

DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION AT HARRODS

Harrods operates in the Luxury end of the retail market where offering customers the wow factor and a unique experience is key. For over 150 years, Harrods has had a rich heritage of driving service excellence through investment and innovation in customer experience.

Consequently, Harrods customers are extremely loyal. They are also widely spread throughout the globe and cannot always visit the flagship store in London. Therefore, online growth is critical. Offering the same exceptional experience across all channels and reaching out to those customers that do not live near the store became paramount in order to meet customers' needs and expectations.

Expanding the e-commerce side of the business to offer a truly omni-channel presence was critical to the next stage of the Harrods journey.

THE CHALLENGE

The customers' needs are moving at pace and the challenge for Harrods was to deliver a new platform that could respond to market dynamics and changes to customer behaviour. With this goal in mind, Harrods embarked on a re-platform programme in October 2014. E-commerce requirements were outlined; Technology applications and IT suppliers were selected.

In June 2015, Harrods requested Project One's support to help re-enforce the programme to ensure it was a truly omni-channel business transformation. While the transformation programme started in the e-commerce department, Harrods recognised that to fully achieve their ambition, a crossdepartmental programme of work and staff mobilisation was required.

Harrods looked to Project One to provide additional programme leadership capability to scope, shape, mobilise and execute an integrated transformation in the business and IT.

"It surprised me how quickly Project One got a handle of the challenges and the programme shaped and under control. The governance and structure of the programme were very good."

E-Commerce Director,



Harrods

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OUR APPROACH

Not just an IT e-commerce project - delivering an omni-channel solution successfully required many different teams from Customer Loyalty to Distribution to be involved; and their needs and requirements to be catered for. The challenge for the programme leadership was to bring these teams on-board, ensure that the solution was fit for purpose and then delivered it in an environment constrained by the previous technical and supplier decisions.

An integrated approach - encouraging people to work outside the usual organisational boundaries was required to create a genuinely omni-channel platform that would enable the growth desired.

Scope Definition - once the scope was clarified and quantified a phased approach was adopted to provide maximum business benefit as quickly as possible.

Structure and Governance - the omni-channel nature of the transformation required a new way of operating. Rapidly restructuring the programme to ensure clarity of responsibility and interdependencies between the work streams was key. To manage these work streams and the cross-functional nature of the programme, a number of business and technical governance forums were introduced. The structure also needed to remain flexible throughout the delivery in order to ensure it remained optimal.

THE OUTCOME

Communication - we joined up different parts of Harrods that traditionally worked and operated independently. Engaging and timely communication was the glue that held the programme together.

Programme Delivery - we drove the delivery of the transformation by setting up and executing a set of integrated work streams, plans, risks and issues.

Structure - we created a structure that covered all aspects of the delivery and ensured accountability for all aspects of the programme. We ensured all members of the team, businesses and board had weekly updated information on the programme RAG, risks and issues.

Governance - we created governance forums for business and technical decisions at Harrods.

Vendor Management - we inducted and managed the key vendors developing and testing the key platform systems, constantly challenging them and directing their energies in areas that supported the overall goals.

Standards - we upgraded project and programme management standards and established the testing function, introducing best practice processes.