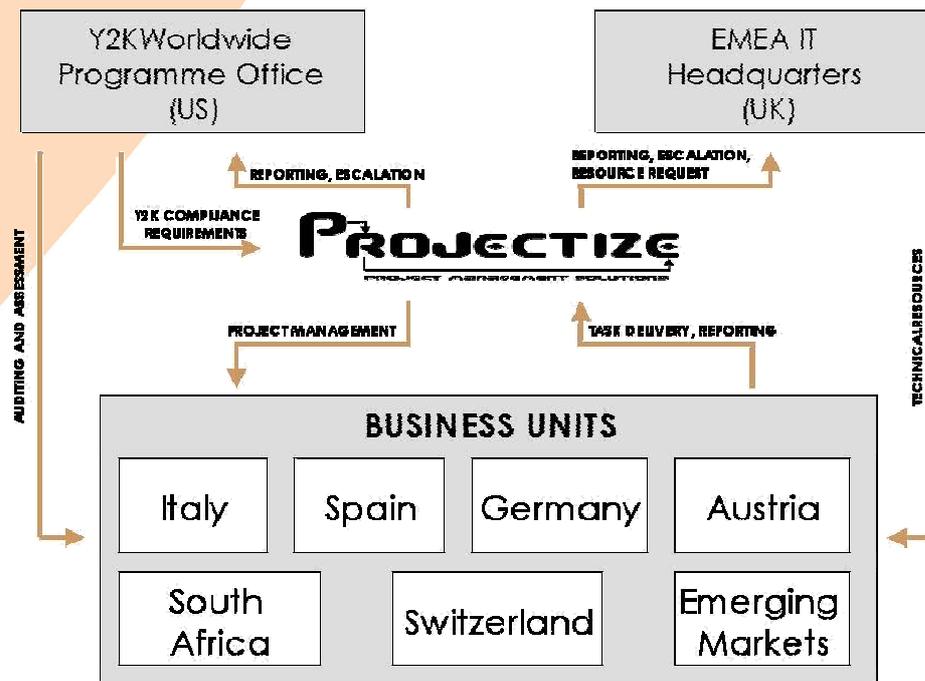


CASE STUDY

YEAR 2000 SYSTEM COMPLIANCE

SEVERAL BUSINESS UNITS OF A MAJOR CORPORATION ACROSS EMEA (EUROPE, MIDDLE EAST and AFRICA)



The Client

Dell Computer Corporation. One of the top three Personal Computer manufacturers in the world. With headquarters in the United States and worldwide operations. Dell is structured around Business Units active in most countries.

The Project

The "Year 2000 Compliance" is to date the biggest project undertaken by the Information Technology industry world-wide.

Classed as mission critical by most corporations, our Client's aim was to ensure that all facilities, internal systems and critical elements of the supply chain's infrastructure would be able to function correctly as computers internal date rolls from 1999 to 2000.

Each single Business Unit (BU) around the globe was tasked to ensure its own Year 2000 (Y2K) readiness. To co-ordinate the effort, a Programme Management Office was established in the US to issue

a common set of instructions and compliance requirements as well as to carry out readiness assessments and report progress and issues to the Board of Directors.

Resources were to be made available by the Business Units and by the regional IT headquarters, which would provide technical expertise and assistance.

In order to guarantee speedy progression and efficient communications, a project manager was assigned to each group of business units to co-ordinate the initiative and ensure its successful delivery.

One of Projectize's partners was tasked with the project management of 7 EMEA (Europe, Middle East and Africa) Business Units as described in the opening diagram. His role was to provide project management methodology and control (Planning, Tracking, Resource Utilisation, Risk and Issue Management, Reporting and Escalation).

The Challenge

To manage the successful implementation of a standard set of activities across 7 separate Business Units, with plans of over 1000 tasks each and more than 250 owners per plan.

Often employees were not assigned full-time to the project, but 'borrowed' from the various departments for a portion of their time. Clarity in tasks assignment, rigorous tracking and prioritisation were key elements to delivery, as well as the understanding of the local culture and ways of working to ensure consistent delivery across different nationalities.

Available Systems

The Client had a global intranet that allowed communication and data exchange in real time.

Each Business Units had the full Microsoft Office Suite including Outlook, Access and Project.

The Solution

- Creation of a Microsoft Outlook database, accessible by all parties involved, to maintain and track the compliance assurance process that each supplier had to undertake. Outlook was used to track progress as well as a document repository where all forms and correspondence were stored and accessed by both sides of the Atlantic.
- Creation of standard project plan templates in MS Project to allow for consistent reporting and tracking across Business Units. Resources were allocated to each task to allow for the following:
 - Automatic update of tasks by e-mail (integration with owner's Outlook to-do list)
 - Constant monitoring and rapid escalation of critical tasks and issues
 - Data consolidation, reporting, risk and issue management.
- Frequent visits to the Y2K project teams of each Business Units, to build a personal relationship with key members of the team and minimising language barriers to achieve maximum clarity on the objectives of the project and its progress in time.

Results

The outcome was the achievement in time of full Y2K compliance for all Business Units.

More than 500 suppliers were taken through the compliance process and 7000 tasks completed internally across EMEA within the allocated resources.

Critical Success Factors

- Constant communications and building personal relationships with key stakeholders in the project
- Advanced use of existing applications (Outlook, Project) to fulfil the reporting and communication needs of a global programme without having to purchase new tools, and training staff accordingly.
- Simplification and standardisation of all requirements so that they would be understandable in all cultures and languages.
- No ambiguity. Clarity of instructions and effective prioritisation via teamwork and careful planning