HFS

Learn how Infosys helped Conagra deploy a Minimum Lovable Product (MLP)

For many enterprises, ServiceNow has become an integral business platform—a cornerstone of their technology stack. The tool is usually part of a broader digital transformation program, and leaders often find themselves caught between implementing and scaling the platform rapidly and extracting the most business value possible. For Infosys and Conagra, a leading American packaged foods company, this meant breaking all deployment speed records in a race to implement the solution, but they followed a strategic roadmap that ensured a "minimum lovable product" (MLP). Their success shows that with the right services partnership in place, there's little that can get in the way of ambitious requirements.

The project started when Conagra recognized that its existing solutions were no longer fit for purpose; the firm picked ServiceNow to align with Conagra's broader modernization program. But here's the catch: Conagra needed the platform in place as soon as possible. First, its incumbent solution was falling out of support. Second, the new platform would have a major impact on the organization, so Conagra needed to spin it up as speedily as possible—within 13 days.

Conagra selected Infosys for this ambitious project because the two companies were already partners delivering managed services and support. Alongside Infosys' well-known ServiceNow services capabilities, Conagra could lean into service management professionals already working in the Conagra environment, ensuring Infosys became the partner of choice for the engagement. Those capabilities would become part of Infosys' newly established Cobalt business unit, which unifies all cloud assets to more effectively support clients on their migration projects.

With just a 13-day runway, Infosys and Conagra partnered up to deliver a minimum lovable product

Of course, with a tight timeframe comes a tight roadmap. Conagra and Infosys worked together to build a roadmap that would create their version of an MVP—a minimum lovable product. According to Andy Xydakis, Vice President of IT at Conagra, the approach was simple: they weren't going to disrupt their business users, and they would deliver the most value in the shortest amount of time by carefully plotting out the implementation roadmap starting with the most important business applications.

"We're going leverage standard out-of-the-box capabilities as quickly as we can, and then prioritize the work based on the value it brings to the business."

Andy Xydakis, Vice President, IT, Conagra

Pulling in stakeholders and specialists from across both Infosys and Conagra was the next vital step. This step became increasingly important when the unpredictable

happened—a global pandemic brought everything around the world to a standstill. However, with a team already well accustomed to collaborating, the route to keeping the ambitious project on schedule was simple. A team remained on the existing service management toolset to ensure minimal business interruption, while another team worked directly on the deployment.

According to Andy, Conagra had already enacted its existing IT estate and business continuity plans. Most people were already working on laptops, and VPNs were already set up to handle circumstances like the COVID-19 pandemic. The move for both project teams to work from home was seamless. A global pandemic couldn't slow the project down, even though its roadmap required core ITSM processes and other key business applications on the ServiceNow platform to go live in less than two weeks. Andy advised that despite the widespread global disruption, the "project was not impacted, and neither was the roadmap for how we implemented the platform."

Even with a global pandemic in the way, the ServiceNow implementation stayed on schedule, thanks to a highly collaborative partnership

Andy attributes the project's success to Conagra and Infosys bringing the right resources to the engagement from the start and employing a hybrid sourcing model that effectively leveraged onshore and offshore resources to deliver the right results. This model meant the team could continue working effectively through COVID-19, with the team building out over a hundred ServiceNow catalogs to get things done quickly and efficiently.

"We had a real commitment from the team and Infosys to getting things done."

Andy Xydakis, Vice President, IT, Conagra

According to the Infosys team, Conagra's support and collaborative approach to the engagement were instrumental in both thriving through the unprecedented conditions and pulling off a major ServiceNow implementation in record timing. From the start, they recognized that this project was a mammoth undertaking, unlike any they'd attempted before. Conagra's approach to this challenge was to bring the right technical expertise and to work with the Infosys team it already partnered with to develop a framework and roadmap that could bring the most business value in the shortest possible time. Conagra supported this by helping Infosys navigate the organization and ensure they had involved right stakeholders and decision makers in every stage of the engagement. According to Infosys, Conagra's mature organizational change management capabilities provided a mature and proactive mechanism to move this rapid project forward.

Both Infosys and Conagra realized the implementation's benefits—aside from the immediate need to replace a legacy toolset. Infosys had managed services teams using a modernized toolset, and Conagra had a foundational building block of a broader transformation program in place. With core processes implemented, Andy advises the roadmap now extends to other crucial business applications, such as software asset management, process mapping, and operational intelligence, which the team will continue working on over the next three to five months.

"We wouldn't change anything—we're very happy with what the team achieved in challenging circumstances."

Andy Xydakis, Vice President, IT, Conagra

The team also noticed some more surprising benefits from the engagement. Both companies now have more visibility across different systems, and thanks to a platform that's easy to integrate, they have oversight of the health of more of their tech estate, enabling them to be more proactive and make data-fueled decisions. There is also a bustling ecosystem using the ServiceNow toolset, which enables both Conagra and Infosys to bring in different tools and applications. Further, with a new self-service function, Conagra can offer more intuitive and efficient IT procurement processes, making it much easier for the team to get things done.

The Bottom Line: With an already tight timeline and disrupted by a global pandemic, having a trusted partner to rely on its key to success.

Infosys ServiceNow leaders, understandably, first balked at the prospect of completing such a mammoth engagement in such a short time frame. However, they rose to the challenge and brought in the right blend of technical skills and on-the-ground talent to achieve a previously unheard-of timeline. Even a global pandemic forcing professionals to work from home didn't hamper the ambitious project's completion. From the Conagra executives' perspective, completing the project on schedule provided considerable business value, and it is just the starting point of an ongoing engagement to add more applications and capabilities on top of the ServiceNow platform. With the right partners and approach in place, even the tightest timelines in the most challenging circumstances can't get in the way.

HFS Research author

Tom Reuner | Senior Vice President - Research

Tom Reuner is Senior Vice President, IT Services at HFS. Tom is responsible for driving the HFS research agenda for IT Services including the change agents of Intelligent Automation and AI. A central theme of his research is the increasing link between technological evolution and evolution in the delivery of business processes. In particular, he will focus on the Future of Work and the testing of innovation.

Prior to HfS, Tom worked as Head of Strategy at Arago. His deep understanding of the market dynamics comes from having held senior positions at analyst firms including Gartner, IDC and Ovum where his responsibilities ranged from research and consulting to business development.

2020 DEFINING BUSINESS OPERATIONS IN THE NEXT DECADE

About HFS Research: Defining future business operations

The HFS mission is to provide visionary insight into major innovations impacting business operations, including: automation, artificial intelligence, blockchain, Internet of things, digital business models, and smart analytics.

HFS defines and visualizes the future of business operations across key industries with our Digital OneOffice™ Framework.

HFS influences the strategies of enterprise customers to help them develop OneOffice backbones to be competitive and to partner with capable services providers, technology suppliers, and third-party advisors.

Read more about HFS and our initiatives on www.HFSresearch.com or follow @HFSResearch.

HFS