



Accenture taps ServiceNow Inspire to “consumerize” its approval process

It’s assumed that certain business processes are just going to be painful. For example, securing approvals for new projects and funding requests is likely to be a time-consuming, multi-stage process involving multiple people and disparate systems.

Accenture, the global professional services firm, refused to accept this assumption and started looking for better ideas. The company turned to ServiceNow Inspire, an executive advisory team composed of former customers, industry strategists, and enterprise architects, for assistance in transforming its approval process from a necessary function into a great experience.

The result: in just two months, ServiceNow Inspire and Accenture partnered to create a POC (proof-of-concept) for a transformative mobile service experience. The new streamlined approval process will not only make employees more productive via a simple, intuitive user interface, it will also serve as a model for ideation and exploring the art of the possible in business service delivery.

Improving the employee experience

Accenture has always been highly motivated to excel at internal business services. As a Fortune 500 Global Leader with 14 consecutive years on Fortune’s World’s Most Admired Companies list, the \$33 billion consulting firm strives to provide its clients with showcase examples of how to “do it right.”

However, common business processes and approvals of all kinds were in need of upgrades and extended IT support. In addition to addressing its IT service modernization needs, the company was rapidly expanding, as well as involved in numerous acquisitions, resulting in the need to consolidate, standardize, and improve service management activities across the enterprise. This situation led internal IT to rethink its approach, especially as Accenture pushed to become a fully digital business.

Led by CIO Andrew Wilson and his team, Accenture launched an initiative focused on transforming the approval processes across systems. “We hire a large number of millennials and we are very conscious of the notion of consumerization in the enterprise. We wanted our employee experience to reflect this, making it imperative that we expand our digital-centric way of working across the business and delivering



Highlights

Securing approvals for new projects and funding requests can be a time-consuming process, involving multiple parties and systems. For a better experience, Accenture enlisted ServiceNow Inspire for help in transforming its approval process into a great experience. In only two months, the partnership created a proof-of-concept for a transformative mobile service experience.

Headquarters

Dublin, Ireland

Geographies

Global

Business

Professional services

Challenges

- Productivity challenges due to time-consuming approval process
- Company growth demanded newer, more scalable platforms and mobile capabilities
- The experience did not reflect the desired company culture

Solutions

The Now Platform®

Results

- From workshop to “wow” in two months
- With a few clicks, managers could see each request; drill down into specifics; see acknowledgements and compliance requirements; and approve or deny the funding.

to clients," said Andrew. "Our business is becoming more of a social enterprise every day, making it important that we incorporate and build on the collaborative capabilities our employees rely on to communicate within their personal lives."

Accenture called in ServiceNow Inspire to provide guidance and fresh ideas about improving the user experience for key business services.

Making it real

The Inspire team held an introductory workshop with Andrew and his staff to discuss the vision and business objectives. At that initial meeting, the key stakeholders discussed what a next-generation universal approval experience might look like. They decided that it should:

- Be easy
- Offer an intuitive interface that unifies and simplifies all the various steps involved in this complex process
- Enable fast performance
- Have single log-in access to multiple services

"We wanted to bring the action to the end user rather than make the end user go find it," said Tom Parisi, a managing director in Accenture's CIO Organization. "We wanted to bring together multiple processes and platforms in a single location for employees so they can get the approvals they needed on their own terms, in their own timeframes."

Accenture wanted to improve and expedite the entire approval cycle so that executives could be more productive and reduce time on administrative tasks, but it also wanted to showcase the business value of IT by demonstrating its ability to innovate and accelerate a core business function.

"The Inspire engagement was all about exploring the art of the possible," said Tom. "As part of that, we were looking to see what we could do with the Now Platform beyond its core service management capabilities, which we were installing. We wanted to see what was possible functionally—exploring new ways to make applications 'pop' and create a great experience; and how ServiceNow could create new opportunities to present and package new capabilities."

From workshop to "wow" in two months

For the two months following the workshop, Inspire and Accenture worked together on the business process and functional design, which Inspire built into a POC directly on the ServiceNow platform. The team then met with Accenture stakeholders to present its recommendations and a transformation roadmap.

The Inspire team began with a demonstration of the POC developed in collaboration with the Accenture team and ServiceNow Inspire Labs, a team of user experience researchers, designers, and developers who create user experiences aligned to each client's business vision.

The POC showed how a single mobile app could provide a universal approval process, integrating all the discrete tasks needed for sign-off into one amazingly simple interface. With a few clicks, managers could see each request; drill down into specifics; see acknowledgements and compliance requirements; and approve or deny the funding.



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– Andrew Wilson, CIO, Accenture

"This innovative tool greatly expands the use of our technology," said Tom. "The POC was a lot more than wireframes. It brought the vision alive. It started with the end in mind—it allowed services to suggest what the user experiences next. To see that at the beginning of the relationship rather than at the end, allowed us to see the art of the possible. And it illustrated that we have a very healthy teaming relationship."

Direct and immediate business value

Accenture found the proposed solution illustrated new ways to design IT while also delivering change and enablement at a rate and pace right for the business. The approach supported Accenture's evolving business, an opportunity to increase employee satisfaction, and an overall agile way to enhance the partnership between IT and the business—proof positive that digital transformation initiatives could deliver direct and immediate business value.

Just as importantly, this POC enabled clear, transformative dialogue between IT and business executives. The power of the visualization helped reinforce the value drivers and design principles, which elevated the focus from only on approvals to ways to address cross-functional employee productivity. The resulting innovation was a transformation IT pattern that focuses on how to better package multiple services to the end user. After agreeing to a roadmap, Accenture moved forward with deployment.

"We were inspired together, and we are innovating together," said Andrew. "We worked together to deliver change and enablement at a rate and pace that's right for the business being served. Together we took advantage of emerging technologies, thought about the process in a different way; moving away from a one-size-fits-all approach and accelerating our use of the next generation of technology."



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