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Council's transformation journey to empower citizens and streamline processes

CUSTOMER
Christchurch City Council

LOCATION
Christchurch, New Zealand

INDUSTRY
Public Sector

Challenge

- Improve customer interaction and how services are delivered
- Outdated legacy systems, complex and manual processes, no centralised data management
- Move from analogue to digital to improve business processes and operational efficiency

Solution

- Design and implementation of digital transformation plan
- SAP S/4HANA and SAP Cloud for Customer
- SAP Business Technology Platform, SAP Commerce Cloud and Citizen Engagement Accelerator

Results

- Digital ways of working incorporating people, process, information and technology
- Improved IT efficiencies with streamlined workflows; reduction in the number of systems used and maintained, reducing associated costs
- Easier for citizens to interact with the Council's people and services
- Estimated savings of around $20m over five years

Council's transformation journey to empower citizens and streamline processes

Christchurch City Council is the local government authority for the City of Christchurch. Located on the east coast of New Zealand's South Island, Christchurch has the second largest population of all the New Zealand territorial authorities after Auckland, and is the largest urban centre in the South Island.

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Head of Digital/CIO,
Christchurch City Council

The Council is responsible for the social, economic and cultural well-being of the city, including the management of a range of local services, as well as roads, water, sewerage, waste collection, parks and reserves, libraries and urban development.

As Christchurch began to rebuild after the devastating 2011 earthquake, the Council envisioned creating a liveable city with strong communities, a healthy environment and a prosperous economy.

Business challenge

Improving how the Council delivers services and interacts with customers was integral to achieving this vision. However, it was impeded by challenges such as outdated legacy systems, complex and manual processes and no centralised data management.

As a result, a major digital transformation program was required for Christchurch to meet its goals of creating a great place

to live, a great place to work and being viable for the future.

Symon McHerron, Head of Digital/CIO, Christchurch City Council, says the Council also faced many demographic and environmental challenges with citizens demanding the Council deliver the same customer experience as the private sector.

"Aging populations are straining government services and are increasing sustainability drives to ensure communities are liveable now and in the future," McHerron says. "At the same time, the environmental impact of climate change is affecting how government services are delivered."

The Council's vision for its digital strategy was squarely aimed at helping make it easier for citizens to interact with its people and services. But as McHerron explains, transformation in the public sector is still lagging due to a build-up of technical debt and a scarcity of human resources.

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Solution

To address these challenges, the Council asked DXC Technology to lead the design and implementation of the Council's digital transformation plan.

"As the development partner for the SAP Citizen Engagement Accelerator, DXC was well placed to guide us on our journey to improve the quality of interactions and outcomes citizens were experiencing," McHerron recounts.

DXC and other providers implemented a range of SAP technology, including SAP S/4HANA and SAP Cloud for Customer to improve business processes and operational efficiency, SAP Business Technology Platform to support vital integrations, and SAP Commerce Cloud and Citizen Engagement Accelerator to provide a new digital interface for citizens. As part of the Council's continuing transformation, SAP Customer Data Cloud is currently being implemented to solve the challenge of siloed identities.

"As an existing SAP user, the decision was made to leverage the native integration capabilities of SAP to streamline both internal, back-office processes as well as citizen engagement services, recalls McHerron. "SAP allowed for more consistent integration across core financial, asset management and customer-facing processes."

The program of work had several key objectives, including:

- Increase efficiency by reducing process complexity and allowing staff to complete end-to-end services digitally

- Migrate and standardise processes from end-of-life systems to solutions that can meet both current and future needs

- Improve the information available to citizens for their requests and make interacting with Council easier

- Create a single view of the customer to enhance customer services capabilities

- Improve the ease of interactions and provide more choices to citizens on how and when they interact with the Council

Results and benefits

"We are reaping a range of business and IT benefits thanks to the ongoing program of work," says McHerron. "By moving from analogue to digital processes, we estimate the Council will save around $20m over five years."

He says the project is helping streamline workflows and has improved IT efficiencies by reducing the number of systems used and maintained and reducing the associated costs.

The Council's move to the cloud-based S/4HANA ERP solution enables it to leverage more standardisation, functionality, and innovation. The upgrade has also increased performance

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and given the Council greater disaster recovery capability for improved resilience.

By onboarding SAP Cloud for Customer and the Citizen Engagement Accelerator, it has transitioned customer service requests off legacy systems for more standardised and consistent citizen experiences.

"We have moved all service requests to the platform, enhanced services such as online payments, and introduced innovations such as Geographic Information System (GIS) interfaces to map where requests were located," says McHerron. "This has allowed contact centre staff to gain a visual representation of the service request geo-spatially."

Using SAP to configure its identity services allows the Council to better

consolidate and personalise each citizen's experience.

"We are creating more self-service options to empower citizens when they transact with Council and to move contact centre staff from mundane requests to higher-value activities."

The Council plans to leverage SAP Cloud for Customer for its funding, grants solution, and infringement processes. In addition, to enable a secure and consistent citizen experience, it continues to rationalise processes and functions onto core platforms. It anticipates further leveraging its identity services solution to federate other citizen services to create a more robust, multi-channel CRM experience.

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