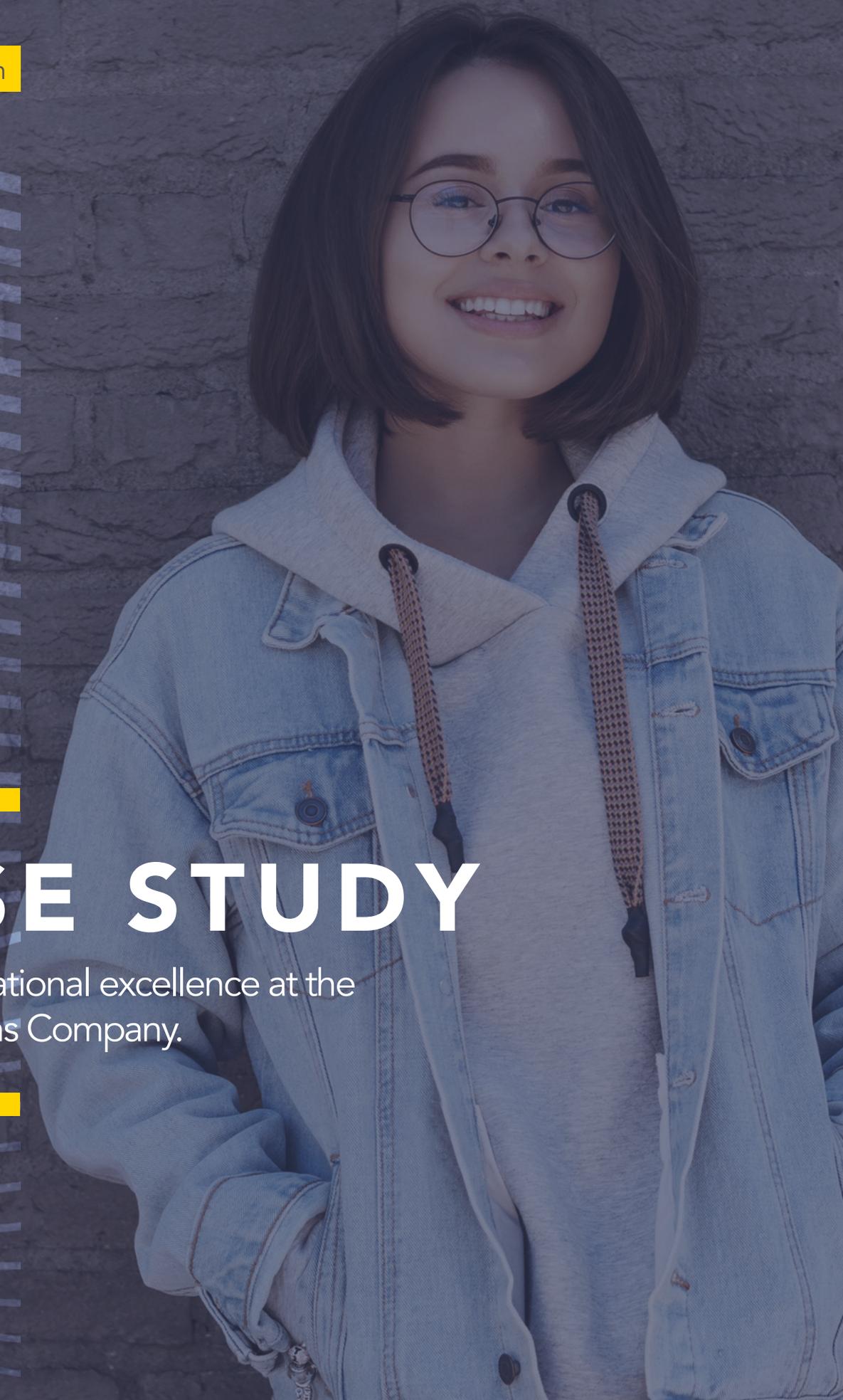




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CASE STUDY

Driving operational excellence at the Student Loans Company.



INTRODUCTION

The Student Loans Company (SLC) is a non-departmental public body company in the United Kingdom that provides student loans. The organisation is owned and funded by the UK government and the devolved administrations in Scotland, Wales and North Ireland.

Student Loans is responsible for both providing loans to students and collecting loan repayments alongside HM Revenue and Customs. With offices in Glasgow, Darlington and Llandudno the organisation has 3,300 employees; 8 million customers and a loan book of over £135bn.



KEY REQUIREMENTS

In 2015 we engaged with the Student Loans team to discuss the possibility of an OPX pilot solution, for a number of their operational areas. Prior to our engagement the Workflow Management Team had managed much of the activity which 'flowed' through the operational heart of the organisation via manual spreadsheets and other end user developed applications (basic databases, worksheets etc). Work was centrally managed and distributed via a controlling team using a series of simple allocation rules to team leaders, usually on a daily basis.

Working in this way resulted in missed operational efficiencies; numerous errors; difficulties in moving and balancing resource and an increased operational risk profile. It also inhibited the growth of the team, as and when they needed to respond to peaks and troughs in demand.

Such an approach also impacted the end-to-end experience that the organisation provided the customer (typically the UK or Overseas Student). Customer touchpoints were typically in infrequent bursts, and inbound contact was often made to check on the progress of applications. Therefore visibility to parts of the journey which were problematic, and an approach to better managing the experience of the customers was at the forefront of Student Loans' mind.

OUR SOLUTION

Scoping a pilot for rapid deployment and in-year benefits.

OPX was reviewed for pilot suitability alongside a number of workflow management and workforce management providers. The OPX solution was selected for its flexibility and fit to the business, and our ability to deploy the platform rapidly.

A pilot area of the business was selected. The pilot area chosen was Grants for Dependents (GFD). GFD was selected as it was regarded as providing a level of processing complexity that would provide good metrics to allow for a direct comparison around productivity and effectiveness.

The initial pilot scope allowed OPX to:

- Deploy alongside existing platforms, such as Documentum and their core processing platform, LA Portal.
- Provide automated skills-based routing.
- Automate creation in appropriate OPX queues.
- Provide rich Operational Insight through reports and dashboards.

Impacted teams were engaged, to ensure they were bought in and supported the changes to be made.

MOBILISING TO DELIVER

From idea to delivery, in just four weeks.

A pilot plan was agreed, which allowed our team to work with key stakeholders to:

- Analyse processes and current MI in use
- Prepare a technical environment
- Deploy the platform
- Train an initial user group
- Prepare a post go-live support model

Core functionality for an initial rollout was agreed via a series of initial working sessions with key stakeholders, such as Ops Managers, Team Managers, Assessors and Business Analysts. The focus of these sessions was to understand how the business worked today, and where the greatest impact on the business could be made, for the benefit of not only the team but the wider business.

Key considerations prior to rollout included ensuring that the right behavioural change took place for team leaders and ops managers, and that other parts of the organisation (such as technology; procurement; HR etc.) were bought into the pilot.



ROLL OUT & RESULTS

| Initial deployment and scaling up

Within four weeks, the deployment teams had rolled the pilot out to 150 users of the Grants for Dependents business area.

This pilot was a roaring success and, after further work with the Student Loans project teams, the pilot scope was extended into areas such as Core Processing and the DSA teams (supporting students with additional and often individually specific needs).

As well as including more users, this widened the functionality to meet increasing levels of operational complexity.

| New support models

Tony Deans, Head of Transformation, said

“The OPX team treats all of our issues as high priority and have never failed to deliver to keep the business running”.

Collaboration is king in the OPX Practice, with weekly reviews during mobilisation, monthly catchups during the bedding-in period and annual user groups to give mature clients a voice in the direction that their product is going in.

| Powerful new ways of working

The OPX platform has now empowered all 1,800 employees within Processing & Repayments (more than half of the business) to work smarter, more efficiently and to be more customer aware.

Work flows through Student Loans logically and is automatically directed to those best placed to deal with it. Working with OPX, Student Loans processes 1.74m applications per year across 220 different streams and has adopted modern and flexible practices.

“OPX has completely transformed the way we process work, how we report against SLAs and the productivity and efficiency gains have been more than we had hoped for.”

Mark Cassidy
Head of Operations | Student Loans Company

ABOUT US

Founded in 2008, we have more than 35 years of experience in the field; we know the workforce optimisation space like the back of our hands.

The nucleus of the Corporate Modelling development team, based in Glasgow, UK and has been working together for over 15 years providing transformational software solutions to solve key business operations efficiency problems.

OPX is the result of over 200 man years of business focused enterprise software development and was conceived to provide a broad, functional, cost effective and yet easy to implement solution to aid the digital transformation of back office operations.

Every customer is unique. That's why we customise our OPX platform to fit every customer's needs precisely. Our Rapid Deployment Method (RDM) takes clients through the five steps of an OPX implementation in around 30 days.

OPX is proven to increase productivity and utilisation; reduce costs; improve cycle times and enhance customer experience.



For more information about OPX,
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