



Centrica plc

Partnering to accelerate digitisation



Centrica adopted Microsoft Power Platform to give the business autonomy over its app development. When internal IT resources are stretched, Centrica wanted to find a way to swiftly scale to support the business. Fujitsu provides expertise and resources to build and manage large and complex apps.

Challenge

Microsoft Power Platform allows the business to develop its own apps within 'guardrails' provided by IT. The popularity of the tools increased demand on central IT for complex app development.

Solution

Fujitsu provides Centrica's IT team with a way to tap into their best practice expertise as well as additional resources to build more complex Power Platform apps for the business.

Outcomes

- Delivered central visibility and control over business IT
- Provided support for Centrica's business critical Power Apps
- Gave IT access to 20+ specialists for guidance, expertise and capacity

"Without Fujitsu, we wouldn't have been able to meet business deadlines for key business critical apps."

Roy Young, Head of 365 Platform, Centrica



Guiding and accelerating the digital journey

Many organisations find embarking on a digital journey leads to departments building their own IT. All too often, if someone were to leave, no one else could maintain the solution they'd built.

Centrica found that some parts of its business were developing IT solutions in the shadows, invisible to and without guidance from central IT. "We wanted to give our colleagues the right tools to drive our digital transformation," says Roy Young, Head of 365 Platform at Centrica. "We also needed to put in 'guardrails' and increase transparency."

Today, citizen development using the Microsoft Power Platform gives the business autonomy over the solutions it builds while increasing central IT's visibility and control. While the business can, on the whole, develop its own solutions, some still have to come through central IT – very large or complicated solutions, for example.

The Power Platform Centre of Excellence provides a team of expert developers to build Power Platform solutions for the business whenever it is short on time or expertise. But Young and his team can find themselves overstretched. "There are lots of solutions people want to build, and they can't always build it themselves, so our Centre of Excellence became very busy," reveals Young. "We needed a way to keep our team skilled, and build apps when our team was also busy and couldn't take on any more."

Expanding development bandwidth

Centrica's strategic partner Fujitsu has managed the organisation's Microsoft 365 Platform for some time. Centrica turned to Fujitsu to help central IT build and manage Microsoft Power Platform solutions for the business. "If somebody comes to us and says, 'can you build this solution?' and we're already maxed out, we can work with Fujitsu to still build their app," shares Young.

Examples of critical Power Platform apps that the Fujitsu team has built and now manages for Centrica include:

- The Contingency Appointment Booking App allows contact centre agents to dispatch engineers and track customer emergencies outside of standard service hours.
- The Extended Service Portal App tracks and manages claims from British Gas Home Care customers, replacing manual processes.
- The Learning Operations Planning App plans and manages engineering apprenticeship and contact centre training for its 6,000 British Gas engineers. Admins can book courses. Engineers can view their courses. Both can view certifications and qualifications.

Centrica has built more than 1,000 apps using the Power Platform. The Fujitsu team is then able to work with the Centrica team or standalone to evolve apps developed by the business or central IT.

Industry:

Utilities

Location:

UK & Ireland

Website:

centrica.com

About the customer

Centrica is a leading energy service and solutions provider focused on helping customers live sustainably, simply and affordably. Its business is founded on a 200-year heritage of serving people. It supplies energy and services to more than nine million residential and business customers, mainly in the UK and Ireland, through brands such as British Gas, Bord Gáis and Centrica Business Solutions.



28,000

**emergency jobs in first
eight months since
CAB launch**

Fujitsu also shares its wealth of Power Platform experience with Centrica's central IT. Young describes how the Fujitsu team helped to adopt Azure Application Insights. "The Fujitsu team had been using Azure Application Insights for some time," he says. "They helped us set up our own monitoring and alerting for Centrica's Power Platform solutions. That was really useful."

When it comes to methodology, Agile is a cornerstone of both Centrica and Fujitsu's development approach. "The Fujitsu team is really good at employing Agile when building solutions," notes Young. "When our people are looking to build an app, Fujitsu defines their user stories and the priorities they need to be delivered in. They then deliver those in a series of sprints, reviewing what's been delivered and agree on what goes into the next sprint based on the backlog."

Rapid and safe digital success

Thanks to the Microsoft Power Platform, Centrica can develop solutions much faster than before. The "business-led development" allows the business to create the solutions it needs – quickly and at low cost. For example, the finance team built an app to replace an enterprise tool that demanded a hefty licence fee. Young shares that they are now "building their own roadmap for the app" and making changes when needed, without waiting for support from a third party.

The guardrails have allowed Centrica to get going on its digital journey while allowing central IT to retain control by eliminating risk-fraught shadow IT. "The Power Platform gives central IT full visibility of what the business is building," notes Young. "We can ensure solutions are not introducing risk to the business." The app's stability reflects this: users hardly ever raise issues each month.

Engaging Fujitsu has proven really effective, allowing Centrica to bring time-critical apps to life when the Centre of Excellence would not have been able to deliver for months. "Without Fujitsu, we wouldn't have been able to meet business deadline for key business critical apps," adds Young, noting how the alternative of recruiting additional internal resources would have taken too long.

Fujitsu's Agile approach helped in getting to a solution that works. Young adds, "It provides Centrica with regular confirmation that what's being built is on the right track while, at the same time, allowing for change where a solution doesn't work in practice as well as anticipated.

"Another advantage to the Fujitsu team working with us is we're able to tap into their knowledge and experience," shares Young. Additionally, Fujitsu's 'Power Apps in a Day' sessions have proved vital for bringing users up to speed on the Microsoft platform.

With numerous successes, Centrica is looking to a future with Fujitsu and the Microsoft Power Platform at its core. The roadmap includes AI Builder, Power Virtual Agents and other products that Microsoft plans to integrate into the Power ecosystem.

Customer:

centrica

Fujitsu

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