



## The Client

Multi-site hotel chain geographically dispersed across the United Kingdom. In a rapidly growing market the organization struggled to sustain market share as sales were flat and operating costs spiraled out of control. Investment had recently been made in sales but nothing had seriously been done to get a handle on cost.

## The Challenge

Significantly reduce the operating costs of the business, continue to increase its sales capability and deliver a better customer experience. The entire executive team was at risk if the business did not quickly become more profitable. The CEO's plan was to move all central customer support on property, without adding any headcount in the hotel. Many thought he was nuts.

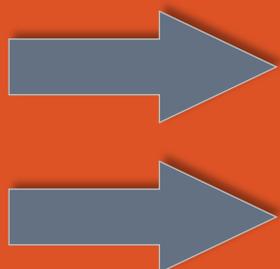
## The Solution

He was far from nuts: We completed the project in 14 weeks start-to-finish. Needless to say we moved very fast. There were 30+ hotels affected by the change. The central reservation office had over 160 staff manning it, supporting calls, emails, faxes and chat – for individuals, groups, meetings and events. Our role as program manager was to oversee all aspects of the project including: preparing the hotels for the incoming work (staffing models, needs assessment, training, office builds), developing and deploying required technologies (ACD, email/chat solutions, system rights), transitioning the work and decommissioning the central office.

Once we agreed on a network-level ACD solution, designed it and built it (three weeks), we piloted the decentralized model in three hotels: a large, medium and small. For four weeks we ran the pilot to gain learnings related to process, technology, staffing, training, customer experience, quality and service. Twice daily throughout the pilot we held operations calls to understand what was working/not. On these calls was the entire design team consisting of the executive sponsor, IT, HR, hotel staff and central res. The pilot and daily calls proved critical to the success of the project, as issues were raised and resolved – many times that same day.

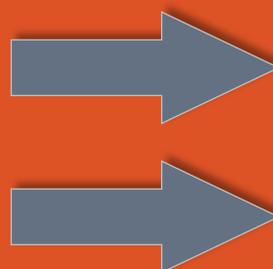
During the pilot we were busy training the other hotels, which were being cut over using a phased approach. For each cutover, we placed a member of the design team on property to ensure things went as planned. As hotels came online in phases we held twice daily calls with them to address issues and questions. Pilot representatives attended these calls as well, which proved useful. Daily reporting was put in place from day one to make sure our service, cost and quality throughout the cutover was equal to or better than before. At the end of the 14 weeks, all customer support functions had been moved on property without adding staff. What many in the company saw as impossible, we delivered in three months, much to the CEO's delight.

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## Results

