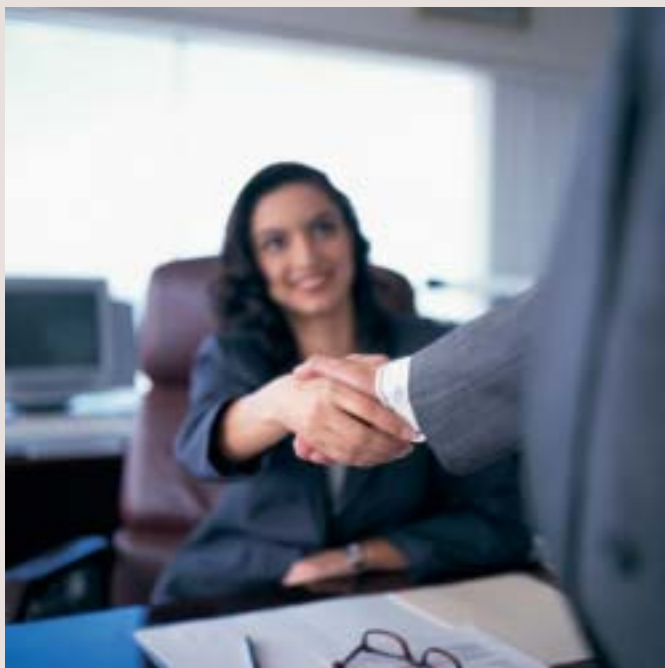


Client Case Study



Ministère du Revenu du Québec (MRQ)

Company Profile

The Ministère du Revenu du Québec (MRQ) is the provincial department within Quebec tasked with the administration of tax collection and distribution for the 7.4 million residents and one-half million businesses located in the province. The organization employs over 10,000 people in its twenty offices situated in urban centres throughout Quebec as well as one location in Toronto, Canada, serving international organizations reporting Quebec revenue.

Amongst the agency's many responsibilities is the ongoing assessment and administration of a tax collection system capable of funding the province's public infrastructure. To this end, the organization makes daily assessments of tax returns and refunds, manages business registrations, and provides support payments. This involves effectively handling thousands of queries from citizens on a daily basis.

Client Problem Description

The MRQ serves the citizens of Quebec. As such, the department is under constant pressure to improve its client-facing services in an effort to provide faster, more efficient levels of service for its many stakeholders.

In fact beginning in 1998, most departments within the Quebec government were challenged by a province-wide mandate to attain higher levels of service. As one of the larger branches of the government, with more direct exposure to citizens on the frequently sensitive subject of taxation, the MRQ knew it was important to make itself as efficient and as responsive as possible.

In looking for a solution, MRQ CIO, Pierre Boisvert, clearly stated his desire to be able to react quickly to changing needs, and anticipate the demands of constituents. In doing so, Mr. Boisvert identified the following three drivers of change:

- Consolidation of existing services
- Development of new Web services to fulfill business needs
- The need to build a common infrastructure for all services, to ensure standards and uniformity

“Our mix of technologies prior to our business transformation hampered our ability to be responsive and to cost-effectively develop and introduce new online services,” stated Mr. Boisvert. “I wanted to know with certainty that a framework could be provided that would facilitate change and growth.”

In all, the entire project would impact in excess of five thousand Web pages, in pursuit of a more responsive, user-focused online presence. In addition, a switch to newer, more scalable technologies would render many of the older applications, and their supporting mainframes and mini-computers, redundant. The move towards a common platform and integrated applications promised to revitalize an aging system.

Implemented Solution/Service

Phase One

The project involved two major phases, with the first completed in 2001. In this phase, Fujitsu Consulting was asked to design a development environment that would permit all IT and business transformation work to be undertaken in a standardized, consistent way. To accomplish this goal, the consulting firm drew upon its award-winning Macroscopic® methodology to create development templates capable of guiding consultants and internal IT staff. The templates established methodology and best practices to be used throughout the transformation. It also enacted a method of cataloguing sections of Web services code for reuse in later projects, an important cost-saving structure.

As a demonstration of the comprehensive nature of this preliminary phase, one template was created specifically as a proof of concept for the use of .NET. Many other templates were equally granular with respect to purpose and design.

With the project scope clearly articulated, the MRQ and Fujitsu Consulting further refined the business transformation project by splitting the entire program into seven sub-projects: four application projects and three infrastructure projects based on .NET (hardware, software & environment, development tools).

As identified by the government department, the seven smaller projects would bring about the following changes:

1. Allow Quebec companies to register online for purposes of PST and GST and directly manage their addresses within the MRQ systems
2. Enable clients to submit tax remittances online, both for sales and income tax deductions (an activity that typically occurs once a month or quarterly)
3. Give businesses an easy way to perform annual reconciliations with their monthly remittances
4. Allow enterprises to file tax reports online
5. Enable clients to access and view accounts and related activity online
6. Provide online payment and registration services to the electronic services environment
7. Create a scalable technology environment for cost-effective future expansion

On the surface, many of the projects appeared straightforward. However, legacy issues often added a layer of complexity. As an example, in Sub-project 1, the MRQ asked Fujitsu Consulting to make it possible for Quebec residents to be able to file a change of address request online. Fujitsu Consulting soon learned that address changes impacted no fewer than seven separate legacy databases, meaning that somehow an online update function also needed to update information in seven other systems. While the challenge was overcome with the right technology and expertise, it was indicative of the complexity often faced by the team.

Using the assessment techniques integral to the Fujitsu Consulting Enterprise Value Management suite, the MRQ and Fujitsu Consulting jointly established a list of criteria for determining priorities within the business transformation process. Deliverables of the various sub-projects were considered based on the return on investment related to each section. In addition, each application was weighted by its ability to further the evolution of the department's online capabilities. Above all else, both organizations articulated the need for data confidentiality and security, closely involving the legal department of the MRQ.

“Security was the number one concern for my entire IT team,” said Mr. Boisvert, adding, “and we wanted to leave nothing to chance. We asked Fujitsu Consulting to absolutely convince us that our data was impregnable.”

Phase Two

For Phase Two, the MRQ developed a request for proposals (RFP). Within the RFP, the MRQ clearly communicated the objectives of the project and set out the seven sub-projects comprising the business transformation.

Fujitsu Consulting was chosen to lead six of the seven sub-projects detailed in the plan, largely because of the organization's expertise and capabilities in .NET solutions, as well as the ability to deliver on time and under budget, as demonstrated during Phase One. In addition, the MRQ requested that Fujitsu Consulting support the system integrator chosen to lead the remaining sub-project - online payment and registration capability.

"The Fujitsu Consulting team provided the most convincing demonstration that they understood our needs and could deliver," stated Mr. Boisvert. "In addition, having met all of Phase One's scheduled deliverables, I was confident in their ability to do the same throughout Phase Two."

The careful planning and phased approach demonstrated a very mature model of change management. The entire project structure, including roles and responsibilities, was documented and known by everyone on the project. The seven sub-projects were mapped out according to delivery dates, and three distinct periods of delivery were established as project milestones. As an additional measure, at the request of Fujitsu Consulting the MRQ installed an escalation process to ensure any time-sensitive decisions could be made without delay.

Common to projects of this nature, Fujitsu Consulting and the MRQ enlisted the help of the project's many stakeholders to "sell" the project within the organization. To facilitate acceptance, each sub-project had an executive committee as well as a team of integration architects, to ensure stakeholders had an established feedback mechanism. The project management office and project manager were ultimately responsible for incorporating feedback while maintaining a focus on project delivery.

With the Fujitsu Consulting Macroscopic methodology in place to ensure focus, the organization's team of .NET specialists set to work on project deliverables. Given the relative newness of the .NET open architecture, Microsoft also provided a .NET implementation team to facilitate a smooth and problem-free evolution to the new technology.

The MRQ chose to use .NET for a number of reasons, including its power and flexibility, open architecture, and the ability to scale to meet future needs. In addition, the organization wanted to adopt an object-oriented design and development environment, to make the delivery of upcoming online applications faster and easier. In its role as a replacement for older online applications, the team at the MRQ counted on the .NET environment to be more robust, as it would need to tie together various legacy systems scattered throughout the department.

Results Achieved

With the support of Fujitsu Consulting and Microsoft, the MRQ adopted the new technology, allowing for cost effective delivery of online capabilities to Quebec citizens, while paving the way for future services. At the same time, the government updated its server technology to Microsoft's Windows Server 2000, to take advantage of the full potential of .NET.

With .NET in place and the project completed, the department's IT staff now have an easier task of maintaining a stronger, more robust set of online services. In addition, they now have ownership of a much more powerful design and development environment.

Experience the Fujitsu Consulting Difference

As the management- and technology-consulting arm of the US\$45-billion Fujitsu group, Fujitsu Consulting integrates the core expertise of Fujitsu companies and its partners to deliver complete solutions to businesses and government in the areas of Information Management, Legacy Modernization and Managed Services. The scope of these offerings extends from strategic management consulting to the tiniest detail of infrastructure operations. Through its industry-recognized strategic methodology, Macroscopic®, Fujitsu Consulting assists clients in incorporating more value into their investments and driving their leadership in the marketplace.

We work with you to create solutions and produce results that drive your business.

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