

CREATING A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE FOR CATALYST HOUSING GROUP



CLIENT TESTIMONIAL

“

WE NOW HAVE
A PLATFORM
FROM WHICH
WE CAN DELIVER
INNOVATION
AND GROWTH
TO MEET THE
CHALLENGES OF
OUR INDUSTRY
FOR YEARS TO
COME.

”

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2012, Catalyst Housing Group embarked on a £5 million internal change programme, which involved the consolidation of legacy systems to an Orchard solution. Faced with a number of challenges internally, the programme fell behind schedule. Mosaic Island was subsequently invited to conduct a review of the programme and to make recommendations with a view to getting it back on course.

CHALLENGES

In a consistently uncertain economic climate, the housing sector faced reductions in public subsidy, increased competition and changes in regulatory requirements. In response to the turbulence with the market place Catalyst identified three strategic objectives;

- To radically improve our customer focus
- To increase profitability to create more of our own capacity to invest in homes and services
- To grow substantially by new development and by enlarging the Group and thus house more people, improve efficiency and increase our influence

In 2012, as part of a range of initiatives to support these objectives, Catalyst's board approved a £5 million investment named the 'Diamond Programme' with the primary aim of implementing a strategic transformation of the existing business systems. The desired outcomes of the programme included a drive to become customer centric, streamlining the business processes that they support and improving the integrity and reliability of the information that they provide.

A new Housing Management platform (Orchard) had been selected to become a key component in the systems landscape that would replace a number of legacy systems and much of the focus of the programme was around the implementation of this platform.

In 2012 the programme commenced however it became apparent that along with the pressures of managing the day-to-day business, external assistance was required to assure a successful and transformational delivery.

ASSESSMENT

Experienced Mosaic Island consultants, who have a strong track record in programme delivery and architecture, conducted a four-week investigation. Through a combination of interviews, technical reviews and programme analysis, the team performed a 'health check' to fully understand the status of the programme. It rapidly became apparent that the programme needed restructuring to suit the objectives.

SOLUTION

We produced an extensive report that was presented to the leadership team at Catalyst. The report clearly expressed that in order to be successful the focus for the programme must have the vital engagement of the business rather than being centered on IT change.

In addition, the delivery methodology selected must allow for clear accountability and decision making between business stakeholders and the IT delivery team, and the target architecture needed to clearly align with the needs of the business.

The findings were presented in a format that allowed all members of Catalysts team to understand what was needed and make decisions on how the programme should be governed and managed. The key ingredients of the report were:

- An architectural blueprint aligned with business capabilities in a single page - this enabled proper business engagement by providing an 'at a glance' view of how the systems worked and why they were needed
- A recommended organisational structure for clear accountability and faster delivery

CLIENT TESTIMONIAL

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We contacted Mosaic Island who immediately impressed us with their straightforward approach to tackling this complex technical area whilst maintaining a clear business focus. They subsequently became the driving force in helping to transform our housing management systems through the successful delivery of the £5m Diamond Programme in 2013-14.

Mosaic Island helped us achieve a major step change in business capability – key processes have been consolidated, legacy systems decommissioned and manual interventions significantly reduced. At the same time, the perception of IT within the business has fundamentally changed. They delivered on time and within budget – a result that is hard to achieve for change on this scale and complexity.

I am delighted with what Mosaic Island has achieved for us and have no hesitation recommending them as a consulting and delivery partner. ”

Kevin Nichols, CIO

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES



- To radically improve our customer focus
- To increase profitability to create more of our own capacity to invest in homes and services
- To grow substantially by new development and by enlarging the Group and thus house more people, improve efficiency and increase our influence

- A delivery methodology based on agile, which would bring the business owners closer to the technical team
- Appropriate governance to enable key risks and issues to be quickly identified without a wasteful bureaucracy of reports and meetings

The report was received favourably by the senior team at Catalyst, who actioned the recommendations immediately and asked Mosaic Island to lead the delivery of the programme.

DELIVERY

In the space of eight weeks, the programme was entirely reorganised. Mosaic Island took a pragmatic approach when working on Catalyst’s Diamond Programme and installed an Agile Delivery (Scrum) Team on-site, including Delivery Manager, Scrum Master, Solutions Architect, Test Resources and Business Analyst.

Our team used Agile to deliver the programme, and as Catalyst were keen for the skills to be shared with its own permanent team members, we trained them in the skills required. However, while Agile was used extensively, it was not an all-encompassing solution.

The approach was adapted to make the most of every possible benefit and Catalyst’s own team whole-heartedly adopted the delivery method. The use of Agile ensured that the project moved quickly, and tied all the elements together – which had not previously happened.

Also, this approach was able to provide governance thanks to Sponsor Board and Programme board meetings, which were held every two weeks and provided an insight to the key stakeholders and leadership team.

Using Agile to deliver the Diamond Programme also made sure that the business was closely and continuously engaged and that successive, incremental changes were delivered on a regular basis. The business gained immediate value from the programme and, despite a prior delay of one year, Mosaic Island completed the project within just 18 months – 12 months ahead of the originally-planned schedule.

OUTCOMES

The programme was completed in June 2014 and with key processes now consolidated, legacy systems decommissioned and manual interventions significantly reduced, Catalyst now has a management system that produces better operational efficiencies.

Streamlined processes allow staff to work more efficiently, creating more visibility and the ability to make decisions, and also enabling them to respond to customers in a much more time-effective manner.

Catalyst has reported both tangible and intangible benefits from its new strategic efforts, which include the Diamond programme. The programme has facilitated a new complaints procedure and enabled faster responses to complaints – resulting in a 16% improvement in the time it takes to resolve problems.

This has increased overall customer satisfaction by 6%. Rent arrears have decreased by 1% and profitability increased by 3%, which contributes to Catalyst’s goal of creating more capacity to invest in homes and services.

The leadership team at Catalyst have stated that Mosaic Island has helped them to achieve a major step change in business capability – and the perception of IT within the business has also fundamentally changed for the positive.

Plus, Catalyst now has a platform from which the group can confidently deliver innovation and growth to meet the challenges of its industry for years to come. The organisation can press ahead with its vision of being a catalyst for change and improvement, pursuing better homes, better service and a better future for its customers.

6% Overall increase in customer satisfaction

1% Reduction in rent arrears

5% Increased satisfaction with complaints process

M&A Opportunities enabled by flexible platform

LESSONS LEARNT



- For transformation to be successful, there must be sufficient initial engagement with the business in the ‘requirements gathering’ stage, as well as continuously throughout delivery
- An organisational structure is needed that allows for clear accountability and faster delivery, and the delivery methodology used must bring the business stakeholders closer to the technical team
- The architectural blueprint that was produced for Catalyst Housing aligned the business capability effectively communicated to all stakeholders how the transformation would take place
- The programme highlighted the importance of taking a business-driven view and not relying purely



ABOUT MOSAIC ISLAND

Since 2006, Mosaic Island has been applying its unparalleled knowledge, experience and comprehensive capabilities, across multiple industry sectors, to deliver successful Digital Business Transformation.

Mosaic island work in close partnership with client organisations to understand their business needs. Utilising our unique blend of skills, we apply our

proven methodologies to deliver fast and efficient business transformation to achieve strategic goals, creating trusted partnerships and peace of mind for our clients.

If you'd like to find out how Mosaic Island can assist with your digital transformation then contact us at enquiries@mosaicisland.co.uk for a confidential consultation.



ARTICLE BY DAVID TYSON

As Managing Director of Mosaic Island, David has an impressive track record of driving business change for over 25 years. He is committed to nurturing an organisation that delivers exceptional results while providing a great place to work. Contact David at david.tyson@mosaicisland.co.uk.

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