

Case Study: Business Process Assessment

Consultative process re-engineering for streamlining data center deployment services.



Situation

A leading technology company deploys servers as a routine process in their data centers. On average, this process takes about 12 weeks from the initial request to the server going live in the data center. In addition, highly paid engineers spend many hours for each request, filling out forms and performing repetitive administrative tasks. The company called on VMC to determine how to eliminate wasted engineering time and shorten the overall cycle time of new server deployment.

Solution

VMC began by documenting the current state processes, to get a better grasp of the situation. It was determined that holding a blitz event would be the most ideal method for developing more efficient processes. Once the process analysis and preparation were completed, a three day event was held involving representatives from the engineering team, management, data center operations and telecom and hardware vendors. The team focused on a few key areas that had been identified during the documentation and analysis phase, which included eliminating unnecessary documents, reducing the back and forth communications between the engineering team and the other teams, and reducing the number of approvals required throughout the process.

By rearranging a few steps in the existing processes, VMC helped the company to eliminate much of the back and forth interaction between the engineers and other teams during the design stage of new server deployments. A design meeting was also added, which brought all of the different teams together for an hour to discuss the details as a group, saving valuable engineering time.

All of the documents required to complete the server design and deployment were changed, as well. Documents were revised to a more user friendly format, eliminating some of the potential errors that had been experienced in the past, which were causing engineers to spend extra time on paperwork. One of the documents was completely eliminated, as it was discovered during the process analysis phase to be redundant.

A new position was created to take the administrative load off of the engineers and allow them more time to provide consultation on server requests. This new Junior Engineer position increased internal customer satisfaction and provided a more cost effective means of completing the required administrative work. It also allowed the company to create a pipeline for recruiting entry level candidates, offering them training and a career path toward becoming a Senior Engineer.

Success

The result of these efforts enabled the technology company to realize a number of improvements in the way new servers were deployed.

- The average time needed to deploy a new server from the request to “go live” was reduced from 12 weeks to 8 weeks—a 33% reduction.
- The average time required by senior engineers to complete a new server deployment went from 80 hours to 20 hours—a 75% reduction.
- Customer satisfaction increased by 20%, based on customer satisfaction surveys measured before and after the project. Internal customers felt like they had more of an engineer’s time after the improvements were made, even though engineers were spending less time on each deployment.

As a result of this effort, those requesting servers were able to get their servers on average 33% faster. This allowed the applications targeted for those servers to be utilized sooner, which led to a cascading effect of other benefits based on those applications and their intended purposes. The time needed by engineering to complete the tasks associated with design and deployment of servers was cut in half, and 20 of the remaining hours needed under the former process were passed on to junior engineers instead of senior engineers, resulting in a more than 60% reduction in engineering labor costs.

About VMC Consulting

VMC is a technology consulting company providing flexible and scalable development and integration, IT outsourcing and customer care solutions to businesses, offering a competitive advantage through the effective application of people, processes and tools. Using an integrated PMO methodology and world-class talent and resources, VMC delivers targeted solutions for the unique needs of our customers.

By tailoring solutions to address specific business challenges, VMC becomes a true partner for reaching high performance goals. VMC is positioned to help through both consulting and outsourcing that delivers results. Our value is in our blend of proven experience, skilled expertise and defined thought leadership.