

IT Optimization

Evidence Case Study: Finance Ministry of the Netherlands

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Technological Innovation Improved, Move Completed Issue-Free with Service Plan

For more than 15 years, the Ministry of Finance in the Netherlands has operated in a Microsoft® IT environment. To ensure it was experiencing the full benefits of this infrastructure, the Ministry engaged with Microsoft Premier Support Services. The personalized assistance enabled by the service offering, including an assigned technical account manager, allows the Ministry of Finance to maximize its current IT investments as well as successfully implement new Microsoft technologies.

Business Needs

The economy of the Netherlands depends greatly on the decisions the country's Ministry of Finance makes. This powerful government agency is charged with developing equitable fiscal legislation, collecting taxes, and monitoring the expenditure of government funds.

The Netherlands Ministry of Finance has operated in a Microsoft® technologies-based IT environment for 15 years—routinely upgrading software as new versions were released. However, the ministry wanted to ensure that it was experiencing the full benefits of this infrastructure.

"Technically, all of our systems worked, but we had a feeling that we could get more out of them. We wanted to tap into the new features and possibilities—and get a better return on our investment," says Robin Hoogduin, Chief Information Officer at the Netherlands Ministry of Finance.

For example, advanced mobility features within Microsoft Office Outlook® 2003, such as Outlook Web Access and Mobile Synchronization, weren't being used because of security concerns. Workers were unable to access e-mail messages or calendar information from home or on the road, hindering productivity.

The technology team also faced a physical move; the Finance Ministry's entire technology infrastructure was being relocated and the system's stability needed to be assured.

Solution

In 2005, the Netherlands Ministry of Finance contacted Microsoft to create a plan for maximizing its current IT investments, to gain support for an upcoming move, and to successfully implement new technologies. After careful deliberation, the Ministry of Finance signed up for Microsoft Premier Support because of the broad range of personalized assistance it provides, including the services of a technical account manager (TAM).

"Microsoft took the time to make sure our technical account manager was the right fit," says Hoogduin. "This meant that we were assigned a TAM who really understood our goals—and who could directly address the specific challenges we were facing."

The first task the TAM tackled was to inventory the existing IT environment at the Ministry of Finance, determining the overall system constraints as well as the different



<http://www.minfin.nl>

Country or Region: The Netherlands

Industry: Government Agencies

Customer Size: 2,200 employees

Customer Profile:

The Netherlands Ministry of Finance, based in The Hague, creates and implements the fiscal policies of this European country.

Software and Services:

Microsoft Exchange Server 2003
Microsoft Office Live Communications Server 2005
Microsoft Office Outlook® 2003
Microsoft Premier Support
Microsoft Windows Server® 2003 R2

pieces of Microsoft products the ministry was using. The TAM then initiated a four-step infrastructure optimization project that included the following evaluations:

- Microsoft Exchange Server Risk Assessment Program to identify areas where communication could be improved.
- Microsoft Active Directory® Health Check to ensure that the system was properly configured.
- Baseline security evaluation to align the Ministry of Finance's security processes with Microsoft best practices.
- Operations check to improve management of IT environment.

States Hoogduin, "The Microsoft Premier Support team, including our TAM, consulted with us on the best way to resolve the issues they uncovered, then created a remediation plan. The team really functioned as a combination consulting service and quality assurance agency, helping us to optimize our in-place technology and successfully adopt new products."

Benefits

The optimization services, combined with the one-on-one support the agency's TAM supplied, helped the Ministry of Finance become more successful with its existing Microsoft technology.

"We're able to work much more effectively now. Premier Support has allowed me to improve communication, collaboration, and connectivity throughout the Ministry of Finance," says Hoogduin. "Our Microsoft products are doing more than we ever imagined." Fuels Successful Innovation

The knowledge and services Microsoft Premier Support offers encourages the Ministry of Finance to use Microsoft technology beyond its most basic capabilities.

For example, the Ministry of Finance just upgraded to Microsoft Exchange Server 2003. Says Hoogduin, "In the old days, we would have used this application exactly like we used the previous version. But, with Microsoft's help, we're exploring all the functionality Exchange Server 2003 offers—such as mobility features."

Executives and employees at the ministry can now use Outlook Web Access and smart phones to receive and respond to e-mail messages and to access their calendars. The IT team at the Ministry of Finance is also working with Microsoft to implement collaboration products, such as Microsoft Office Live Communications Server.

Supports a Seamless Relocation

Physically moving the Ministry of Finance's IT environment—which consists of approximately 400 servers and numerous desktops—was a challenge filled with potential issues.

To help mitigate risks, the TAM joined the ministry's team for the move and offered his expertise. Also, Microsoft Premier Support helped the agency prepare IT systems for a smooth move by completing infrastructure optimization activities, including the migration to Microsoft Windows Server® 2003 and Microsoft Exchange Server 2003 before the move. During the move, Microsoft consultants were stationed on-site to immediately resolve any issues that arose.

Offers Reliable Advice and Strategy

The expertise offered by Microsoft Premier Support supplies the Ministry of Finance with innovative solutions that map to business-critical goals. The shifting relationship dynamic has moved Microsoft into the role of a trusted advisor and strategic partner.

"Now, Microsoft isn't just offering me a product—it's a complete solution," says Hoogduin. "Our relationship with Microsoft is much more productive—and positive—since using Premier Support."

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Robin Hoogduin

Chief Information Officer

The Netherlands Ministry of Finance

**The following recently released products are now available:*

Microsoft Exchange Server 2007

Microsoft Office Communications Server 2007

2007 Microsoft Office system

Microsoft Infrastructure Optimization

With infrastructure optimization, you can build a secure, well-managed, and dynamic core IT infrastructure that can reduce overall IT costs, make better use of resources, and become a strategic asset for the business. The Infrastructure Optimization Model—with Basic, Standardized, Rationalized, and Dynamic levels—was developed by Microsoft using industry best practices and Microsoft's own experiences with enterprise customers. The Infrastructure Optimization Model provides a maturity framework that is flexible and easily used as a benchmark for technical capability and business value.

For more information about infrastructure optimization, go to:

www.microsoft.com/io

For More Information

For more information about Microsoft products and services, call the Microsoft Sales Information Center at (800) 426-9400. In Canada, call the Microsoft Canada Information Centre at (877) 568-2495. Customers who are deaf or hard-of-hearing can reach Microsoft text telephone (TTY/TDD) services at (800) 892-5234 in the United States or (905) 568-9641 in Canada. Outside the 50 United States and Canada, please contact your local Microsoft subsidiary. To access information using the World Wide Web, go to: www.microsoft.com

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