

BENCHMARKING CASE STUDY

An Assignment for a UK Central Government Department

Introduction and background to the assignment



Our client was required to carry out a benchmarking exercise of its activities under a Central Government programme - 'Competing for Quality' - and commissioned Touchstone Renard to carry this out.

Responsible for ensuring that certain UK businesses were registered for payment of tax, our client operated a Registration & Deregistration service, incorporating 'sub-service' processes, covering: registration for tax; amendments to registration particulars; registration cancellations; claims for tax refunds post-deregistration; and general enquiries and support to businesses.

The Department wished to benchmark these processes with the key aim of obtaining high level comparative financial information.

Our task

Before undertaking the main benchmarking task, we were required to achieve a detailed understanding of our client's main registration and deregistration processes.

It was then necessary to identify one or more potential benchmark partners in the public or private sectors with similar processes, capable of providing 'cost per transaction' data, such that it provided a valid comparison. We would then be in a position to carry out the key exercise and report our findings.

How we went about it

We selected a small team of consultants who had a track record in benchmarking work and excellent communication skills. A process map for each of the 'sub-services' was produced by observing and interviewing managers and other staff and reviewing data at one of our client's Registration and Deregistration centres.

In identifying potential partner organisations with similar processes, it was, of course, necessary to investigate their activities to a certain degree prior to selection to decide whether their work was of a sufficiently similar nature to produce valid comparisons. It was eventually decided to focus more heavily on public sector participants, although we did have in-depth discussions with a major group of companies with over 50 UK operating divisions.

In discussions with our client, from a list of eight potential partners, we finally selected another Central Government Department that dealt with other types of taxation and the agency of a third Government Department, dealing with transport related processes.

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Process maps for the services of the two partners were created following a series of visits, interviews, observations, data gathering sessions and desk studies. One partner in particular operated a range of registration processes that were more complex than those of our client but it was still possible to extract sufficient elements of the work for benchmarking purposes to deliver meaningful comparisons.

We had previously recommended to our client that partners be selected with significant performance or business improvement objectives already embedded into their processes. Our analysis would then not only produce the specific cost comparisons that our client required but also possible suggestions for revisions to our client's processes to achieve greater efficiencies.

In producing the detailed 'cost per unit' structures for the key benchmark activities, our consultants were assisted throughout by the enthusiasm and helpful approach of both partner organisations.

What we achieved

Having analysed and compared the data obtained, we prepared a detailed final report, providing our client with a range of highly significant and relevant information that would be influential in helping to determine future plans and strategies.

In particular, our client was able to make a well informed decision to invest in updated IT and we were also pleased when the Registration and Deregistration service continued to benchmark on a regular basis with one of its new partners.

Please contact us



Touchstone Renard has a strong team of highly skilled consultants with a wealth of experience in the public and private sectors.

If you would like to receive further details of our capabilities or you would welcome a discussion on how Touchstone Renard can assist with solutions for your organisation, please contact Phil Austin, Managing Director.

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