



# Perform Partners Case Study

Merger & Acquisition

## The challenge

In order to continue to trade online within Europe after the UK's exit from the EU (Brexit), the customer identified a need to have an online technology presence within an EU country and acquire a new EU Regulatory Gambling Commission licence as direct replacements to its current operations.

**This would deliver significant value for the International Group, expand European presence, increase overall revenues and provide market growth opportunities.**

The customer approached Perform Partners to manage the transformational aspects of the merger and acquisition to source a Maltese datacentre presence, build out infrastructure and replicate data from Gibraltar alongside managing a technical audit of business processes and technology as part of the licence acquisition.

# Our solution

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Our approach to the programme was a three-stage process:

## Understand, Establish, Deliver.

### Understand

The customer acquired a new pan-European business and the initial activity was to understand the programme scope, this included:

- Integration of systems and technologies across both business entities.
- Provision of new technology services to integrate existing internationally deployed network services.
- Dedicated support to the resultant business operational change.
- Identify scope of change to technologies, tools, suppliers, licences, people and process to create a single cost effective and efficient Technology Operations function capable of supporting both businesses.
- Migration of c. 500 Sweden and Malta based users within the acquired business from G-Suite to an existing customer MS Office 365 tenancy for email and file share purposes.

Working with the customer's stakeholders, primarily their Legal, Compliance and Technology teams, analysis of the Regulatory requirements was undertaken through evaluation of the framework and compliance documentation. A strategic high level design was developed which identified the solution, allowing us to undertake market research and formal vendor selection.

The customer's Operational teams were engaged to understand their full requirements, expectations, anticipated timescales and any critical dates. This allowed Perform Partners to structure an approach, qualify budget and deliver. Because of other transformation change being undertaken by the customer at the same time, we proactively identified other dependent programmes and initiatives, aligned to, engaged with to ensure a smooth delivery without adding complexity or delay.

## Establish

Regulatory frameworks, documentation and requirements are inherently complex and often vague; in addition, the UK's withdrawal from the EU under Brexit was new. Whilst the technology solution was considered relatively simple initially, the lack of legislative clarity, requirement instability and the lack of previous experience in achieving the objective presented challenges for the customer who was undertaking change ahead of its other industry competitors. Perform Partners experience identified the need for solid stakeholder engagement from the outset to ensure alignment; this included cross functional teams internal to the customer, the International Regulatory Authority and 3rd party vendors. Although relatively standard, we also recommended formal project governance which captured and managed requirements under change control as the Brexit legislation materialised and gained clarity.

Resulting from the customer's subsequent business acquisition, once the change control was approved, we identified, recommended and implemented a revised approach to project delivery:

- Separate workstreams were established to define, deliver, track and close-out specific activities, focussing on time critical elements and quick wins where appropriate.
- Perform Partners' operating model allowed the programme to bolster the team with additional resource to deliver concurrent workstreams, whilst remaining aligned to any customer resource constraints.
- Establish a cross functional team across several countries to 'deliver as one', utilising video technology and face-face engagement as a means to enhance relationships and enable joined up delivery.
- Regular and frequent engagement with stakeholders to report progress, seek decisions and share intent.

## Deliver

Once quantified analysis was approved, we set out the overarching delivery plan, clearly showing dependencies and key milestones across the workstream structure. Having identified and assigned workstream owners, more granular plans enhanced the level of control. Our intent was to enable responsibility and delivery to be shared amongst the team, so tasks were allocated to specific resource, thus creating a team ethos and ways of working whilst Perform Partners remained accountable for programme delivery.

We established a number of concurrent delivery workstreams, focussing on a specific technology deliverable with the primary workstreams being:

- **Datacentre Infrastructure** - provision of new data centre infrastructure in Malta and the replication of data from Gibraltar based systems.
- **Networks** - integration of existing networks and provision of new services to meet strategic requirements.
- **Security** - technology and process change to integrate the customer's Information Security function across both businesses into an acceptable and cost effective single unit with standard processes and tools.
- **System Access** - effecting technology change to allow users to access IT systems safely and appropriately, regardless of origin or hosting, as business operations were transformed and consolidated.
- **Regulatory Audit** - change to business process and technology to ensure compliance with the new Regulatory Authority's requirements and the certification of a new Regulatory Operator's Licence to trade across Europe.
- **O365 Migration** - migration of acquired business users and data from G-Suite to O365 to streamline technology tools and reduce operating costs.
- **Operating Model** - identify, analyse, reduce and standardise the number of technology products, tools, processes and capabilities in order to streamline the Technology operational model and effect cost savings in the long-term.

We established a core working group of assigned Project Managers, Business Analysts and key Technology SMEs from both parts of the business organisation to move away from a silo-based approach in favour of one which had joined up thinking, delivery and involvement.



Perform Partners supported the overall business and project's objectives by facilitating the relationship between the customer's in-house teams, their business operational teams and their strategic partner professional service teams. Perform Partners consultants worked with the customer and coordinated all delivery resource to achieve success. During the delivery lifecycle, in addition to the core project team, geographically dispersed resource from the customer's internal teams were involved in a matrix-managed capacity, including specialists from Legal, Compliance, Business Operational and Technology teams, alongside 3rd party resource from the customer's Technology Service Providers, Legal and Consultancy partners.

Whilst favouring face-face engagement, we utilised collaboration tools (Skype, Video, Slack, JIRA and Sharepoint), to ensure documentation and tasks were clearly communicated and tracked in addition to encouraging people's behaviours to engage one another.

The core team, using traditional presentation packs and conference calls, provided regular, focused reporting and updates to all stakeholders to ensure a clear, consistent and all-encompassing communications at all times.

## Successes

Through careful preparation, planning and implementation, Perform Partners successfully met key business case initiatives:

- Migration of acquired business users and data to O365 in advance of the critical date, as planned and without issues.
- Provision of a new infrastructure platform in a Maltese datacentre, with near-real-time replicated data from Gibraltar being available in advance of the Regulatory constraint.
- Deployment of new network services to key sites, connecting these to the customer's core network fabric.
- Provision of access to IT systems as business transformation progressed thus maintaining operational capability within the International business.
- Progression of documentary evidence to support the ensuing Regulatory licence audit, identifying those areas of Business operational processes and Technology stacks which need attention and remediation ahead of the Licence being granted.

**Through collaboration, regardless of geographic location or business entity, Perform Partners helped the customer achieve ongoing business transformation across its International online business, successfully encouraging a cultural shift from silo delivery to a collaborative working model.**

The programme developed a reporting template which was well received and became an adopted template for use by other programmes and initiatives across both businesses.

# Benefits

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**EUC / UAC:**

- Removal of duplicate costs currently being incurred.
- Removal of bottlenecks, improving internal SLAs.
- Users have one entry point for requests across two organisations.

**Tool Consolidation:**

- Removal of duplicate/additional costs currently being incurred (potential benefits of licensing economies of scale).
- Improved collaboration across all teams.
- Improved productivity, information and processes stored/performed in one application.

**System Access:**

- Enablement of key business activities and collaboration across businesses.
- Reduced SLAs in the completion of these requests, resulting in improved customer satisfaction.

**IT Operating Model:**

- Alignment of people, process and technology to meet strategic objectives.
- Cross pollinate skills and knowledge, to improve capabilities.
- Balance workload and increase capacity to deliver strategic priorities.
- Reduce current attrition rates.

**Portfolio Alignment:**

- Remove the blocker of Catalyst/Fusion (Fusion was key priority of William Hill International)
- Increased collaboration and communication between all teams where IT Operations are involved.



# Benefits

**Networks:**

- Network connections to key sites – secure, stable and scalable.
- Potential for network rationalisation (cost reduction).

**Data Centre:**

- Enabling the reduction of large DC cost/optimisation.
- Asset Management:
- Reduction in license costs.
- Identified opportunity to reduce in costs for agreements through leveraging scale.
- Identified opportunity to reduce likelihood of fines for non-compliance.
- Improve efficiency (and realise capacity benefits) through optimising E2E process.



**Customer:**

William Hill

**Customer Contact:**

Sarah Lucas, Head of Platforms & Infrastructure

T: (+44) 113 397 4865

E: slucas@williamhill.co.uk

**Contract Start Date:**

May 2019

**Contract Value:**

£582,000

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**Perform Partners**

Platform,  
New Station St,  
Leeds LS1 4JB

T: (+44) 113 4266810

E: [info@perform-partners.com](mailto:info@perform-partners.com)

W: <https://perform-partners.com>