



DELIVERING A COMPLEX TECHNOLOGY IMPLEMENTATION AT BORD GAIS ENERGY

BUSINESS AGILITY REQUIRES IT AGILITY ALLOWING THE GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES TO BEND AND INFORMAL NETWORKS TO PROSPER. THIS IS COUNTER-INTUITIVE AND MIND-BLOWING FOR MANY VETERAN IT PROGRAMME MANAGERS. THIS IS EXACTLY WHAT IS REQUIRED TODAY IN A FAST CHANGING BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT

“ENNOVATE CAME ON-BOARD IN THE MIDST OF SUBSTANTIAL CHANGE, A DIFFICULT VENDOR RELATIONSHIP AND CONFLICTING PRIORITIES. THEY BROUGHT REFRESHING CALMNESS AND CONFIDENCE, SEPARATING THE WHEAT FROM THE CHAFF. THEY QUICKLY AND DECISIVELY BROUGHT RENEWED ENERGY AND FOCUS TO THE PROGRAM AND RESHAPED AND PRIORITISED BUSINESS COMMITMENTS IN ORDER TO BRING THE PROJECT HOME”

DES MCCABE, HEAD OF BACK OFFICE, BORD GÁIS ENERGY

BACKGROUND

Bord Gáis Energy (BGE) is a leading Irish all-island gas, power and home services company currently supplying products to over 1 million customers with revenues of €1.5 billion and over 1,000 employees.

BGE is a progressive company with a reputation for experience and expertise in the energy market and is committed to providing a quality service to all its customers.

BUSINESS CHALLENGE

In August 2010 Ennovate were asked by the CIO to provide a Senior Project Manager to manage the implementation of a complex new wholesale and retail electricity settlement solution. It required an experienced consultant to manage the project and a series of sensitive and complex relationships between the vendor, IT, and their Trading and Settlement team in BGE.

At the time, BGE had undergone significant growth and change raising the need to replace and move the existing settlement processes and technology onto a strategic platform that could support the recent and expected changes that included:

- Major expansion into the domestic electricity market
- Deregulation of the gas and electricity markets
- Rapid expansion into the Power Generation Markets with the acquisition of SWS (in 2009) and the opening of Whitegate in 2011, a large Gas burning Electricity Power Station.



“ENNOVATE BRING A PRAGMATIC UNDERSTANDING OF HOW TO GET THE TEAM TO MOVE QUICKLY AND DECISIVELY IN UNISON. THEY UNDERSTAND THE NEED TO BRING PEOPLE ALONG AND DRIVE THE OUTCOMES NEEDED”

ASHLING CUNNINGHAM, CIO, BORD GAIS ENERGY

DIAGNOSIS & INSIGHT

- Bring a detached perspective and listen beyond the obvious. In this case, the prevailing story of the vendor being supportive and helpful was misguided. From there, Ennovate recognised the need to build technical strength into the team by challenging the vendor's product deliverables, raising the standard of product delivered and bringing clarity on scope and the requirement for strong vendor accountability.
- Technology capability is seldom the challenge, successfully delivering IT projects requires designing and fostering win-win relationships between vendors, IT organisations and the business community
- Effectiveness in managing change is a critical success factor. By that we mean managing changing priorities and shifting scope, but in a counter-intuitive way, rather than by eliminating change or making it almost impossible to seep into a programme. The latter creates huge distrust and builds barriers between business and IT. The former requires working through the required changes and applying equal measures of governance and pragmatism. Applying the right judgement calls makes all the difference.
- Getting and maintaining business commitment requires careful management of the hand-offs between IT and the business, effective governance, designing a communications campaign that keeps the business informed and managing an informal network of commitments between the business and IT.

HOW ENNOVATE HELPED

We deployed a variety of consulting disciplines; Project Management, Change Management and Vendor Management.

We undertook an initial review over a 10-day period and presented a simplified one-page plan, instigated weekly vendor, stakeholder and regular Steering Group meetings and developed a 9-point plan to address key areas of vendor weakness.

We then re-mobilised the project with a kick off meeting with the Vendor and key stakeholders and the existing project team. We:

- Mobilised the project in a way that simplified, clarified and reinforced the deliverables, accountabilities and responsibilities of the team
- Designed an aggressive project plan focussed on 'deliverables in smaller chunks'
- Aggressively managed the risk, issues and actions to drive action and accountability
- Instigated VP level workshops with the Vendor in order to make real progress in addressing their lack of on-time delivery and poor quality
- Introduced local project governance that drove out actions and accountability
- Improved communications and business stakeholder buy-in and commitment to the technology implementation
- Designed and delivered a series of interventions that brought clarity and improved product delivery quality from the vendor so saving time and effort and leading to improved vendor relationships

- Prepared the business to accept the new solution by leading the design and implementation of new processes and practices to embed and sustain the project

Over a period lasting 12 months we brought the project through a series of milestones resulting in the successful delivery of the wholesale & retail settlement platform.

IMPACT

We revised the plan and budget forecast to take account of the extended timescales and gained Steering Group approval for the revisions.

Stakeholder communications improved significantly and the Vendor was driven hard to improve their overall quality, resulting in the successful delivery of Phase 1 and the re-planning of Phase 2.

The project was successfully delivered within the recalibrated budget.



ENNOVATE
MANAGEMENT CONSULTING

