

AWARD WINNING DELIVERY PROGRAMME

SECURING THE UK'S EXTENDED BORDERS TO UNDERPIN THE ECONOMY AND IMPROVE CROSS-BORDER SECURITY

Extract from CSC's MCA submission 2009



INGENIOUS

CSC implemented effective UK border control using biometric and identity management solutions.

PURPOSEFUL

CSC delivered the solution within 10 months by applying lessons learnt from implementing visa systems in other geographies.

PASSIONATE

CSC deployed the solution across many countries whilst overcoming cultural and legal challenges.

"We're delighted that our ambitious plan has been met and that the contract and the governance structure is working well. More importantly the partnership with CSC has developed in a way which means that we're working together effectively and solving issues as they occur."

Geoff Lockwood,
Programme Manager,
UK Border Agency

From destinations as diverse as Taipei, Islamabad, Beijing, Jamaica, Mumbai and Lagos, people want to travel to the UK. The country processed 2.75 million visa applications in 2006-07, up 8% on the previous year. Income from visa fees was over £190 million with more than 2,300 people operating the overseas network.

The UK Border Agency is tasked with processing these applications, a critical role in allowing skilled workers to come in to the country while protecting the nation's borders against terrorism, organised crime and influx of illegal immigrants.

THE CLIENT'S CHALLENGE

The UK continues to be an important destination for trade, travel and investment. Pressures caused by an accelerating demand for visas have been exacerbated by problems associated with global immigration and the ever-present threat of international terrorism. As a result the government announced it needed to strengthen border control by ensuring that all visa applicants gave their biometrics.

With an 8% percent growth in applications in just one year, the need for a more efficient and robust visa system was fundamental for the UK Border Agency. To meet the needs of all applicants the UK Border Agency needed a robust border control process that enabled applications to be made over the web, by post, in person or via an agent in the country of origin.

In order to meet these challenges the UK Border Agency decided to seek long-term commercial partners. While the commitment to meeting the biometrics roll-out was fundamental, the agency wanted to work with a couple of major players who could help achieve longer-term aims of introducing online applications and exploiting additional commercial opportunities.

Without implementing biometrics it would be impossible for the UK Border Agency to meet government targets and transform the way visa applications are processed in the UK. The use of biometrics will strengthen UK borders as well as enable more applications to be processed quickly.

To achieve these goals, the UK Border Agency required CSC to implement a single UK visa solution, incorporating advanced biometrics and identity management, within ambitious timescales.

CSC SOLUTION

Key to the success of the project was CSC's ability to apply lessons learnt from implementing visa systems in Europe and the United States. This experience enabled CSC to develop suitable processes during the nine month bid approval process in order to advise the UK Border Agency. Based on the success of their consulting early on in the bid process, CSC was empowered to find suitable premises, recruit staff and determine optimum process flow across each facility.

The commission spanned three regions – the Americas, Europe, the Middle East and North Africa. Each region differs vastly and this project was a great example of CSC's ability to address the business, cultural and technological issues in a broad range of countries. John Aspinall, responsible for delivering the project comments, "Not only were we on a very steep learning curve, we also found that aspects of the model that worked well in Europe didn't necessarily work as well in the Middle East".



Winner,
MCA Management Awards,
International category



Shortlisted,
Best Practice
Outsourcing in 2008



After a rigorous selection process, the UK Border Agency signed a five-year BPO agreement with CSC in February 2007 to run part of its global operations. A new service was launched – under the CSC-owned brand, ‘WorldBridge’ – which provides UK visa applicants with visa and immigration customer services, information and assistance.



Under the WorldBridge banner, CSC established 30 Visa Application Centres (VACs) in 14 countries throughout Europe, the Americas, North Africa and the Middle East. It provides information services through websites, email and multilingual call centres to an additional 87 countries.



The agreement also included the implementation and management of the secure biometrics-based visa application solution to the 30 VACs by 2008 – within just 10 months.

CSC was chosen for this project because the UK Border Agency was confident they had the skills and resources to roll-out the programme globally. CSC demonstrated an understanding of client challenges in the

bid process and is renowned for adopting a flexible and collaborative approach, fundamental to the success of this project.

BUSINESS RESULTS

The ambitious rollout plan of secure biometrics collection to Visa Application Centres around the world has been a huge success. The overall project was completed three months ahead of schedule and under budget. The UK Border Agency has successfully transitioned to new ways of working and now has a single information record of each application, which has significantly enhanced control over national borders.

By outsourcing time consuming administrative functions to CSC, the UK Border Agency can devote more time to analysing the data it receives so it can make better, more informed decisions.

Globally, 3.2 million biometrics have been enrolled, over 20,000 visa applicants connected to earlier immigration cases and asylum requests have been identified, and over 4,420 cases of identity swapping have been detected.

Visa applicants receive a far better service and can apply online or by phone. They are also experiencing significant reductions in processing time with 66% of visa applications now processed within 24 hours.

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