

APM Project Management Awards



WINNER'S

CASE STUDY



Category **Young Project Professional of the Year 2013**

Winner **Martin Monaghan, DHL Supply Chain**

Sponsor



Overview

DHL Supply Chain has been supporting Iceland Foods as it implements its growth strategy of starting an online shopping service.

As part of the project DHL Supply Chain's Martin Monaghan worked to provide voice-picking technology for Iceland's distribution network – something which contributed to the nine per cent increase in productivity and a drop in gross error rates (GER) of 30 per cent. Consequently, Martin was asked to spend 12 months with the food retailer to put his project management skills in place, and deliver an online shopping solution with a sustainable solution for growth.

Objectives

Iceland has gone from strength to strength in recent years with sales continuing to grow. The launch of the online platform is forecast to generate £200m within two years. Projects in three main areas were devised – business, information systems (IS) and website development.

With business, the main emphasis was on the development of online processes and how it could be managed. Sub-projects within this area included national training for a fully functional radio frequency (RF) picking process, marketing, new HR expertise and legal contracts being negotiated and signed.

The IS project involved all website content being fully managed via scheduled data cuts and interfaces direct from back end systems in to the front-end database. The website and all work associated with getting it live from a hosting point of view was developed by a third party company.

Resources

Martin was inexperienced in terms of leading projects and had previously only delivered one project for Iceland, but he was determined to push himself out of his comfort zone to gain valuable experience, gain knowledge on the retail sector and build his confidence through real world experience.

None of the team that Martin had put in place had much experience in an e-commerce environment, either. Two positions were identified to fill the experience gaps relating to e-commerce, which provided the team with more balance. The team then consisted of individuals with e-commerce and retail expertise spanning more than 60 years of experience.

Co-ordination

Regular communication was critical in this process, particularly as many of the team didn't have vast experience. Daily updates were given to keep team members abreast of developments, and Iceland's senior teams were also communicated with regularly as key stakeholders in the programme.

A strong network of information for the programme was created through weekly steering groups, updates to senior team meetings and executive board updates.

A cross-functional steering group allowed all areas of the business to contribute to the project, while at the same time managing involvement from all stakeholders.

Throughout the programme, the team held several reviews and workshops and distributed qualitative research to Iceland customers to find out how it could make Iceland's online shopping experience market leading.

Successes

The first phase of the project delivered significantly more positive results than those expected across the business – it generated sales of more than £170,000 in just four weeks. Other larger projects within Iceland previously had the tendency to be delayed, and there was almost expectation that the online shopping programme would follow suit.

The leadership and attitude shown by Martin and the team ensured the programme was delivered on time and to budget. Also, many of Iceland's competitors are taking two-three years to implement online shopping – Martin achieved this feat in just seven months.

Following the successful rollout to 25 stores in phase one, Iceland is now looking to progress into the second phase and reach more than 200 stores.

Challenges

The main challenge was to deliver the programme within such a short time frame, despite other food retailers taking much longer to implement the same programme.

At the beginning of phase one, a large number of people were involved in meetings, resulting in too much debate and solutions not being resolved in a timely way.

Martin also found that it was crucial to get to know his team and what drives them: otherwise he wouldn't have been able to build quick relationships and work as rapidly as required.

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The APM Project Management Awards have been celebrating project management excellence since 1993 and the broad range of categories is designed to make entry possible for projects and companies of all sizes and complexity.

The awards reflect the invaluable contribution project managers make in all sectors of society and the event provides an opportunity for industry professionals to meet with colleagues and entertain guests as well as celebrate at one of the year's most exciting events.

Highly regarded in the project management industry, the awards reflect the dedication and talent that helps to shape the project management community and the world around us. The finalists, winners and sponsors of the awards attract national publicity for their achievement and involvement. Winning an award provides invaluable recognition and kudos to the careers of winners.

For more details on the awards and how to enter or attend, visit apm.org.uk/awards or email awards@apm.org.uk

Association for Project Management

Ibis House, Regent Park
Summerleys Road
Princes Risborough
Buckinghamshire, HP27 9LE

Telephone 0845 458 1944
International +44 (0)1844 271640
Facsimile +44 (0)1844 274509

Email info@apm.org.uk
Web apm.org.uk