



Project Management as a Service: *Infoblox Case Study*

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January 30, 2023

Case Study Abstract

Infoblox presents a compelling case study for the use of Project Management Outsourcing to achieve the business objectives of its Professional Services (PS) organization.

In 2019, Infoblox's PS management team was faced with numerous existing and upcoming challenges and were conscious that addressing those challenges required the creation of a formal Project Management Office (PMO) complete with a team of highly skilled PM resources. Notably Infoblox management was facing two main problems:

- (1) They had an immediate and urgent need for skilled PM resources for their Professional Services (PS) organization
- (2) They were hindered by internal constraints, and did not have adequate resources readily available from internal pools

As a result, Infoblox elected to subcontract its PM needs to an external partner.

In this paper, we focus on the Project Management solutions employed by Infoblox and its external PM solutions partner (hereafter referred to as 'PM Partner'). We breakdown each challenge and highlight the selected services* furnished by the PM Partner. We also explore the criteria used to select the PM Partner and conclude with the benefits realized by Infoblox.

**For reference, these services are defined and detailed separately in Grindyzer's whitepaper "PM-as-a-Service".*

Case Study: Infoblox

The Company

- ❑ Founded in 1999, Infoblox is headquartered in Santa Clara, California with over 1000 employees
- ❑ Infoblox provides Enterprise-grade DNS, DHCP, and IP address management, Network Insight, Reporting and Analytics, DNS Firewall, and Advanced DNS Protection. As a recognized industry leader, Infoblox delivers the next level network experience with its Secure Cloud-Managed Network Services to 70% of Fortune 500 companies. Infoblox has over 8000 customers in wide ranging industries across the globe.
- ❑ Infoblox's mission: Dramatically simplify complex distributed networking and security by delivering modern, cloud-first networking and security services that automate and streamline NetOps, SecOps, DevOps and user experiences

Case Study: Infoblox

The Challenges:

- 1. Day-to-Day PM Operations:** Infoblox's Professional Services (PS) did not maintain a formal PM team and instead Infoblox's PS managers were often forced to improvise and assume the role of a "project manager" in an ad hoc fashion. PS managers lacked the bandwidth to assume day-to-day PM function for hundreds of customer engagements whilst continuing to adequately perform their core responsibilities of managing the PS organization.
- 2. Project Delivery Framework:** The rapid growth in Infoblox's PS business had necessitated a formal Project Delivery Framework (PDF) and structured project management controls. The absence of a PDF and inconsistent project execution yielded sub-optimal KPIs: project duration and closure, financial performance and margin contribution, as well as CSAT scores.
- 3. Tech Refresh Cycle:** Infoblox's Professional Services had an immediate and potentially short-term resource need for a large-scale customer Tech Refresh Program. This program had the goal of refreshing all existing 8000 customers to the latest hardware and software platform versions. However, Infoblox's PS management was cognizant of the organization's PM resource constraints, inconsistent project execution, and lack of KPI monitoring for such a large and important undertaking. Furthermore, Infoblox's PS managers recognized that once the Tech Refresh Program was completed, they may not need to keep the entire team of project managers on staff.
- 4. Transition to SAAS:** Infoblox's medium term goal was to make the strategic transformation from perpetual license to a SaaS revenue model. Infoblox set an aggressive timeline to launch their SaaS-based network security product. As part of this transition to SaaS, Infoblox's PS Management needed to develop the PDF for this initiative as well as train key stakeholders tasked to quickly and successfully rollout their SaaS solution to new and existing customers.

Solution: Challenge #1

Challenge #1:

Infoblox PS did not maintain a formal PM team. PS managers assumed the PM role in an ad hoc capacity, and lacked the bandwidth to effectively manage hundreds of customer engagements.

Selected Solution:

Outsource PM Professional Services to a PM Partner**

- ❑ Infoblox understood that building and training an inhouse team of experienced PMs would require months and the company was not afforded the time nor budget for such an undertaking. Instead Infoblox's management chose to engage with a third-party PM Partner to:
 - Quickly deploy a seasoned team of project managers, with the requisite experience and knowledge in IT transformation programs.
 - Ensure the externally-sourced PM team are responsive, laser focused on CSAT, with the ability to quickly integrate with existing Infoblox PS systems and operations to work alongside Infoblox's PS team.
 - Provide a turnkey solution that included a Program Manager to oversee the day-to-day operations of all internal and external PM resources.
 - Assign a single point of interface towards Infoblox PS Management for PM function reporting, issues and escalations.

*** Refer to Grindyzer's whitepaper "PM-as-a-Service"; page 5 (PM Outsourcing Models: PM Professional Services)*

Solution: Challenge #2

Challenge #2 :

The absence of a PDF (Project Delivery Framework) and inconsistent project execution resulted in suboptimal project KPIs.

Selected Solution:

Establish a Project Delivery Framework **

- ❑ In order to successfully deliver on strategic initiatives, Infoblox's PS Management understood the need for structured project execution process including a clearly defined PDF.
- ❑ Implementation of a Project Delivery Framework would standardize Infoblox's PS project execution and improve upon current project delivery metrics.
- ❑ The chosen PM Partner collaborated with Infoblox's PS Management and PMO to roll out the following initiatives:
 - Define and implement a structured and repeatable PDF that best fit Infoblox's existing operations. This included establishing methodologies, best practices, templates, standards, as well as procedures for accounting audit and compliance.
 - Create and foster adoption of uniform and consistent project collateral including templates for Project Plans, Project Kick-offs, Project Communication, RAIDs, and Reporting.
 - Drive adoption of online tools such as Smartsheet and DocuSign to improve project status tracking, project monitoring, and automated reporting to senior management.
 - Create a PM Handbook to publish and formalize the PM Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and Processes across the organization.
 - Work with internal stakeholders to drive the-adoption of standardized PM processes defined in the PM Handbook.
 - Continuously monitor and oversee project processes and KPIs to ensure the PDF is understood and continuously adhered to.

*** Refer to Grindyzer's whitepaper "PM-as-a-Service"; page 4 (PM Outsourcing Models: Project Delivery Framework)*

Solution: Challenge #3

Challenge #3:

Infoblox PS had an immediate and short-term need for PM resources to refresh the HW and SW of its entire customer base. Moreover, it was unclear if all the PM resources would be required upon completion of the-refresh life cycle, and adversely impacting margins.

Selected Solution:

Subcontract PM Professional Services to an external PM Partner**

- ❑ Infoblox's PS management was mindful of the anticipated deluge in projects because of the technology refresh life cycle program. This program presented the following challenges:
 - PS Management were under time pressure to execute on the refresh program and did not have the bandwidth nor the budget to hire and train full-time permanent resources.
 - PS Management expected wide-ranging fluctuations in workload over the program's expected 2-year lifecycle, making resource management and loading very challenging.
 - Hiring and training a large and potentially under-utilized team would not be cost-effective, contributing negatively to the bottom line. Moreover, there was the likelihood management would have to contend with idle FTE resources at the program's completion which, coupled with the associated HR costs that come with redundant resources, would further worsen the cost impact.
- ❑ To address these challenges:
 - PS management determined that PM outsourcing was the best approach for this program's needs and tasked the PM partner with providing a scalable "Plug and Play" team of PMs. Since the PM partner was already embedded with Infoblox's operations, they were able to quickly deploy a team of PMs and begin execution of the program in a very short timeframe.
 - Outsourcing to a PM Partner afforded PS management the flexibility to scale up or down, depending on changes in workload, without the need to maintain a large and costly team of inhouse FTEs. Instead, this heavy burden is shifted to the PM Partner.
 - The PM Partner was also tasked with management and oversight of all PM resources. As such, the cost and overhead of maintaining, managing and training a team of PMs, on an ongoing basis, is also borne by the PM Partner.

*** Refer to Grindyzer's whitepaper "PM-as-a-Service"; page 5 (PM Outsourcing Models: PM Professional Services)*

Solution: Challenge #4

Challenge #4:

Fast-track deployment of SaaS program

Selected Solution:

PM Mentorship & Project Delivery Framework **

- ❑ Infoblox PS Management was tasked with the development of a customized Project Delivery Framework (PDF) for their strategically important SaaS initiative. As the PM Partner was already entrenched and familiar with Infoblox's PS operations, PS Management called on the PM Partner, as an extension of their current mandate, to assist with the development of this PDF.
- ❑ The PM Partner jointly collaborated with Infoblox's PS Management to develop and implement the following initiatives:
 - Work with internal stakeholders to define and implement a PDF specifically catered for the SaaS Program and expand on existing processes, procedures, and templates to match the program's unique needs.
 - Update the PM Handbook to reflect the new processes for the SaaS program.
 - Create and deliver SaaS specific training program to the PM team.
 - Closely monitor and oversee the controlled introduction of the SaaS program and make fine tune adjustments as needed.
 - Interface with PS Management to report on the SaaS program KPIs, issues and escalations.
- ❑ By leveraging the PM Partner's extensive experience through the PM Mentorship** service, Infoblox's PS management was also able to capitalize on the PM Partner's valuable input to offer a fresh perspective in the development of a SaaS program's rollout and execution.

*** Refer to Grindyzer's whitepaper "PM-as-a-Service"; page 4 (PM Outsourcing Models: Project Delivery Framework) and page 6 (PM Outsourcing Models: PM Mentorship)*

Selected PM Partner: Grindyzer

Infoblox PS Management needed a PM Partner that could quickly integrate with and adapt to existing operations becoming a seamless "Plug and Play" extension of the PS organization . Infoblox selected Grindyzer for the following reasons:

- 1. Turnkey:** Grindyzer offered an all-encompassing solution providing (1) assistance with PDF development (2) a team of highly skilled PM resources (3) a Program Manager to oversee this team and (4) a senior resource and one point of contact to interface with Infoblox's senior management, ensuring continuous synergy in achieving the organization's goals and objectives.
- 2. Skilled Resources:** Grindyzer is equipped with highly skilled and seasoned PM resources; all resources are fully certified PM professionals (i.e., PMP, Prince 2, or equivalent) with proven track records in the field of project management, IT deployment, and transformation programs.
- 3. Responsiveness:** Infoblox PS Management recognized Grindyzer's ability to quickly respond to their pressing need for PM resources, and valued Grindyzer's capacity to accommodate accelerated timelines demanded by Infoblox's end customers.
- 4. Similar Core Values:** The commitment to excellence is a core value adhered by the Grindyzer team. Moreover, Grindyzer's entire team demonstrated the conviction and dedication to "get the job done". These same core values reflect Infoblox's PS organization.
- 5. Flexible and Easy to work with:** Infoblox was intent on choosing a compatible partner who could easily accommodate its operational complexity and function as a seamless extension of their PS organization. Grindyzer demonstrated their willingness and flexibility to work with Infoblox in facilitating an effective integration as well as managing the partnership on a more pragmatic level.

Case Study: Results

Infoblox Results: Benefits realized

Grindyzer successfully integrated a fully scalable externally-sourced project management team with Infoblox's existing PS operations yielding the following incremental benefits:

- ❑ Developed and instituted a standardized PDF (Project Delivery Framework) with the corresponding tools, collateral, templates, SLAs, and SOPs
- ❑ Demonstrated notable improvement in customer project cycle times and closure rates: The average project duration reduced from 12 to 6 months
- ❑ Observed overall improvement in CSAT metrics from 91% to 94%
- ❑ Achieved a 20% increase in PS top line revenue of which the new PM Team directly accounted for 11%.
- ❑ The PM Team realized a net positive margin contribution of more than 20% for the PS line of business
- ❑ Rolled out and successfully upgraded 500+ of Infoblox's customers within a 24-month timeframe
- ❑ Developed and introduced a custom "fit for purpose" project delivery framework, including KPI definition and monitoring, for the strategically important SAAS product line