

The NFU farms out IT services to outsourcing specialist Panacea



As one of the the UK's leading service-based systems integrators and providers of business process solutions, Panacea's outsourced service delivered the following benefits to the NFU:

- *Improved data availability and security provides increased systems uptime, performance and protection*
- *Service delivery precisely matches business need through high tailorability*
- *Fixed-price costings provide easier budgetary control*
- *Guaranteed access to the latest technologies delivers improved business efficiency and staff productivity*
- *Guaranteed access to IT specialists provides improved systems efficiency*
- *Defined SLAs provide quality benchmarks for support and maintenance services.*

The National Farmers Union is the largest farming organisation in the UK representing around three quarters of agricultural production in England and Wales.

As one of the foremost farming organisations in Europe, the NFU plays a central role in guiding agricultural policy, developing legislation and promoting the importance of agriculture in the UK.

While undertaking a thorough review of their overall business operations, the NFU placed IT high on their agenda primarily because they recognised an increasing need for a more clearly defined, cohesive and cost-efficient IT strategy.

As meetings between the NFU and Panacea progressed, it became clear that a tailored, fully outsourced service was both a viable and effective proposition that would bring to the NFU all the operational functionality and benefits they were seeking - dedicated resource, proven expertise and reduced overhead.

The new arrangement would provide high quality management and maintenance of the NFU's existing infrastructure as well as providing the flexibility for future expansion or customisation.



// I don't need to think about supporting our IT infrastructure any more.

It just happens! //

*Ken Sutherland,
Director of Finance & Internal Services, NFU*



Overview

With headquarters in London, a European office in Brussels and offices throughout the seven English regions and Wales, the NFU serves the needs of its members locally, nationally and internationally.

As an existing IT partner, Panacea had previously upgraded the NFU's ERP and business intelligence systems for which high quality support services were already being provided.

Situation

During a review of their existing business operations, the NFU recognised a need for a more clearly defined, cohesive and cost-efficient IT strategy. And the timing was ideal. With business processes already earmarked for change the NFU consulted with Panacea's team of experts.

Solution

The new arrangement would provide high quality management and maintenance of the NFU's existing infrastructure as well as allowing for future expansion or customisation.

Add to this, technical support (covering hardware and software)

and systems administration - all backed by a highly experienced services team.

Some of the main features of the outsourced service include:

- Defined service benchmarks and service levels
- Full-time, on-site personnel
- Hotline support for end-users during office hours
- Extended (24 x 7) support for designated individuals
- The dedicated resources of a Services Director, Technical Director, Account Director, Services Delivery Manager and other team members.

Outcome

The benefits to the NFU are derived principally from greatly improved efficiencies in IT administration, immediate cost savings and a much more strategic approach to IT service delivery across their enterprise brought about by Panacea's expert support and maintenance teams.

To date, Panacea's project service levels have improved on mutually agreed SLAs and client expectation.

Fixed costs allow for easier budgeting while defined timescales

deliver quality of service benchmarks against all elements of support and maintenance.

As a result, the NFU is now in a stronger position to leverage new technological developments within the IT marketplace and is more able to effectively manage and maintain its IT infrastructure to help provide operational stability and sustained business growth.

If you'd like further information or a more detailed account of this project, please telephone Panacea on 01256 30 50 50 or e-mail enquiries@panacea.co.uk



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