



CASE STUDY: A GLOBAL RETAILER

Major retailer depends on RSM's Managed Services for mainframe operations

Summary

The best laid plans: when a leading global retailer decided to outsource its essential UK Mainframe Operations via a global services provider, it became clear the new offshore arrangements were not working in certain areas. RSM Partners took over this outsourced activity as a fully managed service.



Background

This RSM client is among the UK's largest and most successful retailers, serving millions of customers worldwide, with 500,000 employees. As part of the company's ongoing evolution and efforts to streamline the business - which include standardizing processes, reducing costs, ensuring agility and empowering colleagues - the decision was made to outsource Mainframe Operations to an international IT services provider. The provider opted to move these operations to an offshore service centre, with some of the retailer's mainframe staff redeployed.

Challenges

Within six months, a number of issues and challenges emerged with the offshoring element of the outsourced relationship, leading the retailer to rethink its approach. Following discussions with the service provider, RSM Partners was engaged to quickly deploy several highly-skilled mainframe consultants. The decision was then taken to outsource to RSM, based on its in-house capabilities, expert personnel, UK location and successful track record in delivering similar long-term support for other leading mainframe users.

Solution

RSM Partners was awarded a five-year contract to provide a resource-based Managed Service to deliver the entire system programming team for mainframe systems, delivering pure resourcing both onsite and remote. The environment includes two IBM z13 mainframe systems running over 20 LPARs in an IBM Parallel Sysplex environment, with over 12,000 MSUs under management.

Crucially, the RSM solution included a team that was 100% dedicated to the retailer, integrated with its in-house team. RSM is tasked with BAU as well as supporting special requirements plus *ad hoc* projects, identified and prioritized by the client. The RSM team consists of a Solutions Architect together with z/OS and other experts in DB2, CICS, IMS and resources focused on Storage and Networks. The original client

team had a 16-strong headcount, including team leader. RSM's Technical Director, Mark Wilson says, "The embedded RSM team also has access to the wider RSM community of experts, meaning it can call on this network for any incidents or issues that aren't immediately resolved onsite."

With resources a blend of dedicated and shared, the RSM Solutions Architect is the main technical point of contact, co-ordinating teamworking to ensure client requirements are met in all circumstances. Meanwhile, the RSM Service Delivery Manager spends time both onsite and remotely, ensuring delivery meets client expectations: supporting planning sessions, resolving issues and managing additional requirements.

Outcomes

"We 'keep the lights on' in terms of BAU as well as optimizing and securing the environment, and also help the retailer to plan and evolve its systems and approaches as new opportunities arise."

The retailer gained immediate access to the mainframe skills that it needed, with experts who quickly understood the end-to-end environment and its operations. Virtually overnight, this ensured that no further operational issues were encountered. "Importantly for this client, there was a clear transfer of risk ownership and responsibility, as the RSM service takes on accountability for delivering to the service levels demanded by the client," says Mark. "They knew we could deliver: they had confidence in our people, our set-up and our gold-standard approach."



"We are fully integrated and treated as an extension of the retailer's in-house team – which is how it should be," he adds. "A few years in, we've seen no escalations or complaints regarding delivery of the managed service." All requests for additional work have been met within the existing framework at no additional cost to the client, clearly showing that the RSM service is a true extension of the client's own team.

To find out more, email info@rsmpartners.com or visit www.rsmpartners.com