

SUCCESS STORY

UK LIFE & PENSIONS FIRM

Systems and infrastructure separated



Planning and delivering the successful separation of systems and data following business sale. Collaborative effort between multiple stakeholders brings about successful transition from shared systems to standalone entities for two companies.

The challenge

Following the sale of its Life book to another firm, a UK Life & Pensions company needed to separate the shared mainframe application estate and connected server/ web based applications into two distinct sets.

Sopra Steria's client, a major UK Life & Pensions company, signed a contract selling its Life book of business to another major UK Life & Pensions company. A series of Transitional Service Agreements (TSAs) were put in place to allow both companies to continue to operate on shared systems and infrastructure for a limited period of time.

A number of large programmes of work were then initiated to physically separate the systems, infrastructure, end users, premises, etc. This would enable the exit of all of these TSAs.

One of the largest programmes of work was to separate the shared mainframe application estate and connected server/ web based applications into two distinct sets of applications hosted on logically separate mainframe partitions and servers. These could then be physically re-hosted by a subsequent programme of work.

This programme was driven by a fixed end date. Cut-over needed to be achieved over a weekend to avoid any impact on business-as-usual operations. 270 gigabytes of data had to be separated/migrated from the shared applications, leaving both companies with only their own data in their own working application.

Key points

- Cut-over with no impact on business as usual
- 270GB of data separated and migrated
- Measured risk-based approach to delivery
- Complex governance structure addressed.

Our solution

A trusted transformation partner, Sopra Steria had been supporting its Life & Pensions client's application estate since 2001. Industry knowledge coupled with a proven track record of successful project delivery with its client, including previous migrations project experience, put Sopra Steria in the best position to lead the majority of the programme work streams. These included:

- Application environment build
- Application and data separation
- Customer Management System integration
- Cut-over planning and implementation.

Sopra Steria's unique holistic view and understanding of the entire programme ensured its consultants successfully navigated through the many technical issues a complex transition of this nature typically encounters.

How we worked together

The programme required a close working relationship between Sopra Steria and all parties involved. This would ensure contractual boundaries were overcome between both the selling and purchasing Life & Pensions companies, the infrastructure provider and a Life & Pensions business process outsource supplier.

Programme planning demanded a pragmatic solution design combined with a measured risk-based approach to delivery. Key risks were identified early in the planning stages and various activities were built into the programme plan to mitigate against them. These activities included prototyping, dress rehearsals, and full batch schedule execution.

Sopra Steria and the other programme participants faced a number of challenges:

- Only very high level requirements were available - the stated basic requirement was that the separated applications should continue to function as before
- A complex governance structure existed with different parties responsible for different elements of the programme
- BAU development projects (e.g. regulatory changes) continued in parallel with an ensuing impact on the in-scope applications
- Opportunity identified to transform some applications by introducing new system developments into the scope of the programme, including technical solutions not proven within the impacted environment.

Results and benefits

Success was dependent on Sopra Steria's key Subject Matter Expert (SME) knowledge and the ability to ramp up resources to deliver against programme timelines. To this end, Sopra Steria's offshore delivery teams were vital to the delivery of this programme, while its UK teams provided both application and technical SMEs and programme management.

270GB of data was successfully separated and migrated on time during the cut-over weekend with no impact to the BAU business operations. Business users finished work on Friday on a combined application set and were able to start work the following Monday morning on a separated application set. Very few issues were raised during the programme warranty period. Of those that were raised, many were due to a lack of user education, rather than directly related to the programme delivery.

This programme also enabled Sopra Steria's end client to move away from some legacy technology, thereby reducing licence costs. One impacted application, the Customer Management System, was replaced by the client's own application with Sopra Steria contributing to the data transformation and integration. Sopra Steria also successfully re-engineered two other applications to be within a .NET framework.

The successful completion of this complex programme was fundamental to the implementation of the contract between the two Life & Pensions companies. It enabled the physical re-hosting of the applications into a separate data centre in order to achieve full separation, thus enabling the exit of the final TSAs.



Sopra Steria, European leader in digital transformation, provides one of the most comprehensive portfolios of end to end service offerings in the market: Consulting, Systems Integration, Software Development and Business Process Services. Sopra Steria is trusted by leading private and public organisations to deliver successful transformation programmes that address their most complex and critical business challenges.

