

Outsourcing and Quality

Improving Standards Generates New Business

At A Glance

- Company:** GFT, a leading international provider of IT services
- Industry:** Financial Services Sector
- Challenge:** Managing quality issues following expansion and internationalisation
- Solution:** GFT Methodology with CMMI Level 3 accreditation and appointment of a Chief Quality Officer
- Benefits:** New business from clients requesting support in improving their processes in Germany, Spain and the UK. Improved offering for current clients and easier internal management of projects.

Established in 1987, GFT has seen rapid growth in the last decade and now numbers over one thousand employees in twenty two locations worldwide. With its business divisions representing Services, Resources and Software, the company has a unique service portfolio and its 4Ps approach to outsourcing (project, people, places and only then price) means that it operates project teams across many geographical boundaries.

Whilst becoming an international company is good for business, the speed of expansion and growth can have an impact on quality. Although GFT already had respectable procedures, it wasn't always easy to replicate these in new offices of varying sizes and in different countries. GFT realised that it was vital to create some quality absolutes and to ensure that teams based in different regions, or even continents, were working with commonly accepted processes and levels of quality. In addition to this, the company recognised that adherence to quality should be ongoing and recognised internally.

As part of the internationalisation of the company, GFT had adopted a global delivery model and it needed some globally accepted processes to support it. Many of GFT's projects in the UK, for example, are delivered by the teams in Spain and Brazil, along with their UK counterparts. It was therefore vital to have a recognised, mature and standardised methodology, which focussed on generating consistent quality of service. A range of standards were considered by the company, but the CMMI model was chosen as being recognised and well-respected by the IT industry, and having a particular focus on software development projects.

GFT began the CMM (now CMMI) Level 2 accreditation process in 2003 and, by December, had achieved this level of process maturity in just seven months, the shortest time ever. It was therefore decided to extend the CMMI model across all GFT's Global Delivery Units, where Level 2 certification was achieved in 2005.

For the attainment of CMMI Level 3 GFT's processes areas were evaluated. These included; project management, software engineering, and support and organisational activities. Level 3 also covers several aspects of the software development lifecycle, such as: planning and monitoring, risk management, requirements and technical solutions development, testing, validation and product integration, configuration management, usage of metrics, and employee training. The process of obtaining CMMI Level 3 requires the company to develop its own methodology, based on the model's requirements, and to be applied effectively across all the company's projects.

Having been assessed in these areas and created the GFT Methodology, today, GFT's Global Delivery Units have been recognised as having reached CMMI Level 3. For GFT the process was almost as important as achieving the final accreditation. The company learnt much about itself whilst preparing for evaluation and was able, as a result, to develop a GFT Methodology as its standard for software development.

Having achieved its immediate aims, GFT underlined its commitment to developing its quality maturity through the appointment of its first Chief Quality Officer, Manuel Urban. He acknowledges that the company is more interested in the real implementation and use of the most efficient processes, than in achieving certification for the sake of it. The company's continued successful expansion is only possible on the basis of a consolidated set of processes that define the GFT way of doing things, share and retain the knowledge inside the company and deliver the levels of quality the business expects.

This strategy also enables the company to offer its international clients assurance that their projects are managed, and will continue to be, according to a standardised model. It also ensures consistent adherence to delivery deadlines and costs, whether the project is developed in Europe, South America or Asia.

The whole process of CMMI accreditation, development of the GFT Methodology and a commitment to ongoing quality maturity, has already resulted in benefits for the business. GFT has improved its offering through increased visibility into the workings of its projects and confidence in the quality of the outcome, regardless of where in the world the work takes place. It has easier internal management of its projects, as the

teams have a consistent understanding of what is expected and have become more quality oriented.

As a result of this successful implementation of international recognised quality processes, GFT has secured new business across Europe. This includes supporting a large German bank in establishing its development methodology and processes (according to CMMI), as well as projects looking at optimising the client/outsourcer process flows in the UK and Spain.

Thus GFT's internal improvement process has reaped rewards externally. Quality, it seems, breeds success.

Quotes

Manuel Urban, Chief Quality Officer, GFT

"With the rest of the team at the GFT Quality Office, we will be ensuring that each project at our development locations worldwide offers its clients the benefits of our common development methodology, globalised services network and maturity model of process improvement".

Graham Underwood, Managing Director, GFT UK

"That we have managed to improve our working practices *and* win new business following our CMMI accreditation, demonstrates the importance of consistent application of quality processes for a global business. We have appointed a Chief Quality Officer to ensure that this strategy continues to benefit our clients and the business".

For further press information please contact:

Kate Warwick or Shelley Byfield at PR Savvy

Tel: 078 1069 7282 / 077 4780 1409

Email: firstname.surname@prsavvy.co.uk