



The Client:

Industry: technology

Location: global project centred in London

Employees: >1000

Background:

As part of a separation programme the client had to build most admin processes and IT from scratch. The T&E project was part of a larger programme managed by iProCon Consultants.

The Story:

Where we started:

The client had various travel policies and processes in the 10 countries involved. There were little controls and analytics in place, and MS Excel based expense reporting was awkward and required a lot of manual work from the finance department. Due to a lack of data, the volume of travel was not managed at all, and there was no centralised negotiation with providers of travel services.

The objective was to implement a standardised global process, which was lean and user friendly for employees and managers, and provided corporate finance with the controls and analytics to manage travel volume and cost. The new process also had to be SOx compliant.

To achieve this the following elements had to be delivered:

- the travel policy had to be harmonised between countries, whilst taking local statutory requirements into account
- American Express had to be engaged as a travel agency with regional hubs in the US, Europe, and Asia
- the online booking tool Cliqbook (SaaS) had to be rolled out to all countries (except for Asia, where the tool was not yet available)
- for offline bookings a separate approval tool had to be put in place
- Concur (SaaS) had to be deployed for expense recording and approval
- mobile devices had to be included for approval of trips and expenses
- an outsourced receipt handing and auditing service had to be put in place
- American Express had to be engaged as a corporate card provider, cards be rolled out, and interfaces set up
- the workforce had to be engaged and trained to a completely new process, while loads of other change initiatives were going on

What we did:

iProCon provided a project manager, a PMO assistant, a training and communications manager, and an admin resource for the credit card rollout. The team worked closely with the vendors, the finance department, HR, IT security, and local office managers to deploy the new processes and

Exec Summary:

The client asked iProCon to take over project management and provide the resources for a high priority Travel&Expense initiative, stuck after vendor selection due to a lack of resources.

The project comprised a new travel policy, a new global travel agency, online travel booking and online expense reporting with approval workflows, rollout of credit cards to 50% of the workforce, an outsourced audit service, and tighter controls on providers of travel and accommodation.

The project was successfully delivered within 3 months, followed by a period of optimisation in interfaces and analytics.

systems.

Together with the client we designed the new solution, re-negotiated with vendors, where necessary and established a project plan for delivery within 3 months.

Major challenges to overcome included:

- changing the travel agency due to a change in circumstances since vendor selection. Selection and contract negotiation had to happen at extraordinary speed to make the deadline
- engaging a diverse workforce across 3 continents to embrace the change towards self services, more rigorous controls, and more accountability for line managers – in an environment where all departments had to deal with significant change already
- engaging various parties quickly to get the various interfaces (including Workday HR and SAP Financials) in place
- Covering special processes like candidate travel, expatriation, and group travel

A rigorous management of vendors' activities, engagement with change agents in all subsidiaries, and keeping the scope down to the essentials guaranteed a successful deployment in time and in budget.

Non-essential interfaces and analytics were deployed after go-life as a second release of the project.

What we achieved:

Not only was the system delivered in time and in budget, but it was accepted by users very quickly: the uptake of online bookings one month after go-life was above 80%, thus beating the expectation of the vendors by far.

The new processes and systems allowed the client to reduce manual work considerably, get in the controls required for SOx, and reduce travel cost by actively managing travel volume and data-based negotiating with providers.

The new system also provided the basis for engaging a VAT reclaim service, and getting a safety and emergency plan for travellers in place.

If you want to discuss similar challenges in your organisation, please get in touch and we can arrange a meeting: contact@iprocon.co.uk