

Success Story North Highland

northhighland®

HIGHLAND WORLDWIDE

North Highland is a global management and technology consulting firm that guarantees measurable results for their clients, who include some of the largest and most recognizable names in the world. North Highland collaborates with its clients to improve their business and produce results across the spectrum of strategic planning, information management, sales and marketing execution, change management, workforce performance, financial planning and reporting, and operational strategy. North Highland has 18 offices in the United States. Global coverage is offered by Highland Worldwide from 25 international office locations.



North Highland will recognize return on investment on Nintex Workflow 2007 just on the on-boarding project alone

North Highland's consultant workforce consists of more than 750 experienced management and technology consultants of which 20% are affiliates hired for a specific client project and/or set period of time. The on-boarding process for affiliates is handled by the Revenue Management business unit. Previously, manually driven email exchanges, involving 8 – 10 employee stakeholders, were prone to human error and duplication of efforts by stakeholders. On average it took North Highland five business days to on-board affiliates a process North Highland acknowledged was highly inefficient and restricted how quickly the company could get consultants working on projects.

As the business came out of the economic downturn they recognized that the increasing volume of client projects would quadruple their affiliate resource needs from 50 – 60 affiliates per quarter to more than 200 affiliates per quarter. This set the wheels in motion for finding a solution that would automate the on-boarding process.

North Highland has been using Microsoft SharePoint technology for three years across their business for project collaboration, knowledge management and their intranet. They have successfully engaged Abel Solutions, a Microsoft partner widely recognized for their SharePoint skills and strong commitment to quality solutions, to help them with a number of SharePoint customizations in the past.

Conscious of the fast-approaching deadline to improve their on-boarding process, they turned to Abel Solutions for assistance in finding a solution to integrate with their existing SharePoint investment with just one stipulation: help them build something with minimal custom development effort so that they would be able to maintain it with their internal staff after deployment.

Abel Solutions suggested a number of products that would address this requirement and position them well for the internal development of future workflows. After review, North Highland concluded that Nintex Workflow 2007 was best suited to help them construct a workflow solution for their on-boarding process requirements. Nintex Workflow was a particularly attractive solution because it could quickly be implemented in their current SharePoint environment with workflows developed by Abel Solutions and their IT staff then handed to the business unit to maintain in future.

The full value of their Nintex Workflow investment was realized through the implications for business units across their organization. The Accounting Group on-boards affiliates into key systems such as payroll. As North Highland recruits some of its affiliate staff through recruitment agencies, both the affiliate and the agency that put forward the affiliate must be entered into the Accounting Group business unit general ledger system Great Plains. The workflow has been designed to request and populate into Great Plains affiliate and agency information including tax forms (W9), proof of right to work (I9), payroll details as well as setup a contractor schedule fee. This had been a manual entry process per affiliate so the workflow has produced huge efficiency gains.

The average time to on-board an affiliate has dropped from five days to four to five hours. This is already an incredible time and cost savings and North Highland expects that the duration will decrease further as users get more familiar with the capabilities of Nintex Workflow 2007.

The Revenue Management business unit, charged with managing sales engagements, administering resource planning, and producing project revenue and margin reports, are now able to manage resources in their staffing tool. Once an affiliate is hired and assigned to a project, the workflow will automatically populate the affiliate's details across their project staffing tool ChangePoint. This step alone saved North Highland three to four hours per affiliate staffing.

Simultaneously the workflow is designed to set off provisioning of affiliate accounts in Exchange and Active Directory and create a HEAT ticket helpdesk request for IT to provision laptop equipment to the affiliate. Having this done concurrently with project staffing via the Revenue Management business unit means that the affiliate receives their equipment plus system access and is able to commence project work for North Highland immediately, eliminating lost opportunity costs of non-billable affiliate. What was a series of manual process for North Highland's IT business unit personnel are now streamlined via the workflow account provisioning capabilities and task allocations are kicked off at the first available opportunity rather than as an afterthought once other processes had been completed.

The dashboard overview of workflow progress gives the Revenue Management team insight into the status of each step of the on-boarding process and enables them to pro-actively follow up with any outstanding task owners if necessary to escalate or override the task assignment so the affiliate is on-boarded to North Highland in a timely manner. This feature is

very important for last minute consultant requests that need to be filled quickly. The average time to on-board an affiliate has dropped from five days to four to five hours. This is already an incredible time and cost savings and North Highland expects that the duration will decrease further as users get more familiar with the capabilities of Nintex Workflow 2007.

“North Highland will recognize return on investment on Nintex Workflow 2007 just on the on-boarding project alone,” remarked Allen Brewer, IS Business Strategy for North Highland. Brewer quickly added, “We have recognized the capabilities and have already started looking into other business processes that could be automated, including account password reset process and leveraging the majority of the affiliate on-boarding workflow to create a full-time employee on-boarding process, which is hugely attractive to the organization.”

The affiliate on-boarding process was made available to all 18 U.S. offices within a two month timeframe due to the efforts and commitment of Abel Solutions to meet North Highland’s tight timeframe. North Highland plans to introduce the solution across Highland Worldwide allowing them to leverage the gains that they have already made and get a greater return on investment.

www.northhighland.com

Partner Spotlight



ABEL SOLUTIONS INC

Abel Solutions employs innovative technology to increase the productivity of businesses by making the right information available to the right people at the right time. A Microsoft Gold Certified Partner for Information Worker and Custom Development Solutions, Abel Solutions is widely recognized for our SharePoint-based solutions, custom application development and innovative delivery methodology. Abel Solutions has been delivering custom solutions for businesses, state and local government and non-profit organizations since 1995.

T: +1(678) 393-1704

www.abelsolutions.com