

# Going lean adds weight to customer service

*“Combining Sense and Respond with Lean absolutely enables and increases our operational effectiveness and service value.”*

**Gwenda Connell – Head of the Sense and Respond Institute, Fujitsu**



## Customer's Challenge

Fujitsu Services is a leading European information technology services company, with an annual turnover of £2.46 billion (€3.59 billion) and over 19,000 employees in 20 countries. Having studied the benefits of the Lean management techniques developed by manufacturing organisations, Fujitsu wanted to see if the same approach could be applied to the IT industry, by transferring the production line experience into a service environment.

Gwenda Connell, Head of the Sense and Respond Institute, Fujitsu, says, *“Lean is all about delivering what customers want and making work flow by eliminating waste or needless activities – it’s striving for perfection. We wanted to build on and expand our unique Sense and Respond approach, which is designed to meet customer expectations in terms of quality, cost and delivery time. By “adding Lean” we saw a way to make a step change that would create more capability and enable new thinking in order to deliver maximum service quality and value to our customers. In short, our goal is for everyone in Fujitsu to be involved in continuous improvement everyday, so that it becomes embedded into the fabric of our organisation.”*

## Fujitsu Solution

Fujitsu chose to work with Unipart, experts in Lean implementation with over 25 years experience and a leading exponent of the Lean methodology, to help it create ‘model lines’, which could be used to apply Lean tools and techniques to different service processes. In particular, Unipart was tasked with leading Fujitsu through the first 17 weeks of the process in order to help it gain a real understanding of how the Lean process worked and how it could be applied to the IT environment.

Fujitsu decided to evaluate the new approach in two of its service desks, part of Fujitsu’s front-line Customer Services organisation. The Customer Services operation is unique within Fujitsu, because it handles in excess of 7.5 million individual customer interactions a year and the majority of employees are highly customer-focused.

Gwenda Connell says, *“We chose to start implementing Lean in the service desk and deskside environment where we were already using Sense and Respond, so that we could measure how much of a difference it made. In addition, we knew it would be culturally well received as it was already so focused on meeting customers’ needs.”*

Initially Fujitsu ran a pilot on one of its customer account teams, which had a service desk with 20 people, as well as desk-side support and service delivery management. *“The very first time we applied the Lean techniques it was on a pilot basis,”* continues Gwenda Connell. *“Because Lean is about visual management, once you’ve set-up a Model Line in your own environment everything else becomes much easier.”*

Fujitsu initiated a ‘Diagnostic Phase’ by running a Scoping Workshop that was designed to help construct a high level Value Stream Map of the current state of the service delivery. This provides

## SUMMARY OF KEY FACTS

### Organisation

Fujitsu Services – Customer Services

### Service/s delivered

The application of Lean, Kaizen and Six Sigma principles, tools and techniques in order to create a culture of continuous improvement

### Key Metrics

- Approx. 5,000 Customer Services employees
- 7.5 million individual customer interactions

### Benefits

- **Enhanced customer service** – enables faster and higher quality delivery of what matters to customers and their customers
- **Increased staff satisfaction** – active involvement of staff in the change process has improved staff motivation
- **Improved resource usage** – increases productivity by delivering built-in quality using standardised and efficient processes
- **Reduced costs** – removes duplicate effort, waste and unnecessary processes
- **Enabled continuous improvement** – empowers people to continually monitor and improve quality, time and cost and adapt the service to the needs of customers.

## CASE STUDY FUJITSU

a snapshot of current performance and opportunities for improvement by analysing a range of factors, such as the number of people in each area, the volume of work, how well the work flows, and the impact on the customer.

*“The Value Stream Map gives you a ‘roof-off view’ of the state of the service,” comments Gwenda Connell. “And because it’s created by the people who are involved in the process everyday you gain accurate information and a detailed understanding of the situation. Plus it provides an ideal forum to capture ideas and suggestions for improvements.”*

Fujitsu then designed a ‘future state’ Value Stream Map to outline where the service could be in 12 months, quantify the expected benefits in order to build the business case for improvement based on a cost/benefit analysis and prepare a plan of how to achieve the desired future state. *“The map shows how the Service will look in twelve months time, after all of the changes have been made,”* adds Gwenda Connell.

Consequently, Fujitsu entered the ‘Implementation Phase’ in which it ran a process improvement exercise in order to create the necessary capabilities and roll-out the required Lean tools and techniques for people to use on a daily basis. These include Communication Cells, which feature boards that everyone reviews for 10-15 minutes a day in order to assess the previous day’s performance, resolve problems and set plans for the day ahead. The use of Performance Boards and a Resource Management Tool also allows each team to track customer demand and balance capacity hourly.

Helen Robinson, Head of Private Sector Service Desks, Fujitsu, says, *“Adopting lean principles in our service desk organisation has helped us to evolve our operating model. There are a number of tools and techniques such as the 3Cs (Cause, Concern and Countermeasure) that are enabling us to identify, log and manage issues and performance in real time. For the accounts that have been through the pilot and now adopting it as business as usual, Lean has helped form a culture of continuous service improvement in the operation as the employees now feel true ownership and see the benefit of the changes they are making.”*

*“‘The Unipart Way’ has given us a range of Lean tools and techniques that are very robust and scientific,”* agrees Gwenda Connell, *“Our aim now is to develop Sense and Respond and Lean working together even more effectively, to reduce deployment times by creating a lean version of Lean!”*

Ella Bennett, Head of the Lean Service Programme, Fujitsu, says, *“Lean is not new, but what is new is its application in a broad services environment, which is why Fujitsu’s Lean Service Programme is so exciting and inspiring for those involved. By building on and extending what we are doing in Sense and Respond it’s now delivering real results.”*

### Benefits to our Customer

Through the use of Lean operational controls Fujitsu has:

- **Enhanced customer service** – identifies and resolves key operational issues, enabling faster and higher quality delivery of what matters to customers and their customers
- **Increased staff satisfaction** – active involvement of staff in the change process has improved motivation
- **Improved resource usage** – increases productivity by delivering built-in quality using standardised and efficient processes
- **Reduced costs** – removes duplicate effort, waste and unnecessary processes, increasing service quality and minimising costs

- **Enabled continuous improvement** – empowers people to continually monitor and improve quality, time and cost and adapt the service to the needs of customers.

For one retail customer Fujitsu has seen service desk calls from its “top 227 call raising stores” drop from 1032 in six months to just 46 in the following 3 months. This has reduced the number of sales terminals in the repair process and significantly increased revenue generation opportunities.

Richard Bull, Director of Customer Services, Fujitsu, comments, *“The lean pilots have given us the means to monitor Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and visualise the service we are delivering to our customers in real time, and demonstrate the value that we add. The learning environment and problem solving techniques will also create a standard way of working across all service desks that will enable us to deliver best practice and continuous service improvement for our customers.”*

*“While Sense and Respond is very customer focused, Lean is internally focused and has given us a better way to organise work and capacity to enable continuous improvement,”* adds Gwenda Connell. *“Combining the two absolutely enables and increases our operational effectiveness and service value. It’s definitely been a worthwhile investment for Fujitsu and our customers.”*

### Our Approach

First developed in the manufacturing industry, Lean is a systematic approach for identifying and eliminating waste or unnecessary activities through continuous improvement of the product or service in response to customer needs.

Gwenda Connell continues, *“Lean is culturally different to Sense and Respond, as everything in Lean is driven by visual management. For example, the Communication Cells openly record KPIs, which enables our people to see their contribution to improved performance every day.”*

### Our Expertise

Fujitsu has been delivering consistently high levels of service to organisations across the UK for more than 30 years. Its business is helping its customers realise the value of information technology through the application of consulting, systems integration and managed service contracts. As such, its support infrastructure is constantly being developed and refined to stay ahead of the demands of new technologies and evolving business practice, so that services can be delivered effectively and economically.

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