



ROBI Axiata Limited: Streamlining mobile network rollout operations through process re-engineering and workflow re-design

About ROBI

Faced with the challenge of being ahead of competition in one of the fiercest mobile phone markets in the world, ROBI must implement network rollout projects – technology migration, new stations, BTS upgrade, and 3G roll out – in ever more shorter time with absolutely no service downtime and without adding any extra cost. The challenge could only be answered with a redefined business process for network operations and rollout which allows for fine grained workflow definition and automation with minimum human interaction and uses the existing knowledge and dictionary base of the whole division.

The challenge was well responded by ROBI team with Spectrum's consulting engagement. The team redefined the whole rollout process by identifying more than 25 workflow templates for

Robi Axiata Limited is one of the leading mobile telecom operators in Bangladesh. It is a joint venture company between Axiata Group Berhad of Malaysia and NTT DoCoMo Inc. of Japan. Robi commenced operation in 1997 as Telekom Malaysia International (Bangladesh) with the brand name 'Aktel'. With its strong network and seamless connectivity, Robi is empowering more than **24 million** people across the country. ROBI is the **2nd** largest mobile phone operator in Bangladesh with a customer base of **20 million**. It is the largest roaming service provider in Bangladesh covering more than **600 operators** in about **200 countries** across the globe.

In addition to current 2G/2.5G service ROBI is a key value added service (VAS) and GPRS/EDGE based mobile internet provider in Bangladesh. ROBI

Business challenges

As the cellphone market flattens toward saturation, like other operators. ROBI is forced to maintain its revenue and profit stream through customer retention, new customer acquisition, network upgrade, equipment swapping, sometimes vendor switching, outsourcing, introducing value added services all the time to maintain ARPU as much as possible. In short this means downsizing in cost while improving business performance in all areas including network operations and rollout.

ROBI rightly identified that traditional ways of business performance improvement like financial streamlining, HR restructuring, distribution channel redefinition, marketing innovation - while a must – are not going to improve the scenario alone, the most profound

a number of equipment and systems vendors and internal tech team, designed and modeled a sophisticated workflow system that is dynamically configurable even by business people and tech people alike. The whole system was scoped, designed, approved, developed, tested and implemented within a strict timeline of six months plus a two month period of migration of legacy data from older systems and integration with ROBI's SAP ERP system.

is currently preparing for rolling out 3G network infrastructure as its core network.

Robi has been conferred the prestigious Frost & Sullivan Asia Pacific ICT Award 2010 for "Emerging Market Service Provider of the Year".

improvement comes greatly through network operations, maintenance, new rollout process improvement. If a new project for BTS upgrade in a new zone can be rolled out in one month instead of three months in half the cost that is going to be the key differentiator in competition.

This is where Spectrum came into picture as Spectrum had already done the same business process improvement consulting in another telecom operator in the same market with proven results earlier.

Spectrum's Role

Spectrum came into the scenario through a competitive international bidding process in late 2012. Three separate groups from Spectrum worked with ROBI's internal teams and network vendors as the whole project ran in (as much as) parallel into three streams for minimizing the total time

- One team comprising of telecom experts with network operation background worked with the network planning of Robi, operation team and vendors to document ROBI's practices and for benchmarking existing processes and workflows. Within a period of three months the team came up with a draft of reengineered processes and a book of workflows where existing workflows were upgraded, optimized, merged, and in some cases are broken down into separate processes, which were eventually finalized after a few review rounds
- A core software development team designed and developed a whole new workflow definition container and workflow process engine where both existing workflows and redefined workflows can run side by side. This system allows for workflow template, modification from a top level GUI view so that non-tech people can use them as is often the case. Significant parts of the development was spent

While telecom operators generally take such business performance improvement projects from time to time, those are mostly focused on finance, sales and marketing areas. Reengineering in network operations and rollout area is unique in most cases and Spectrum's telecom domain expertise and previous successful consulting engagement in the same area meant that the return was above expectation for ROBI

Value Delivered

The full impact of the reengineering project will come through years which is estimated as

- Reduced new rollout project time from three months to one month with the new process and system
- Reduced new BTS upgrade project time from two months to 20 days
- Overall operation and rollout cost saving by 30% with a saving of about 20% of technical resources involved
- Control transfer from vendor to ROBI for rollout projects which itself saves a huge amount of outsourcing and managed service cost
- Total network swap (from one vendor to another vendor) used to take years. It is estimated that this can be done within 6 months by ROBI now without involving extra resource or 3rd party consultants

- A central dashboard for project and process tracking for managers and engineers
- Earlier there was no SLA defined for inter-department activities, now there are strict SLAs and reporting/alerting on each and every workflow steps
- A central asset and equipment repository which actually was not there even after SAP implementation. Now this system feeds SAP with all necessary asset and equipment master and status data in a consistent and real time fashion
- In earlier legacy system one engineer would take months to just get oriented to the whole process of operation and rollout, with the new system it takes only 3 to 4 days for any new resource to get onboard the system
- People at C level and finance block are getting day to day progress updates. Exception on the fly as operations run and they can intervene at any point from the system at any level if necessary.

About Spectrum



Spectrum Engineering Consortium Ltd. (SECL) is a top systems integrator in Bangladesh founded in 1995 and serving clients in more than 10

on data migration engine from legacy systems and specially SAP system from where a significant portion of asset and financial data will come and status updates will be done.

- Finally a field level team worked with ROBI operations team for test and production migration, regression testing, integration testing and deployment and endUser training across the whole division of ROBI.

In a nutshell, 15 consultants from Spectrum were involved in the project for a little over six months.

The immediate improvements include

- Optimized process and workflows – purging of old flows which are no longer part of the process, merging of logically consistent flows and vice versa, reduction of over 40 flows into 15 major and 12 minor flows
- Configurable workflow engine which allows for greater flexibility from a user’s point of view
- Total migration from legacy Excel based system to a state of the art web 2.0 based system accessible from everywhere

countries across the globe in areas of business and IT systems consulting, software system implementation and support operations.