senior consultants to take responsibility for developing an approach for each individual assignment that is consistent with best practice and the specific circumstances of the work needed – they will always take client's views into account. Typically, the consultant will work with client staff over the first day or so of an assignment to establish and agree the best approach.

In general terms, we base our consultancy approach on using Buying Solutions' Best Practice toolkit, particularly PRINCE2®. This can be readily tailored for many different situations, and has the advantage of placing considerable emphasis on quality and achieving customer requirements.

Because of the breadth of ICT knowledge necessary for success in this field, we draw on a substantial pool of deeply specialised consultants, with experience and expertise focused on specific client needs, whether these are for a particular background of technology, a particular application area, or the particular solution for a business requirement.

Finally, and as appropriate to the circumstances and our clients' specific needs, we put considerable attention on skills transfer, recognising that when our engagement with the work completes, the client organisation needs to have both the competencies, and the confidence, to exploit the ICT to best business effect.

“Dbi are accustomed to working in the public sector environment and were well aware of the nuances and pressures currently being faced by us. The range of solutions offered demonstrated a good understanding of funding constraints and political realities.”

Quote from Government Agency client

- ICT strategy and options appraisals
- System specification, procurement, implementation and testing
- Technical assurance
- IS/IT change management
- Electronic document records management
- Information security
- Business continuity
- Disaster recovery
- Risk analysis

Case Study: MoD DII

Dbi was engaged to provide technical advice and management support to a number of projects within the Defence Information Infrastructure, including the development and delivery of an architecture for the technical refresh of an existing (Windows NT-4 based) infrastructure onto a Windows 2003 infrastructure. The result needed to be capable of supporting all new and existing services, applications and interfaces and to be implemented at RAF stations throughout UK as well as abroad, and in deployable environments.

The Outcome

We managed the complete programme, including: the rollout plans for technical migration; prioritisation; scheduling and phasing of implementation; development and co-ordination of project work plans and deliverables with the hardware supplier; management and co-ordination of 14 interdependent work streams; development and upkeep of all implementation plans and the management of their associated risks; liaison with Estate Managers to facilitate coordination with other technical CIS projects at RAF stations; production, maintenance and implementation of a wide ranging communication plan; and user awareness briefing.

The Benefits

Particular challenges we overcame were different priorities between suppliers and operational units; resolving some technical shortcomings and inconsistencies early in the rollout that seriously affected user confidence; and responding to a particular operational imperative from the Afghanistan theatre of operations that could have put UK service personnel at risk if not resolved. Having established clear lines of communication and authority between two different clients, many customer sites and the prime contractor, the rollout was successfully completed, providing a robust technical infrastructure and sound user confidence in the system.



Case Study: DCLG Fire & Rescue Service

The primary objective was to develop an ICT infrastructure strategic roadmap for the Fire and Rescue Service with a phased transition programme for the next five to 10 years. To provide best value for money, we took a three stage approach that utilised a mix of business and technical consultancy skills.

The Outcome

We defined detailed requirements and agreed these with stakeholders; defined detailed 'as-is' and the proposed 'to-be' pictures and identified options; developed a detailed 'Road-map' forward; identified costs, ownership responsibilities and key risks and issues; and developed the business case and recommendations. We brought DCLG attention to the need to consider the ICT implications in the modernisation programme and ensured a clear and detailed understanding of the existing ICT that was being used, the technology currently available but not being utilised, and technology that would become available over the next few years.

The Benefits

The business case underpinned and led to key decisions that were taken regarding the future sharing of applications and ICT. A national web presence for the Fire and Rescue Service, supporting electronic services, was implemented providing a coherent joining up between the 47 Fire and Rescue Services in England.

About Dbi

For nearly a quarter of a century, Dbi Consulting has been providing high quality, independent consultancy, primarily to the UK public sector. We are very proud that we have built up an enviable reputation for performance, competence and professionalism.

In addition to the management consultancy that has been the core of our business throughout this time, we now offer the provision of high quality interim managers. Throughout our corporate history we have developed an assignment management approach that ensures the consultants, associates, interim managers, clients and client staff can work together fully and effectively.

What we do

Dbi provides consultancy and interim management services, primarily to clients in the UK Public Sector—Central and Local Government, Agencies, NDPBs, Defence, Education and Health. We also work with a smaller number of commercial and other private sector companies.

Our consulting experience over the past quarter of a century is wide-ranging, but we have built up particular expertise in certain core services, which we brigade into the three practices of:

- Project and programme management
- Business Improvement
- ICT services.

The ICT Practice includes:



Austen Collinge

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A project manager with over 20 years experience of Information and Communications Technology (ICT). He is familiar with both the business and technical aspects of the system development lifecycle, covering analysis, development, testing and implementation, including post implementation reviews. He has worked on a wide range of systems from mainframe to client server as well as local and wide area networks. Austen has experience of working in both the private and public sector and has specific experience of Supply Chain Management, Manufacturing and ICT Service Procurement. Austen is an enthusiastic clay pigeon shooter but says that they don't cook up too well.



Kevin Silk

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Kevin is an innovative information systems professional with a background of developing, managing and supporting large scale information systems in the Local Authority sector. He has worked on a number of projects to develop Information Systems that improve the quality and quantity of Management Information for customers. Kevin is experienced in working both independently and as part of large multi departmental teams within the Project Management and IT development areas. When not studying for his Masters, Kevin can be found fell walking or playing football and is the only member of Dbi to have been bitten by a shark!

If you would like to know more about our ICT services, please contact Austen, or a member of the Assignment Support team, on 01926 834700. We would welcome the opportunity of an informal, no commitment, discussion with you.