



► CASE STUDY

Court Funds Office

Part of the Ministry of Justice

The client

The Court Funds Office provides a banking and administration service to all civil courts in England and Wales, accounting for money paid into and out of court and looking after investments made with that money, and has done so for over 300 years.

In total, the Court Funds Office has a total of circa £2.4 billion¹ of holding funds under management and over 184,000 accounts¹ – many of them vulnerable customers, such as young children who have been awarded damages in civil actions.

¹As of April 2017

The challenge

The Court Funds Office faced a number of structural challenges in maintaining a good service for clients, not least the need to replace an aged IT system.

It was therefore decided that modernising the administration of funds in court was necessary in order to continue to meet the Accountant General's responsibility for protecting the financial affairs of the legally vulnerable and to address those weaknesses.

Achieving these essential goals would enable the Court Funds Office to continue providing a secure, accurate and timely service for managing funds, delivering good customer service to its clients, and maintaining its stakeholders' confidence in its end-to-end service offering.

At the same time, delivering a significant reduction in operating costs was imperative.



The solution

The Court Funds Office team had a clear vision of what they wanted from a new payment services provider and how they wanted to best serve their customers and key stakeholders moving forward.

In December 2011, the Court Funds Office operation was moved from London to NS&I's Glasgow site after relevant systems and processes had been customised to deliver the entire Court Funds Office service.

This was achieved through clear planning and close collaboration between the two organisations.

The success of this major migration programme depended on engaging with the client at all levels, team building, understanding the client's business approaches and a rigorous testing and handover process.

The work included:



Establishing business and customer requirements. Determining a clear and agreed understanding of business needs and customer experience requirements.



Mapping existing systems and processes. Identification and implementation of LEAN processes to boost efficiency and effectiveness of new processes.



Cultural mapping and relationship development between NS&I and Court Funds Office staff, including one-to-one partnering, team working sessions and regular stakeholder updates.



Developing an evolving Model Office: a working prototype of operations reflecting the real environment as closely as possible, enabling an enhanced adaptation, building and testing capability throughout the programme (NS&I proprietary models).



Our Model Office methodology allows us to see how things work before we finalise processes. We run business simulations to replicate actual tasks, with the ability to make real-time changes to workflow practices.



A comprehensive stakeholder sign-off process, including inputs from the client's front line staff, to give complete confidence in the new system.

The transfer of service from Court Funds Office into the NS&I operation was successfully carried out according to the project plan and the customer experience was uninterrupted.

The NS&I Government Payment Services Account Management team work closely and collaboratively to ensure the Court Funds Office team get the service they require.

The big underlying change is that the back office is now based on robust NS&I technology and operational processes, making it a more efficient operation, delivering the benefits of economies of scale with tried and tested processes.

The results

“ We are delighted with the initial 25% cost saving that has been delivered against the pre-transition costs and welcome the further savings deliverable under the new contract, which will take the total cost reduction to over 40%. ”

John Little, Deputy Accountant General and Head of the Office of Accountant General Responsible for the Court Funds Office Service

The Court Funds Office has achieved its key objectives:



Cost savings

Total cost reduction to over 40% while delivering a step change in the reliability of operations.



Risk management

Significant reduction in operational risk through robust, resilient and flexible systems fronted by a workflow package that gives a single customer view.



Oversight and assurance

The Court Funds Office oversees the quality of customer service and operational delivery by monitoring key performance indicators.



Results focused

Against a target of 97% achieving results of:

- 99.7% for timeliness of payment processing
- 99.7% for general correspondence.

Source:
Operational delivery report
March 2017

What we enabled by migrating to a modern, scaleable and robust banking system:



A reduction in staff numbers from 164 to 54¹ through improved processes and workflow management. NS&I Government Payment Services staff now provide a dedicated expert account management capability.

¹ As of April 2017



Significant efficiency savings through changes in working practices, with further efficiencies identified. Clear processes, training and communication packages ensure working practices are consistent, audited and compliant.



The migration from old Court Funds Office systems to new NS&I Government Payment Services systems led to increased control and automation with reduced errors and improved customer service as well as improved business reporting.



Partnering with NS&I Government Payment Services has provided the Court Funds Office with the opportunity to explore increasing digitisation, using modern systems and processes proven through NS&I's retail business.

“Working with NS&I Government Payment Services means working with a dedicated and professional team that brings a strategic focus and commercial knowledge to the relationship. Any government department who is looking for a payment services provider should take the time to consider what NS&I Government Payment Services has to offer. They are serious contenders.”

John Little, Deputy Accountant General and Head of the Office of Accountant General Responsible for the Court Funds Office Service

About us

NS&I is known as the UK government retail savings organisation with over £135 billion² invested and over 25 million² customers. We are also known for outsourcing much of our business model, and it is estimated that this contract has saved the UK taxpayer over £500 million since 1999.

Our tried and tested modern banking engine, our people and our carefully honed processes have powered our success. It's all now available to UK government departments through NS&I Government Payment Services. We only work with clients who would benefit from using and adapting our existing and proven payment services infrastructure and processes.

Contact us



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