

Delivering progress in a rapidly changing world

Pipex case study

The Quortex logo, which consists of the word "QUORTEX" in a bold, uppercase sans-serif font, followed by a stylized graphic of a grey and white shape resembling a speech bubble or a stylized 'Q'.

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Pipex Business Plans for Transformation

By 2007, Pipex Communications had been a market leader for over a decade. The Pipex Business division helps organisations to deploy Internet-enabled technologies to enhance business performance, enable mobile working and keep data secure. Pipex Business also owns one of the UK's most extensive communication networks.

Pipex Business was established through the acquisition of multiple companies including Nildram, Freedom2Surf and GX Networks. This meant that the Pipex team had to contend with multiple, separate IT systems and processes from the discrete brands across sales, customer relationship, provisioning and billing. As each acquired brand brought with it different systems often with manual processes, the result was an internally complex solution that did not support the time-to-market objectives of the business.

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Maria Cappella,
Managing Director,
Pipex Business

"We wanted to bring all of our newly acquired businesses under the single Pipex brand. For the business to continue to succeed going forward, it was essential that our customers felt like they were dealing with one company rather than many," said Maria Cappella, Managing Director of Pipex Business. **"We also wanted to get new products to market more quickly and the existing set-up limited that capability."**

Pipex faced two key challenges:

- To ensure that any changes to the existing capability were business and user-led – the solution needed to be wider than IT. It was essential that IT applications were not simply 'bolted on' in an attempt to automate the existing business processes but delivered genuine improvements to efficiency and effectiveness.
- How to lead and implement such a large change programme without it becoming overwhelming to both the staff developing it and those who would be using the new solution.

The Pipex team immediately realised that they would benefit greatly from an outside perspective: "We all knew what the issues were within the business but also recognised early on that we required input from an objective external source to capture and prioritise all of our separate issues in order to get agreement on the actions needed across the business. We knew that this would help us make the transition as speedy as possible." continued Cappella.

Change experts Quortex were brought on board to provide that outside perspective and help the Pipex team take the change programme forward.

Through its extensive experience of change management projects, Quortex immediately realised how to overcome Pipex's concern that significant change might overwhelm everyone and advised that the programme be set up to develop and deliver enhanced capability in small, regular phases.

As it was essential that the change programme was business and user led from the start, Quortex made its first task to understand the programme's key business goals by speaking to senior stakeholders as well as the people who would be using the systems day-to-day. This included the senior management team across Finance, Sales, Marketing, Product Development, Customer Service and Operations, as well as front-line managers and their people. This process elicited their requirements for the new solution which would form the backbone for the change programme.

Working with Pipex to define the high level solution, Quortex then embarked with Pipex on a vendor review to identify the new systems that would be most appropriate to meet the business and user requirements. From this, Quortex also developed a financial model that would determine the cost and benefit implications of varying price, capability and roll out schedule.

"The financial model that Quortex built for us was invaluable and our CFO was genuinely impressed with it!" said Cappella. "It was easy to make changes to elements of the plan in order to view how different scenarios would impact the value of the programme, both financially and towards our ultimate business goal. This immediately put us in a strong negotiation position with suppliers."

By understanding the true relationship between costs and benefits, Quortex was able to help with vendor negotiations which resulted in the vendor prices for set-up and support being halved.

Once the vendor appraisal was completed, Quortex and the Pipex team were able to use the financial model to split the schedule for release of major new capability into quarterly slots so as not to put a strain on staff and current business processes.

"Releasing new parts of the solution in bite-sized chunks would minimise the disruptive impact of the changes. It would also help us to ensure that the new solution was working well and most importantly that our staff were able to use it. The plan would ensure that a piece of value was released into the business every quarter with minimum disruption to maximise the positive result and deliver significant change in the way we do business." continued Cappella.

As it turned out, an offer for Pipex (including the high volume sector of Pipex Business which would have benefited most from this work) was received before the bulk of the programme could be delivered, and so the programme was put on hold pending the due diligence that was necessary. However the Intellectual Property was retained and was of value in the new business.

"That shouldn't detract from the excellent work that was done in preparing the ground to deliver genuine business led change for our business – it was a credit to all involved." commented Cappella.

As an independent ISO audit report stated: '...all the requirements of good practice in planning a project. ...there is good evidence to show that this will be achieved as the project is being well managed.'

"We gained a great deal of value from working with Quortex and had a fully costed, configured and understood roadmap of what our business needed to do and how it needed to do it. Quortex successfully took us from the creative to the doing stage and I'd work with them again at the drop of a hat." concluded Cappella.

About Quortex www.quortex.com

Quortex are business change experts who bring a refreshingly different approach to the more traditional management and IT consultancy space. Quortex is privately owned and completely vendor independent. It helps companies face the constant challenge to deliver improved and sustainable business performance, where success depends on clarity of vision, astute planning and superb execution. Quortex provides expertise to drive business change ranging from small scale business process enhancements to setting up global transformation programmes. Its pragmatic approach and active transfer of knowledge to client teams is what sets it apart from the crowd. Quortex' difference is best summed up by one of their clients: "The difference with you guys is that you really care about what you do."



Quortex

To find out more about Quortex go to www.quortex.com.

If you would like to discuss how we can help to increase your certainty of success with challenging integration or business change programmes, please call +44 (0)118 942 8025 or email quortex@quortex.com

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