

NEC and Santos

have the energy for continuous improvement



Customer

As one of Australia’s leading gas producers, Santos Ltd supplies customers throughout Australia and Asia. It is listed on the Australian Securities Exchange (ASX:STO) and, with a total market capitalisation of approximately \$14 billion, is one of Australia’s Top 30 companies. Santos has over 3,000 employees working across its operations in Australia and Asia.

Challenges

Santos was looking to consolidate functional support and database administration, primarily for its Oracle e-Business environment, into a single source of expertise. Provision of additional technical support services as and when required, was also a consideration.

An internally operated Service Centre provided Level 1 assistance for the Oracle application platform’s 4,000 users across Santos’ human capital management, supply chain, financials and asset management functionality. Separate Level 2 functional support and database administration (DBA) was the responsibility of two external vendors whose contracts were expiring.

Mahree Waldeck, Manager Corporate & Commercial IS, Information Systems at Santos Limited, said that crucial to the tender was the successful bidder’s “ability to extend its service offering to build a deep understanding of our technology and provide a path of continuous improvement. Every proposed innovation and process must be cost effective and deliver value to us.”

Customer

- Santos Ltd

Industry

- Resources

Challenges

- Support for Oracle e-Business environment
- Expertise to supply a program of continuous improvement for the service and applications

Solution

- NEC Managed Services
- Recruitment of ‘Santos-ready’ onsite support team
- Build broader NEC talent pool in both Adelaide and Australia-wide for on-demand resourcing

Results

- Successful transition
- Active continuous improvement program
- Responsive, local service partnering seamlessly with Santos IS staff to deliver results
- Improved efficiencies and implementation of best practices
- Access to permanent and ad hoc talent pool

The Solution

Before NEC could undertake its successful transition to the new support regime, it had to quickly build a resourcing capability to not only replace existing manpower but also for the extra scope of the contract.

NEC recognised the value of retaining some of the incumbent contractors to smooth the migration to its operation of the complete set of services.

Waldeck said: “NEC was very committed to placing the right people, to ensure the right result and meet the time-frames, rather than putting the dollar first.”

There are three dimensions to this commitment by NEC. A team of 10 FTE consultants are onsite at Santos to undertake the core contract work, a group that has been expanded by a further 1 FTE into technical support for Santos’ Microsoft based applications.

Additionally, Santos has access to NEC consulting services for ad hoc requirements and project delivery which, Waldeck says, benefits the company because: “NEC is able to supplement our skills across the broad Information Systems. This frees up Santos people, improves speed of delivery and fills short term gaps in our resourcing.”

With the transition of the full functional, technical and database administration services completed in six months, NEC and Santos were able to begin working together on a program of continuous improvement for the service.

Under the contract, every six months NEC is required to formally table value-add ideas.

From NEC’s first review, four recommendations were made: (1) automating manual tasks, such as user access and accounts within Oracle, to improve administration; (2) creating a resolution self-service capability for users to reduce calls to the service centre; (3) increased monitoring and health checks by DBAs to reduce downtime; and (4) improved cloning and patching mechanisms in the DBA environment to reduce time taken.

“This active involvement in improvement is outside the scope of standard managed services. It requires a partnership that looks to the future,” Waldeck said.

The Results

Waldeck said: “Key, in terms of working with NEC, was our absolute requirement for a vendor with a strong, committed presence on the ground at our headquarters in Adelaide.

“NEC not only has continued to build a permanent talent pool in South Australia, but is also growing its Oracle skillset throughout Australia which we can draw on.”

Outside the scope of the contract, Santos is leveraging expertise in NEC’s Brisbane office to “help us with a CRM system initiative. This will fold back into our NEC Adelaide support team, once delivered,” Waldeck said.

The now well-established relationship between NEC and Santos has reduced costs and is leading to benefits for both organisations. With proof of capability, NEC has expanded beyond managed services to project delivery services: it is now a supplier across Oracle and Microsoft technologies. NEC has also provided services across the broader Information Systems.

“I’m absolutely happy with the result,” Waldeck said.

“NEC’s focus is on getting the result right for its customers. They are truly responsive and flexible, attributes that are quite difficult to find.”

Mahree Waldeck

Manager Corporate & Commercial IS, Information Systems, Santos Limited

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