



Unifying Customer Data and Optimizing Operational Processes: A Global Manufacturer's Journey

Summary

A global manufacturer of complex technology products needed a centralized view for all vital customer data for the purpose of cost and time reduction, as well as continued nurture of trust and goodwill with clients. Asset data is historical data that is created, consumed, updated, and deactivated through multiple business processes across dozens of IT systems by well over 300 individuals. A large portion of the work was performed by a third party BPO (business process outsourcing) company with limited visibility into the pain points, handoff areas and subroutines. Specifically, from a data perspective, they wanted more visibility into their CRUD (Create, Read, Update, Delete) processes.

Scheer Americas led the effort to 1) bring process transparency between a manufacturer, the BPO company conducting the operations and their joint European manufacturing partner, 2) identify areas of waste related to time, output and resources in every process area, and 3) model future states that eliminated pain points and amplified opportunities for improvement. The project ended with the successful integration of inter-enterprise processes by adoption of the above initiatives.

Organization Background

The organization stands as a prominent global leader in its industry, specializing in advanced products for both commercial and military applications. With over 100 years of experience in this industry, they have a wealth of knowledge and experience in the industry. The organization has adopted Lean methodology to continuously improve their processes. They are enriching their Lean culture by embracing BPM and the use of a process repository. Based in the US, they have successfully cultivated partnerships with renowned manufacturers worldwide, expanding their business horizons and amplifying their offerings.

With a robust workforce exceeding 48,000 employees, they operate across 130 countries, solidifying their international presence and ensuring efficient operations on a global scale. This project also included a major European company as a stakeholder, as many of their best-selling products were produced in a joint venture company that was affected by the shared business challenge.

Business Challenge

The vast number of IT systems and individuals with access to them led to poor data quality across the organization. The result was that users could not trust a single source of truth as the most accurate repository of asset data. Data created in upstream processes underwent multiple revisions through the flow to the downstream processes. Clean data creation and updates were obstructed by many roadblocks like limited functionalities of the legacy IT systems.

Adding to the complexity were the presence of antiquated scripts employed for data cleansing, a proliferation of manual handoffs fraught with inefficiencies, and a lamentable lack of transparency within the organizational siloes, among various other contributing factors. Another formidable hurdle manifested in the form of a data mismatch, compounded by restricted accessibility to pivotal data elements from the vantage point of the company's esteemed joint venture partner, a distinguished European manufacturer.

The Solution

The Scheer team kickstarted the project by utilizing information provided by subject matter experts during the Genba walks of in-scope processes, and later interviewed them to document every task level detail. The team simultaneously logged pain points and opportunities for improvement and presented the findings to the project manager. Then during the subsequent Value Stream Mapping workshop, the Scheer team and the core client team analyzed, revamped, and created To-Be states which will be implemented within set timelines.

Specifically, the solution included the following main recommendations: 1) automation to replace non-value added manual steps, 2) revamp of customer facing portals to put the onus of data creation back to their clients and increase instances of clients using Automated Data Transfer, 3) elimination of data handoffs between systems and automated pull of accurate data from a centralized database, 4) standardized templates for all critical data updates, 5) auto updates of changes made in legacy system to the in-house system that would eventually replace it, 6) overall data monitoring system in place, 7) consolidation of multiple sources of record to one source of truth.

Results

A successful project achieved the following results:

- Laid a roadmap for access reduction from 1877 employees across 25 systems to max 350 employees.
- Reduced data submittal lead time from 7 days to 1 day.
- Located revenue leak points to reduce revenue leakage by 65%.
- Brought about greater transparency between management at the manufacturing company and the third party BPO team doing majority of operational groundwork.
- Created a master process that used automation to subsume every process under the Update category of the CRUD framework.
- Reduced the number of process steps for the biggest process related to engine delivery from 58 to 18, while at the same time eliminating 83% of non value adding steps.

Do you have questions on these subjects, or would you like to talk with us about specific projects?
Simply send us an e-mail or give us a call!

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