DXC TECHNOLOGY

Microsoft

Microsoft Power Platform accelerates delivery for restaurant chain

CUSTOMER
Australian-owned global restaurant chain franchise

LOCATION
Australia

INDUSTRY
Consumer and Retail

Challenge

- Difficulty meeting financial/regulatory reporting obligations
- Statutory and corporate compliance governance was becoming more challenging
- Complex, time-consuming and disjointed manual workflows and techniques impacting productivity

Solution

- Microsoft Power Platform incorporating Dataverse and Model Driven Power App
- Solution design and implementation

Results

- Modern financial reporting and compliance processes with improved productivity and efficiency
- Automated workflows and approvals for faster turn-around and delivery to deadlines
- A single view of compliance task status for data-driven insights and improved transparency, agility and decision making

Passionate about delivering fresh, quality food faster, an Australian-owned master franchise holder has tasted operational success by constantly enhancing customer experience and continually improving and innovating products, processes and technology.

Leaders in the food-technology space, the globally renowned restaurant chain has introduced app ordering, voice assistants, artificial intelligence and augmented reality to cater for and enrich service interaction for both customers and employees. To maintain its momentum, the chain has also modernised financial auditing and compliance by slicing redundant processes and labour-intensive tasks that previously impacted the on-time delivery of its day-to-day operations.

Business challenge

Hindered by complex structures and time-consuming manual workflows, the restaurant chain's finance team found it difficult to effectively manage financial/regulatory reporting and corporate compliance commitments. With cumbersome and disjointed processes, the company was often at risk of not meeting its month- and year-end obligations. In addition, governance of entity statutory compliance was becoming more challenging in an increasingly complex business environment.

Consistency and transparency of compliance processes are critical. Accountable teams need to understand the current status of compliance tasks, with tools and information on hand to support governance decisions. For any single process, various tasks are completed by many individuals with multiple approval layers before submission.

Managing all this involved a haphazard and ineffective mix of spreadsheets, emails, instant messages, phone calls and other manual techniques.

The slow, manual processes made tracking progress difficult, with no big-picture view of compliance product status, time taken to complete particular tasks, or ways to predict delays or manage setbacks. Added complexity resulted from the need to maintain compliance across three different financial jurisdictions in Australia, Asia and Europe, with inconsistencies across the separate entities and teams.

With no formal workflow structure, streamlining and automating this process was critical to ensure deadlines weren't missed or resulting financial penalties imposed. The restaurant chain wanted a consistent solution to help modernise and standardise processes, identify and mitigate bottlenecks, offer increased

transparency across tasks, and provide a single view of task status.

Automation of workflows and approvals would help the restaurant chain increase productivity and efficiency in meeting financial and compliance deadlines for corporate legal entities across statutory reporting, treasury and taxation.

Solution

An existing Microsoft Dynamics customer, the restaurant chain approached Microsoft to solve its problem. A proof of concept was completed showcasing Microsoft Power Platform and its capability to automate finance and compliance workflows, enhance existing processes, and accelerate the ability to access, update and create a single view of data. The components within the Power Platform can be used individually, together or integrated with Office 365, Microsoft Dynamics 365, Azure, or many other apps, business solutions or data sources.

DXC Technology was selected as the preferred implementation partner because of DXC's extensive Power Platform experience and knowledge. Furthermore, the restaurant chain had previously worked with the DXC Practice for Microsoft to implement their enterprise resource planning (ERP) solution: demonstrating a thorough understanding of the organisation's internal processes and transformation objectives.

DXC's Power Platform team conducted an in-depth discovery session using a design thinking approach to uncover the restaurant chain's business challenges, define problems and identify a range of strategies and solutions.

Working closely with the restaurant chain, DXC designed a complete compliance tasks management solution built on Microsoft technology, including:

- Model Driven Power App for the user interface and access to enterprise functionality

- Power Automate Cloud Flows for the automation of processes

- Power Automate Business Process Flows to manage the overall process

- Dataverse for data storage and the Common Data Model definition to implement system tables, security roles, business rules, views, dashboards, etc.

- Outlook for email integration

- SharePoint Online for document storage

The solution was developed via a series of sprints with demonstrations and feedback at each stage. At the end of the build, DXC conducted train-the-trainer sessions to empower the franchise's team and enable a successful outcome across the organisation.

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Results

Within the compliance task management project, each critical process requiring digitisation was referred to as a compliance product.

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Automated email notifications alert preparers throughout the workflow, reminding them when tasks are due soon or overdue. When tasks are overdue, emails are also sent to approvers, and further delays in responding initiate escalations to the CFO. That provides added incentive to meet deadlines and prevents tasks from being rushed at the last minute to meet deadlines.

Integration to SharePoint was also added, providing the ability to upload, download and display documents linked to tasks. Data integrity has improved due to decreased manual input and human intervention with access to the single view, creating a data-fuelled organisation.

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Benefits

The solution has transformed the restaurant chain's processes via modernisation and automation, eliminating complexity and manual intervention in meeting important compliance deadlines across multiple jurisdictions. With collaborators spread across Australia, Asia and Europe, compliance tasks and reporting to regulators like the Australian Taxation Office are more efficiently managed.

According to a spokesperson from the restaurant chain, "User adoption of the solution has been extremely successful, and we have plans to roll the Power Platform to more business units wherever increased control and visibility of processes is needed."

Additional benefits include improved management and visibility of tasks by preparers to meet deadlines, with automated workflows and approvals accelerating the turn-around and actioning of tasks. The approver dashboard allows senior executives to self-serve a 360-degree view of task status and reassign essential or urgent tasks to other team members. This dashboard provides complete transparency with a single consolidated view of overdue items, key milestones and compliance tasks pending CFO approval.

Power Platform has also empowered the restaurant chain to accelerate roll-out and achieve rapid return on investment, with the creation of new compliance products made simple by cloning. A compliance product owner simply clones an existing product (which could contain 100 or more individual tasks), and all workflows and due dates are automatically calculated. With some products produced monthly, this is a lifesaver. The system also can recognise if a task consistently takes longer than allowed, so it can be flagged for review with the option to extend the time allocated.

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— Peter Pontel
Practice Delivery Manager,
DXC Technology

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With the modernisation and improved transparency of critical compliance workflows delivered to the finance team, the restaurant chain is now considering how it can take-away other antiquated processes that have outstayed their use-by date to ensure it remains a leader in the food-technology space — for both its customers and employees.

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