Datalytyx
Making Information Work

ASCO Group

Planning and managing the outsourcing of essential IT reduces risk, increases value and underpins global growth

Headquartered in Aberdeen and with a turnover of more than £670m, ASCO Group is a leading international oil and gas logistics company with operations including the UK, Norway, Holland, USA, Canada, Trinidad, Singapore and the Caspian. Experiencing rapid growth, it employs 1,500 people and operates in more parts of the world than any similar provider. When ASCO wanted to refresh IT service provision, Datalytyx helped to ensure more up-to-date and fit-for-purpose IT delivered at around the same cost. This approach supported the company's aspirations for even faster expansion in international markets.

ASCO Group

Client

Successful oil & gas logistics company operating globally.

Challenge

Ensure effective IT globally at controlled cost to support an agile high-performance business.

Solution

Advisory, consulting, negotiation and outsourcing services to assess and manage critical supplier selection in line with precise needs.

Benefits

Innovation and governance; more robust, reliable and scalable high quality IT to underpin growth in multiple markets, aligned to an ITIL framework for best practice.

The challenge—Improve IT plus year-on-year savings

"We wanted to outsource all IT requirements to someone who could give us the governance capability we needed, and support the international dimension," says Doug More, IT Director. ASCO wanted more robust, scalable and flexible corporate Information Systems delivered before the next financial year to support business strategy, and at a similar cost to previously. In fact, ASCO wanted a capability that delivered year-on-year savings plus service improvements while also supporting ad hoc projects. This was designed to help double turnover through a strategy that involved expanding its presence in the Middle East, China and Australasia. Finance Director Ian Ross says, "This was also an opportunity to increase the value of the business by, for example, introducing a more consistent and corporate look and feel, demonstrating stability and innovation whilst underpinning a high performance management structure."

Why Datalytyx?

"We were looking for a managed services provider more closely aligned to ASCO, given our locations, strategic direction and the IT capability required to deliver against ambitious business demands," says Billy Allan, Group Chief Executive. "IT is critical to our business, to support corporate objectives and, in particular, underpin our continued growth and success internationally." He says working with Datalytyx "enabled us to complete a complex IT outsourcing project with confidence, achieving the best outcome quickly and effectively," adding that Datalytyx "brought innovation as well as strict governance to the entire process."

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The solution: 'six months from start to selection'

The process required attracting the right calibre of outsourcer, issuing details of requirements, then managing and negotiating the process through to selection - all within a few months. Working closely with ASCO, Datalytx owned that process, first providing an outsource advisory service to review current operations and assess IT provision before reviewing, proposing and recommending best-fit managed service providers. This activity included SWOT analyses, providing outline costs for transitioning and ongoing service, options for skills set and knowledge transfer, and highlighting where benefits – including cost savings – could be realised. Given the overall revenue value of ASCO's IT estate, Doug More says, "We weren't sure we'd attract the large outsourcers. Datalytyx said they could attract them – and did."

Expressions of interest were received from suppliers including ATOS, IBM, Unisys and Amor. Datalytyx suggested ASCO go to market with request for proposals rather than being highly prescriptive; to discover how providers would solve the issues faced. More describes the RFP as "very comprehensive. We received six detailed responses. There was a lot of governance and diligence work, and Datalytyx handled all that." This included building a scorecard to examine proposals from financial, IT services and technical perspectives. More says, "It was really fast, around six months from start to selection. It was a very intensive exercise,

managed throughout in exemplary fashion." ASCO agreed a five-year £15 million contract with Scotland's Amor Group covering provision of a fully outsourced IT service.

Benefits

More says a clear benefit was the rigour and discipline on governance throughout assessment and selection. "We couldn't have done that in-house. And we had a complete audit trail explaining why we chose the eventual winner. [Datalytyx] brought a highly inventive approach along with practical solutions - [they] looked for the innovation rather than just a 'me too' approach." ASCO's IT systems moved into a Tier 3 data centre with all the security, protection and resilience that entails. The service includes access to 400 specialists with a wide range of skills, from software developers to deskside support, while users can access an ITIL-based helpdesk 24/7.

More adds, "We went from having a small IT team to benefiting from a large full-service IT department... from two to 400 people without it costing us any real additional money. However, this was never a cost-driven exercise. It was about better supporting the business and underpinning future growth in smarter ways: higher quality of service at virtually the same cost." Without Datalytyx, "we wouldn't have moved so fast; we wouldn't have been so well-placed to support our international growth strategy. Timing was crucial: having the outsourcing sorted before the new financial year meant we could be very fleet of foot in setting-up new operations in, for instance, Azerbaijan, Oman and Norway."

About Datalytyx

"Datalytyx is a leading UK provider of big data, digital transformation, governance and analytics solutions, all delivered as a service from the cloud. Our client-focused approach delivers rapid gains and sustained ROI, meets requirements to store and manage huge data volumes, deploys powerful business-focused analytics, and digitises essential business content and processes. The trusted management information that results enables more effective and more profitable decision-making. We partner with leading providers to deliver best-of-breed solutions, including Microsoft, K2, Talend, Tableau, HP Vertica, KnowledgeLake and Hortonworks."