To operate as a self-sufficient business unit, Shared Services must have:

- A strong understanding of the customer.
- KPIs that align with customer objectives.
- Good service level management (SLM).
- Capabilities beyond service silos.
- A good customer-provider dialogue.

When faced with the need to deliver on multiple conflicting objectives such as:

- Achieving cost reductions for the company as a whole.
- Providing more tailored, higher quality services to the different business units.

SP Ausnet is a major electricity distribution and transmission services provider with operations in Australia and overseas. With 1500 employees and annual revenue of $1 billion the organisation manages a $6.3 billion electricity and gas network servicing more than one million customers in south east Australia.

The Shared Services division at SP Ausnet is responsible for IT, fleet management and building services. With SP Ausnet growing primarily by acquisition, the Shared Services division is constantly being challenged to support a dynamic business.

Shared Services is typically run passively as a cost centre, not proactively as a business. Because of this, Shared Services struggle to provide what the business demands of it.

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**TRANSFORMING SHARED SERVICES**

**SP Ausnet** engaged Dowling Consulting – ASG Group’s consulting business to assess the division’s performance and lay the foundations for fulfilling the above objectives.

The program was delivered in two phases using Dowling’s Service Excellence methodology to:

1. Develop a Service Catalogue and SLM capability.
2. Implement a broad program of continuous improvement.

**SHARED SERVICES MATURITY ASSESSMENT AND HEAT MAP**

This heat map helped drive the program.
Phase One
The aim was to prepare Shared Services to become a self-sufficient business unit able to pursue continuous improvement.

UNDERSTANDING THE CUSTOMER
Dowling Consulting worked closely with SP Ausnet’s Shared Services General Manager and business to define, segment and profile customers. This information was then used to conduct customer satisfaction surveys.

ALIGNING METRICS WITH CUSTOMER OBJECTIVES
Insights from customer satisfaction surveys were used to re-design performance metrics and as a result, the metric portfolio is no longer just a directory of best-practice KPIs. Rather, it became a best practice approach designed to maximize customer satisfaction.

IMPLEMENTING GOOD SERVICE LEVEL MANAGEMENT
A comprehensive Service Catalogue was developed using a variety of consulting techniques and validation methods. Service Level Agreements (SLAs) and a suite of SLM processes were also defined to support the Service Catalogue. This provided the foundation for a broader program of continuous improvement.

Phase Two
To run as a business, Shared Services must go beyond service delivery. In SP Ausnet’s case, analysis showed the Shared Services division needed to build the following capabilities:

Dowling Consulting was engaged to assist in building these capabilities and to implement a broader program of continuous improvement. The aim of this second phase was to unlock the benefits from phase one. The continuous improvement program included the following streams:

IMPLEMENTING A SINGLE SERVICE DESK
Dowling Consulting assisted the Shared Services senior management team to create a vision of a single service desk that covered all services – IT and non-IT. Dowling also helped define the people, organisation structure, and enabling technology for the new service desk. This was done to facilitate delivery of the promises detailed in the service catalogue and SLAs.

IMPLEMENTING A DEMAND MANAGEMENT FUNCTION
The service desk provided a single pane of glass to the business for standardised requests but there was no channel for non-standard requests such as technology evaluations and innovation initiatives. A demand management function was defined to provide a single point of contact for all non-standard requests. This involved outlining the roles, performance measures and rules of engagement.

SELECTING AND IMPLEMENTING A SERVICE DESK PLATFORM TOOL
The Dowling Consulting team assisted in defining the business requirements and helped manage the evaluation of vendors for the service desk platform. Additionally Dowling set up a configuration management database (CMDB) that included all IT assets.

IMPLEMENTING KEY BUSINESS PROCESSES WITHIN SHARED SERVICES
Dowling staff helped business process owners to define key business processes and the supporting procedures and metrics for all IT and non-IT services. This required agreement from all process participants. Following approval, Dowling assisted in providing business support and training to facilitate the adoption of new business processes across a large and diverse workforce.

INTEGRATING IT AND NON-IT SERVICES
Dowling consultants supported the design, build and implementation of new services that were previously delivered and measured in silos but which had a common customer. For example, new starting employees who previously had to fill in multiple forms sequentially to arrange building access, comply with HR/payroll requirements and get access to IT applications were now able to use a single “New Starter” service that was accessible and tracked through a service desk. This reduced end-to-end cycle time on boarding cycle time significantly.

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Phase Two
To run as a business, Shared Services must go beyond service delivery. In SP Ausnet’s case, analysis showed the Shared Services division needed to build the following capabilities:

“NEW” CAPABILITY 
Planning and Organisation
- Business planning for the Shared Services Organisation
- Human Resource Management
- Quality Assurance
- Financial Management

Performance Management
- Develop and gain agreement on Shared Services Organisation Charter
- Define and maintain Balanced Scorecard for IT Business Unit
- Conduct regular surveys to collect metrics for Balanced Scorecard
- Define Continuous Improvement Process for the IT Business Unit

Policy and Compliance
- Manage and monitor compliance to corporate OH&S Policies
- Measure and manage IT risks for business assets
- Manage and monitor compliance with regulatory requirements

For further information about our capabilities please visit www.asggroup.com.au or contact your local ASG Group office: