

Case Study

New Zealand Community Trust

»It was clear right from the outset that Fujitsu wanted to work with us every step of the way. They took time to understand NZCT and how we work, before developing a product designed specifically for our needs. They made us feel we were a special and important customer«

Tony Gill, National Grants Manager, New Zealand Community Trust



The customer

Launched in 1998, NZCT is one of New Zealand's largest licensed gaming trusts, supplying more than 2,000 gaming machines to hotels, pubs and clubs throughout the country.

After covering operating costs and paying the host gaming venues, government duties, levies and player prizes, NZCT returns all its net proceeds to worthy organisations in the communities which the machines are located.

In the year to 30 September 2013, NZCT awarded grants totalling almost NZ\$39 million to around 2,500 grant applications. Around 80 per cent of these went to amateur sports clubs, but the Trust also supports a wide range of community-based health, education, arts and cultural projects - as well as rescue and life-saving services.

The Trust is one of the biggest funders of amateur sport in New Zealand, a country famous for its love of sport and outdoor activities, and which has one of the highest participation rates in the world.

The challenge

NZCT receives more than 4,000 grant applications each year. These range from requests for relatively small sums to buy new sports equipment, provide coaching hours and to cover travel costs - up to larger infrastructure projects, such as new sports pitches, swimming pools and floodlighting which can cost tens, and occasionally hundreds, of thousands of dollars.

Historically, applications were submitted on paper forms, and were processed and checked manually by a team of administrators prior to adjudication. Each new application required standard information about the club or group to be prepared and submitted afresh, even if the organisation had received previous grants. This meant additional work for applicants, most of whom are volunteers, who give up their free time to help their local club or community group. Equally, the paper-based system created a significant and costly administrative burden for NZCT.

The Trust had been seeking to move to an online application system for a number of years. In 2012 NZCT went to the market with the aim of sourcing a bespoke grant application and management system, to modernise and simplify the process for applicants and the Trust alike.

The customer

Country: New Zealand
Industry: Charity
Founded: 1998
Employees: 42
Website: www.nzct.org.nz



The challenge

Every year New Zealand Community Trust (NZCT) distributes around NZ\$40 million in grants to good causes, supporting thousands of amateur sports clubs and community groups across the country. The Trust wished to replace an outdated, backend processing system which relied on paper based application forms, with an integrated online end-to-end system. This would make it much quicker and easier for applicants to submit an application. It would also enable NZCT to manage and process those applications securely, more efficiently and transparently, which would result in cost and time savings for the Trust.

The solution

NZCT selected Fujitsu Grants Manager, an award winning online portal solution, custom integrated with Microsoft Dynamics CRM. Fujitsu also provided help desk expertise and ongoing solution support.

The benefit

- NZCT now receives and processes all its grant applications online
- Applications are much easier for applicants to compile
- Management, decision-making process and distribution of NZCT's grants is now quicker, more secure and transparent
- Increased assurance around grants compliance and governance
- Administration costs have been reduced, with staff reassigned away from repetitive, manual tasks to more productive activities

Tony Gill, NZCT's National Grants Manager says: "We were looking for a solution that made it as easy as possible for applicants to submit the information we needed in order for us to assess their request and make a decision. Many amateur sports clubs make regular grant applications, so we needed a system in which generic background information about the applicant organisation could be securely retained and updated for future applications. The ultimate aim was to move to a 100 per cent online system. We knew this would take time because it involved a fundamental shift in the whole way of working. We needed a partner to assist us on this journey."

The solution

When Tony began discussions with Fujitsu, he was immediately excited at what Fujitsu Grants Manager could achieve for his organisation (and the thousands of community clubs and groups that have come to rely on NZCT funding). What clinched the partnership for Tony was Fujitsu's commitment designing a solution that fitted NZCT's exact requirements. "It was clear right from the outset that Fujitsu wanted to work with us every step of the way. They took time to understand NZCT and how we work, before developing a product designed specifically for our needs. They made us feel we were a special and important customer. It gave us confidence that we were in good hands."

Fujitsu Grants Manager is a total solution for the end-to-end management of the grants process lifecycle. An NZCT branded online web portal, combined with a custom Microsoft Dynamics CRM, enables the Trust to handle all registration, application, assessment, award and management processes, securely and efficiently.

The journey towards 100 per cent of applications being completed online required regular fine tuning of the solution. It also included the provision of a help desk facility to guide applicants as they made the switch from paper to electronic applications.

Anecdotal evidence suggests the vast majority of applicants find the online system "way easier" than paper, and those requiring help desk assistance with their first application are able to use the portal quickly and efficiently thereafter.

Products and services

- Fujitsu Grants Manager
 - Microsoft Dynamics CRM
 - Web Portal
 - SQL Server
- Project Management, Business Analysis, Testing and CRM development specialist services
- Ongoing Support

"We still have issues occasionally, but when we do, Fujitsu's team are on to it straight away. For some time we provided a PDF version of each application form, but once we got to 70 per cent of submissions coming in online, illustrating widespread confidence in the system, we made the decision that the time was right to remove this option and move entirely online," says Tony Gill.

The benefit

The move to a completely online solution has streamlined and simplified the grants application and adjudication process for NZCT and applicants alike. Cost and time savings have produced a swift return on investment. NZCT staff can now focus on securing speedy adjudication and supply of grants.

Applicants' core information, such as bank account details, is held securely, enabling subsequent applications to be created quickly and efficiently. Applicants can also log in to the system, to follow the progress of their application, removing the need for status chasing phone calls.

For NZCT, the solution provides enhanced control, security and transparency – which is vital in this highly regulated sector. Each applications progress is visible to all authorised system users, supporting auditing and compliance requirements. As each application's status is instantly visible, NZCT's managers are able to quickly review and prioritise activities to address specific issues.

The system generates status reports so each application can be quickly and efficiently reviewed at trustee meetings. Essential evidence (accountability documentation) demonstrating the grant funds have been used for the specified purpose for which they were approved can also be submitted online. This also provides efficiencies within NZCT's finance team and transparency for the Trust, regulators and recipients alike.

Conclusion

"Fujitsu Grants Manager has totally changed the way we do things. The combination of a web portal and customer relationship management system is enabling us to process large volumes of grant applications smoothly, quickly and efficiently, day in and day out."

Tony Gill, National Grants Manager, New Zealand Community Trust

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