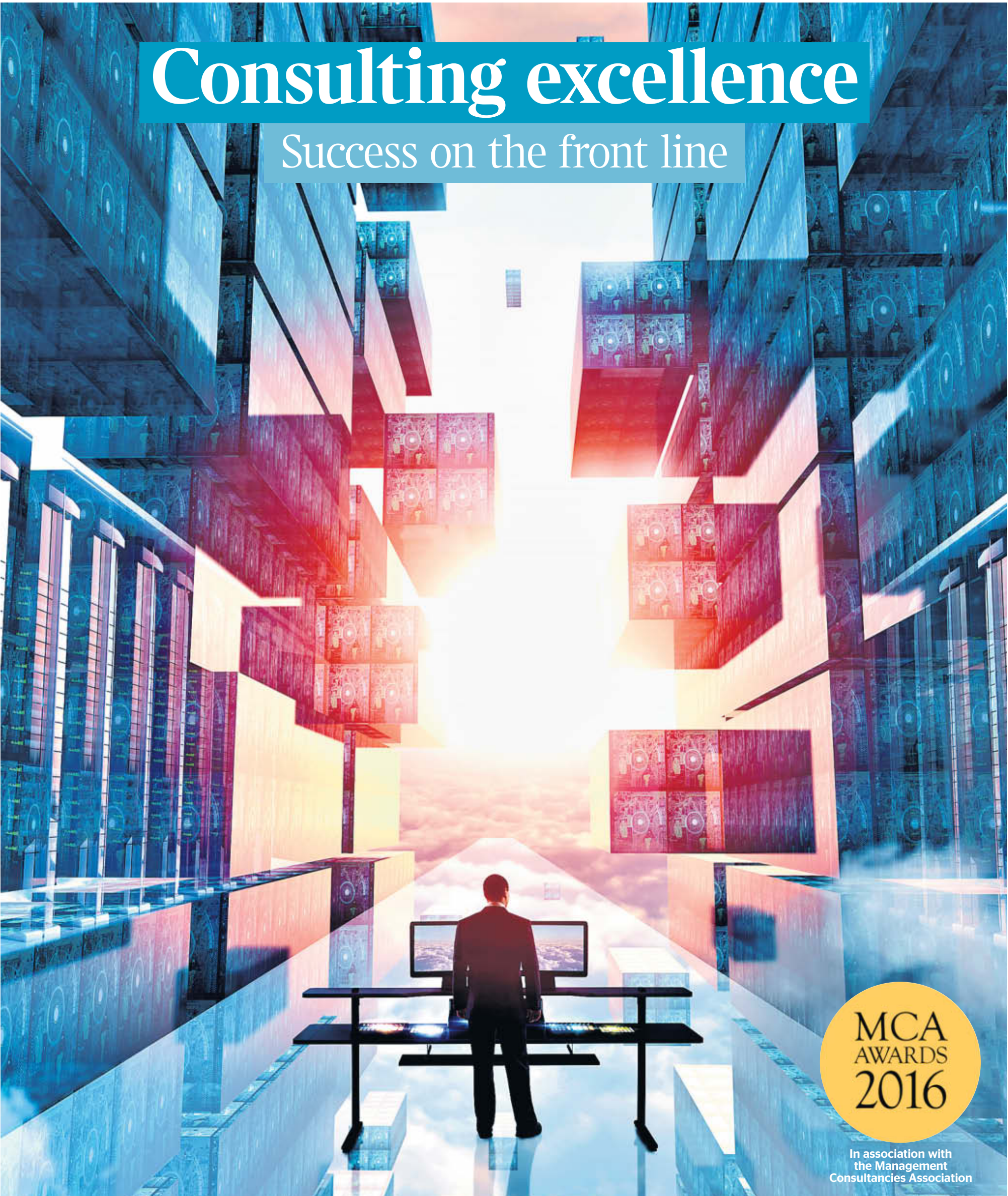


Consulting excellence

Success on the front line



In association with
the Management
Consultancies Association

Consulting excellence

Our industry helps to make life better on the front line

Alan Leaman on how the work of consultancies improves services and lowers costs

The MCA will launch a new campaign, *Consulting Excellence*, in a few weeks' time. This year's MCA awards show why we can be confident in our claims. All the winning projects have already made a

This supplement was produced by *The Times* Special Reports team, which is editorially independent of the sponsors
Editor: Mark Barber
 0207 782 5742
 Cover image: Getty Images

huge difference — and not just to the organisations that won.

The benefits of their work flow directly to the front line. Customers, taxpayers, water consumers, patients, doctors, nurses, rail passengers, victims of crime are all experiencing their value ... the list is almost endless.

The outcomes they achieve include better services and lower prices. Some projects help to save lives or to cut crime. Others lead to safer travel, improving infrastructure or reduced costs for taxpayers.

Extraordinary value is usually generated when UK consulting firms and clients work together in this way. Consulting can help to create a strong future for a company that might otherwise decline. Our industry is helping to make Britain more productive, more successful and a better place to live and work.

The MCA awards are for both consulting firms and their clients. Each year they get larger, and harder to win. This year we welcomed many of the greatest brands and organisations in the world, facing the



toughest markets, working with complex technologies and with the most challenging customers.

Together, we celebrated what, over a century ago, Teddy Roosevelt called "the triumph of high achievement". The winning clients are often just as enthusiastic as their consultants — and they should be just as proud too.

This is the MCA's Year of Growth.

Alan Leaman: "We can help to create a strong future for a company that might otherwise decline"

We are in the middle of a series of events and publications to explore the links between consulting and economic growth. We have also looked at skills, careers and education in the consulting industry itself.

The climate for business — and the public sector — remains difficult. Many clients are changing fast in response to new digital realities. Some also face new challenges, such as cyber security, the need to achieve much more with less money or young and disruptive competitors. And there is also a relentless drive to cut costs and implement more efficient ways of working.

In a global economy, we need to be competitive and reduce the government's deficit. Consulting firms have adapted to meet these emerging needs. Our project of the year shows how one retailer, Argos, worked with LCP Consulting to get ahead of the competition.

There are also six special MCA awards for individual management consultants. The winners are truly inspirational. Consulting attracts highly talented people who really want to make a difference.

A final thanks to the panel of judges, all experts in their field. Their independence means that these awards have massive authority and command the respect of the entire consulting industry, giving added substance to our *Consulting Excellence* campaign.

Alan Leaman is chief executive of the Management Consultancies Association

LEADING THE JOURNEY TO DIGITAL

CSC

CSC with Network Rail are proud winners of the MCA Awards for **DIGITAL & TECHNOLOGY** and **INNOVATION**. Talk to us about your digital journey: mike.r.jones@csc.com

csc.com



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Argos hails hub and spoke revolution

The retail giant has been given a complete digital makeover, writes Virginia Matthews

With 840 stores, one in almost every town in Britain and several in the big cities, Argos is familiar to millions of shoppers. Since 1973 they have thumbed the thick catalogues, marked their choice with a pencil, handed a chit to a cashier and waited, often for hours or even days, for the goods to arrive at the counter.

Today they can browse the web from the comfort of their homes — or in selected stores if they prefer — and study products, photographs, videos and reviews before adding items to an online shopping trolley for delivery the same day to their homes or to chosen outlets. More than 150 Argos stores are now fully digital, wi-fi enabled and equipped with tablet computers.

The journey from paper catalogue chain to online colossus has been “transformational,” says Graham Barnes, supply director at Argos.

“Our vision of becoming the UK’s leading digital retailer involves offering customers a new proposition in terms of speed and convenience, while maintaining our reputation for choice and value. By seamlessly blending our web, mobile and in-store experiences we are able to compete and excel in the new multi-channel digital market.”

The transformation follows a three-year contract with LCP Consulting, specialists in managing supply chains. Starting in 2012, it helped shape the strategy, refine the model and implement the largest change management programme that Argos has ever undergone.

The work has won LCP both the



The number is almost up for the old thick catalogues at Argos as digital technology plays an increasing role in sales

MCA Commercial Excellence and Project of the Year Awards. Although shortlisted four times, these are the first MCA awards won by the 20-year-old Hertfordshire based consultancy.

Barnes says: “LCP came highly recommended and quickly impressed us by taking the time to get to know our business from top to bottom and understand our unique challenges.”

An essential part of the programme is the “hub and spoke” solution, with the firm’s 160 largest outlets acting as hubs for 20,000-plus lines, while the smaller “spoke” stores stock the fastest-selling items and offer a greater range than ever before; on either a same-day or next-day service.

Barnes adds: “In the old days, our customers would walk into our stores and if they couldn’t take away their

“It is vital to remain one step ahead

chosen item there and then, they could be disappointed. Now our fast track system, which allows shoppers to choose same-day delivery on thousands of products across different categories, is proving very popular.”

Almost half of Argos sales now start online, with transactions from mobile phones and tablets representing 28 per cent of the firm’s total sales.

John Lockton, LCP managing director, says: “Lots of traditional

retailers are at the point where Argos was four years ago and are rethinking their order fulfilment processes in order to compete with challengers.

“Argos customers love the transformation and, crucially, it is economically viable. But consumer expectations never stand still so it’s vital to remain one step ahead.”

Sainsbury’s, the supermarket giant, has made a £1.4 billion takeover bid for Argos, which its owner, the Home Retail Group, has advised shareholders to accept.

Sainsbury’s has been looking to offer a greater range of products to customers and plans to open Argos outlets in some of its larger stores.

LCP continues to work with Argos and is now helping to evolve its fast track system.

Pride of the president

“This is the best of times in consulting”, says Howard Tollit, the new president of the MCA. “The industry is growing its services. The work we do is more important than ever.”

Tollit, a senior figure at IBM, has been in the industry for more than 25 years and is acutely aware of how consulting has developed.

“We recruit many of the brightest young people, often with digital, data analytics and other technical skills,” he says. “And it is a great option for those with direct experience of industry and the public sector.”

“We are a diverse industry, and include many specialist firms as well as global brands. There is certainly no time to stand still.”

He is proud to become president as the industry’s professional trade body celebrates its 60th anniversary and prepares to launch the *Consulting Excellence* campaign.

“It all helps put our member firms on the map. Consulting skills are critical to success,” he adds.

Broadcasting success produces humble winner

Mark Epps admits to feeling sheepish when colleagues approached him after he became consultant of the year at this year’s MCA awards.

“People have been coming up to me in the corridor at work. You feel really proud but you also know other people have done great work and haven’t got the same recognition.”

It is a humble response from Epps but he had to take a more forthright approach in his day job to win the award. A senior manager in Deloitte’s strategy and operations team, he oversaw a major restructuring at a European broadcaster, helping it to deliver more than £100 million of savings in a matter of months.

The project involved consolidating a number of disparate teams into one, with the new structure significantly

cheaper than the old — yet the quality of the broadcaster’s output has increased, Deloitte says.

Epps says the project was successful because the team got their “hands dirty” in working on the restructuring.

“During an intensive first 12 weeks I was asked to identify where the savings would come from. But that did not provide all the answers. What we did differently was to develop the ideas and then deliver them in partnership with the client. We were down in the trenches making it real.”

The project earned Epps the MCA Performance Improvement Consultant of the Year Award, one of six individual awards, and from them he emerged as *The Times* Consultant of the Year.

He started his career at BT and has been at Deloitte since 2010. He says it’s a good time to be advising media



Sky’s the limit: Mark Epps with presenter Katie Derham


organisations. “The incumbent companies are having to work harder to get their content watched, read or heard. Part of that is how they can invest in things and that is often based in making savings in other areas.”

He says being a good consultant means listening more than talking. “People are all too good at working the way they’ve always worked. Sometimes they just need a bit of help to see another way of doing things.”

He acknowledges that the familiar wisecracks at the expense of his profession are still in circulation, but there are plenty of reasons to be optimistic about the industry’s future.

“The old jokes will always make people laugh but businesses are becoming more mature buyers of consultants’ work. They know how to get the best value out of them now.”

JAMES HURLEY



**Karen Young,
Colin Terry, Julian
Remnant, Caroline Kennair,
Richard Baderman, Caroline Hope,
Michael Woolf, Katherine Benjamin,
Samantha Bianco, Alex Tanner, Chris Hopkins,
Giles Warner, Andy Bourne, Devyani Narvekar,
David Noble, Brett Walsh, Hein Bence, Tim
Hoyland, Dom Harriott - Thompson, Laurence
Collins, Peter Wallace, John Ford, Keith
Leslie, Izzie Cheung, Anna Brown, Mark
Epps, Nadun Muthukumarana, Harieta
Eleftherochorinou, Sam Baker, Simon
Hannan, Dave Staunton, Sumner
Makin, Hannah Lewsley,
Zain Arora, You?**

Be part of a winning team

34 of our Consulting people were responsible for seven MCA Award wins, four highly commended entries and six finalists. They're part of a network of thousands of consultants who make an impact that matters for our clients every day. Want to join them?

www.deloitte.co.uk/mcaawards

Deloitte.

When nurses need care

Innovative courses have inspired demoralised NHS staff, reports Jenny Knight

Nurses who spoke out about neglect and poor treatment that led to deaths at the Mid-Staffordshire NHS Trust felt ignored, while others kept quiet for fear they would be bullied.

After a report into the failings, the NHS Leadership Academy was asked to develop a programme to inspire frontline staff. The problem was how to run courses for nurses and midwives with highly pressured jobs and little time to spare.

The solution, helped by consultants from Korn Ferry Hay Group, was to put most of the programme online so that staff could study at times that suited them, followed by workshops and practical work. The innovation has earned the two organisations the MCA People Award.

Korn Ferry Hay Group produced 50 short animated and live action films, on topics that the nurses discussed with colleagues from across the country at the workshops. More than 5,250 nurses and midwives took part. The programme proved so popular that other nurses asked to join.

Julie Holmes was a community midwife for Leeds Teaching Hospitals Trust when she joined the course. "It was absolutely exceptional. I feel I am a better person for it," she says.

"I really made a connection with the other people. We talked about problems and thought them through. It wasn't just sitting there listening to someone telling us what to do. The



Julie Holmes believes the course made her a better and more confident person

course made us reflect and look at our skills and how to develop them."

Since then Holmes has won promotion and is now a specialist midwife and community team leader.

"I now lead a team of midwives and have more confidence as a manager and can support my staff better. I'm not frightened to ask questions of senior management and expect answers," she says.

As part of the coursework, participants asked colleagues to fill in anonymous questionnaires about them. They also kept a journal and talked to a senior manager about how nurses could influence change.

Sam Peate, senior programme lead at the leadership academy, says the idea was to help staff reconnect with the reasons why they first went into nursing or midwifery, to empower them and to retain nurses in the NHS.

"The nurses and midwives only had four-and-a-half days away from work.

They reflected on the way they impacted on people in their job, focusing on communication within their teams and how that affected patient care. The feedback was amazing for us: reading their journeys and stories showed the huge impact the programme had on their work and patient care."

Simon Bird, project leader and head of healthcare consulting at Korn Ferry Hay Group, says that 70 per cent of the nurses and midwives questioned after the course said they had introduced changes and 85 per cent felt more confident.

"This project is one of the things I am most proud of. We want nurses and midwives to speak up if they see something they don't feel is right, not necessarily to whistleblow, but to have a conversation. The course was not about career progression but about supporting nurses and midwives to be great in their jobs."

The firm with joined-up thinking

TRYING to link up the work of hospital trusts run by the NHS with social care services is one of the great challenges faced by the public sector at a time when funding is hard to come by.

Yet well-coordinated social care can save huge amounts of valuable hospital time, reducing re-admissions and easing the load on often hard-pressed accident and emergency departments. This is one of the main fields of activity for Prederi, the four-year-old firm that has been named the 2016 MCA Best New Consultancy.

"The question we ask people is simple: what would you do if this was your own money?" says Stewart Johns, joint managing director.

In a sense, those in charge of trusts and local authorities are spending their own money – which comes from taxpayers. Prederi's role is to help make the most of it through integrating health and social care services, encouraging commercial thinking to add value for money and through more effective use of IT.

"These are the three golden threads that run through everything we do and they are especially appropriate in the field of health," Johns says. John Highton, his co-managing director, heads the dedicated health division which accounts for about 60 per cent of the firm's work.

The company was set up

by five partners who had all worked previously for the "big five" international consultancies. "The public sector, including contractors who work in the field as well as publicly-run bodies, was where we felt we could add most value. We would rather save an NHS trust £1 million than save the same for a commercial firm," Johns says.

The firm is now turning over £3m a year and has 26 full-time staff, mostly working from client offices, with a core team at the headquarters close to London's Blackfriars Bridge.

Prederi is a Cornish word meaning "think again" or "ponder". "It seemed a good description of what we



wanted to do," Johns says.

Flagship projects include integrating services and IT and digital strategies for clinical commissioning groups in Waltham Forest, Newham and Bexley in London and for similar services in Essex and Hertfordshire.

Outside the health field, the firm has applied similar techniques to the Royal Academy of Engineering, a number of defence agencies and is currently working with the RAF on a package of financial and budget systems.

ALAN COPPS

MCA Awards 2016 The full list of winners and those highly commended

Overall winners

Project of the Year
LCP Consulting with Argos

The Times Consultant of the Year
Mark Epps, Deloitte

Best New Consultancy
Prederi

Project category winners

Best Use of Thought Leadership
KPMG with Nunwood Customer Experience Excellence Centre
Highly Commended:
Arup - Lighting in the Urban Age; Deloitte - Measuring the return from pharmaceutical innovation

Change Management in the Private Sector
Deloitte with GlaxoSmithKline
Highly Commended:
Curzon with NSG; Grant Thornton UK with Well; PwC with BUPA

Change Management in the Public Sector
GE Healthcare Finnmore with

Birmingham Cross City Clinical Commissioning Group

Highly Commended:
CSC with Asset Information Services, Network Rail; Deloitte with Department for Education; Inner Circle Consulting with Achieving for Children / Richmond and Kingston

Commercial Excellence
LCP Consulting with Argos

Customer Engagement
Deloitte with Virgin Media
Highly Commended:
EY with Pearson; Propaganda with The Car People

Digital & Technology
CSC with Network Rail

Finance and Risk Management
Arcadis with Thames Tideway Tunnel

Innovation
(sponsored by Kimble)
CSC with Network Rail

International
Curzon and Emercomex with Aliaxis Latin America
Highly Commended:
Elixirr with Barclays Africa

People
(sponsored by KellyOCG)
Korn Ferry Hay Group with NHS Leadership Academy
Highly Commended:
BearingPoint with Barclays

Performance Improvement in the Private Sector
(sponsored by Mindbench)
Hudson and Yorke with eir
Highly Commended:
KPMG with Allied Irish Bank

Performance Improvement in the Public Sector
KPMG with Bedfordshire Police
Highly Commended:
KPMG with Ministry of Justice

Social and Environmental Value
PwC with Ofwat
Highly Commended:
Arup with Leeds City Council

Strategy
Arup with GLA

Individual consultant winners
Change Management Consultant of the Year
Tim O'Hanlon, GE Healthcare Finnmore
Highly Commended:
Caroline Kennair, Deloitte

Digital and Technology Consultant of the Year
Andy Bourne, Deloitte
Highly Commended:
David Moran, CSC

HR Consultant of the Year
Laurence Collins, Deloitte
Performance Improvement Consultant of the Year
Mark Epps, Deloitte

Strategy Consultant of the Year
Sumner Makin, Deloitte

Young Consultant of the Year
Rachel Tustin, GE Healthcare Finnmore
Highly Commended:
Hannah Lewsley, Deloitte; Ross Logan, Elixirr

Judging panel

Simon Atkinson, Chief Knowledge Officer, Ipsos MORI
David Bailey, advisor to Professional Services firms
Helen Bailey, Chief Operating Officer, The Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime
Kirsty Birks, Strategy Director, Boost Drinks
David Boyle, freelance writer
Keith Burgess, Crown Representative, Cabinet Office
John Collington, Chief Operating Officer, Alexander Mann Solutions
Paul Collins, Chief Executive, Equiteq
Mary Collis, Chairman, Active Minds
Andreas Credé, Director, Credé Associates
Steve Dyke, Director Asset information, Network Rail
William Etchell, Finance Director, BPP Professional Education Group
Andy Gannon, Executive Coach, Gannon Associates
Jan Gower, Partner, Medway Consulting
Lesley Hume, Executive Director, fraud, error debt and grants, Cabinet Office
Ren Kapur, Founder & Chief Executive, X-Forces
Mitchell Leimon, Head of Profession, Project Delivery, Department for Business, Innovation and Skills
Christoph Marr, Managing Director, Marr Procurement
Mark MacGregor, Deputy Director, Policy Exchange
Sandra Macleod, CEO, Mindful Reputation
Pat Newberry, Non-Executive Director, Paragon Bank
Vicky Pryce, Chief Economic Adviser, CEPR
Duncan Robertson, Lecturer in Management Studies, Oxford University
Sally Scutt, Strategic Advisor, International Compliance Association
Peter Smith, Managing Editor, Spend Matters Europe
Stefan Stern, Director, High Pay Centre
Paula Sussex, Chief Executive, Charity Commission
David Tranfield, Emeritus Professor of Management, Cranfield School of Management
Andrew Vald, Founder, Firestone Coaching
Paul Vincent, Vice President, Global Talent Supply Chain Strategy, Kelly Outsourcing & Consulting
Phil Walker, Chief Executive, Summerswood
Ian Watmore, Former Head of Accenture



Flushed with success

Water companies are listening to their customers and paying more attention to water quality and the environment — two little-appreciated outcomes of Ofwat’s latest five-yearly review that will set the course for the industry until 2020.

It is a major change of direction. Previously, water companies tended to assume that customers were happy as long as clean water was always on tap and the lavatory flushed successfully.

But when Ofwat’s latest review, conducted with PwC, forced them to ask customers for their views, they discovered a well of discontent, with issues including water quality, the environment and vulnerable customers.

Utility Week described the results as “a seismic shift”. Ofwat estimates that the companies will have to spend an extra £43million on environmental projects over the next five years, as well as help vulnerable customers.

“Ofwat put the onus on companies to develop business plans to reflect the priorities of their customers and set levels of expenditure to deliver against those promises,” says Hettie Farrell, senior manager for economics and policy at PwC and one of the consultants involved in the review, which has won PwC the MCA Social and Environmental Value Award.

Stuart Cook, head of utility strategy and regulation at PwC, says regulators routinely bring in consultants to help with major projects, but this was different. “In the past the regulators tended to go to external consultancies for technical advice on an aspect of an engineering programme or some of the financial aspects of a review. What Ofwat did, which was quite unique, was to enter into partnership with PwC to provide broad support.”

For 18 months, up to 30 PwC consultants worked at Ofwat, reading and digesting the mountain of data supplied for the review — about 8,000 electronic files and 40,000 pages of documents.

The review also brought financial benefits. Ofwat and PwC estimate that customers will now pay £3billion less by 2019-20, resulting in bills that are 5 per cent lower than present.

CHRIS PARTRIDGE

Eyes in sky keep trains on the move

Ultra-sensitive cameras are making our rail network safer, writes **Tony Dawe**

An eye in the sky is helping keep Britain’s trains on the move. All 20,000 miles of Network Rail track is being surveyed from the air by two helicopters equipped with military equipment, some so sensitive that its arrival was delayed by US Customs for checks that its export was permitted.

The detailed surveillance allows potential problems to be identified in advance. For example, images of the chlorophyll in trees will provide clues to those most likely to shed leaves on the line — or to fall down completely. Screws in the track can be checked for rust and the height of bridge parapets and their distance from overhead lines assessed to within a centimetre.

The accurate mapping of the network also means that when incidents occur, such as flooding or a landslip, managers will be able to pinpoint where to send maintenance staff instead of sending them out on the track with only limited knowledge of the location.

Aerial surveys and geospatial technology sit at the heart of a rail infrastructure model developed by CSC, the business transformation and IT consultants, and has helped the firm win the 2016 MCA Innovation

Award. The project will reduce overall expenditure on surveys and, by minimising the amount of time required trackside, it will further increase safety when working on the railway and ease delays to services.

The model is just one part of a ground-breaking programme to digitise and revolutionise the entire railway called ORBIS (Offering Rail Better Information Services), in which CSC is working in partnership with Network Rail. Three years into the five-year programme, savings of more than £200million have been achieved and CSC has also been named the MCA Digital & Technology Award winner, in addition to the innovation award.

Richard Pease, Network Rail design architect, says: “The programme hits the sweet spot for us and takes us where we want to be. The railways have never been more popular and demand is growing at 6 per cent a year but we are not going to be able to build new routes and more track, apart from possibly HSI and HS2.

“We need to increase the capacity of the existing network and with this information-led transformation, we are creating a digital railway which will be safer, more efficient and save money. It is a level of change that equates with the founding of the railways and the transfer of traffic from the canals.”

Glyn Knaresborough, head of consulting at CSC, says: “Network Rail had run an efficiency programme for eight years but could not go any further. By undertakingto transform the business through better information, the company recognised it could create a better railway.”



Whenever improvements or maintenance had been planned, staff were sent out in their orange jackets to walk down the tracks to gather information, putting them at risk of being hit and forcing trains to slow down. Today, the software created by the CSC team provides fieldworkers with a detailed desktop view of the network and all its assets — stations, signalling, trackside stores and bridges. Gooty Agharam, CSC managing partner and the firm’s leader on the

“16,000 iPads have been rolled out to staff to provide feedback

Adviser shows how London can meet growing demands

Strategies to cope with the capital’s rapid expansion are being planned, writes **Alan Copps**

In the first few weeks of this year the population of Greater London passed 8.6million, a mark not exceeded since 1939. It is continuing to expand by at least 100,000 people a year and it is estimated that by the time of the next census in 2021, it will have reached more than 9.2million.

Such sustained growth, after decades of decline from the 1940s to the 1980s, is placing huge demands on the city’s infrastructure, especially in housing and transport, and presents a formidable challenge for the newly-elected Labour mayor, Sadiq Khan.

However, a number of scenarios for dealing with the city’s growth, including an assessment of their costs, were set out in the London Infrastructure Plan 2050 that was published by the Greater London Authority (GLA) in December 2014.

Many of the plan’s recommendations are already being adopted for infrastructure projects in London’s 38 designated “opportunity areas”, where brownfield sites have been identified as potential centres for housing and transport development. These include the Royal Docks, Paddington, Park Royal, Croydon and Cricklewood.

For its work on the document, probably the first time any city has attempted to deal with such a challenge on such a scale, Arup has won the MCA Strategy Award. “Our task was to paint a picture of London’s future infrastructure needs and in the process we have helped to underpin the case for devolution of powers from Whitehall and buttress the power of London government,” says Alexander Jan, a director of Arup’s city



The development of Paddington Basin reflects London’s plan for growth

economics group and an adviser to the GLA’s infrastructure delivery board.

“We aimed to produce something that was useful and meaningful for policymakers but which wouldn’t become a prisoner to over-precision and detail. It has to reflect political priorities.”

Khan’s election in place of his Tory predecessor, Boris Johnson, shows how vital it was to proof the plan against natural political change.

Some of the conclusions about London’s increasing population ran contrary to popular perceptions. For example, more than two-thirds of the population increase between 2002 and 2014 came from natural change — people living longer and a rising birth-rate — rather than net immigration. London also exports more people to the rest of the country than it imports, although most remain in the South East and work in the capital.

“At the core of the plan is the population and employment growth that is driving demand for housing and transport and that in turn requires a

structured way of thinking about things like water, gas, power, telecoms and, crucially, green infrastructure,” Jan says.

The team estimated the cost of keeping up with the city’s growth at a staggering £1.3trillion and in drawing up the report, highlighted funding sources of between £3billion and £80billion. It also set out a number of potential efficiency savings and revenue increases.

Until now London has had very limited fiscal autonomy, but last October the government announced plans to allow local authorities to retain business rates in full, a proposal that could have a dynamic effect on funding for infrastructure.

Although the capital’s role as a hub for global business has been at the heart of renewed growth, the plan also has provision for green spaces, cultural development and improvements in drainage and environment. “These are important for the quality of life which is one of London’s key attractions,” Jan says.

Light at the end of the tunnel for consumers

Brunel would have approved: a project that won’t break the bank, writes **Chris Partridge**

Everyone hates sewage charges, so when Thames Water proposed a £2.7billion sewage pipe beneath the Thames to prevent pollution, there were big concerns about the cost to consumers. It was feared that bills might rise by as much as £80 a year. So it came as a relief when it was

announced that the annual charge for the Thames Tideway Tunnel is likely to be less than £20 a year.

The dramatic reduction in the estimated amount was largely achieved, not by technical innovation or cost cutting but by reducing the cost of borrowing.

Normally, investors require a high return on high-risk projects and tunnelling is traditionally regarded as a very high risk operation. The first tunnel under the Thames, designed by Sir Marc Brunel, took nearly 20 years to build and a flood very nearly killed his son, the great Isambard Kingdom Brunel. The investors lost everything.

For the Thames Tideway Tunnel, Thames Water had to completely convince the financiers that the project would be delivered on time

and within budget, and to do that they commissioned a technical report from Arcadis, the consultancy firm.

“We had to demonstrate that although building a supertunnel snaking under the River Thames might seem to be a high risk thing, the reality is if you do the job properly it is very different — nowadays we know how to dig tunnels under London,” explains Steve James, the Arcadis partner who led the team.

The report assumed even greater importance as almost all the cost of the tunnel is needed up-front. “The tunnel has been designed to have very, very low operating costs, but it will be expensive to build,” James says.

“With a very long term asset that will last a hundred years, it’s like a mortgage. If you are borrowing at a

rate a third of what you expected, then your monthly payments will be a third of what you expected.”

The report involved hundreds of engineers looking at every aspect from the geology to planning and environmental concerns. It had to be written in such a way as to be clearly understandable by financiers with little technical background, while remaining accurate and authoritative.

It worked. The rate achieved was a bargain basement 2.5 per cent. “A number of organisations in the UK and other countries are looking at this to learn lessons to get other infrastructure projects underway that would otherwise be difficult to finance,” James says. The project won Arcadis the MCA Finance and Risk Management Award.

Winner swaps academia for the razzmatazz of fashion

SUMNER Makin has a PhD in physics from the University of Cambridge, where he used x-rays to study the proteins involved in Alzheimer’s disease.

He continued with postdoctoral research, only to decide that the really interesting problems to solve were in fashion.

“I wanted to do something more tangible,” says Makin, 37, MCA Strategy Consultant of the Year.

“Academic research takes a long time to have an impact but with what I do now you

can see the results in the client’s business in two weeks.”

Makin is a senior manager in Monitor Deloitte’s strategy practice and leader of Deloitte UK’s strategic retail analytics team, where he analyses fashion sales data. “We have recently developed a tool that helps retailers price things better,” he says.

“It lets retailers know what their competitors are up to so if, for example, a competitor starts its sale early, the retailer can change its prices in response.”



The Fashion Intelligence tool, for which Makin won Deloitte’s CEO Challenge innovation competition last year, can also help predict what fashion ranges will sell best and what products should be put on promotion, without

selling out of stock. “It harvests data from across the internet looking for prices, products and discounts,” he says.

“The difficult bit is the analysis, because lots of retailers describe things in different ways. A computer won’t necessarily recognise the difference between a shirt dress and a dress shirt, for example, or know what colour razzmatazz is — pink.”

The next step is to expand his team’s work into other retail areas. **CARLY CHYNOWETH**

Consulting excellence

How a mistake can leave the customer feeling quite happy

Companies are vying to keep their clients — and their reputations, writes Carly Chynoweth

Companies that make mistakes can end up with happier customers than those that offer an error-free transaction, according to David Conway, the chief strategy officer at KPMG Nunwood.

"It is known as the service recovery paradox," he says. "If you make a mistake and fix it brilliantly, the customer may feel better about you than they did before the error occurred."

It is this sort of insight that Conway and his colleagues offer to members of KPMG Nunwood's Customer Experience Excellence Centre, which has won the MCA Best Use of Thought Leadership Award.

Customer experience has become "the last battleground" in the fight

with competitors, Conway says. "What we see with organisations is that, increasingly, they have got to grips with the basic fundamentals in their market and trends like total quality management and employee engagement."

"In the process the customer has not always been first and foremost. Now, however, every organisation is focused on customer experience because their competitors are."

Consumers today are less concerned about products themselves than in how they make them feel, Conway says. They are also far more able to share those feelings with other people, thanks to digital media. "Fifteen years ago an upset customer told maybe four or five people: now they can tell ten thousand people in a minute, so another driver is needed for organisations to manage their reputation effectively."

Conway and Tim Knight, KPMG Nunwood's managing director, began by asking themselves what customers thought great customer service looked like. Next, they identified companies delivering great service and analysing how they did it. "Then we asked ourselves if we could codify this so that other organisations can learn

from it and use it," Conway says.

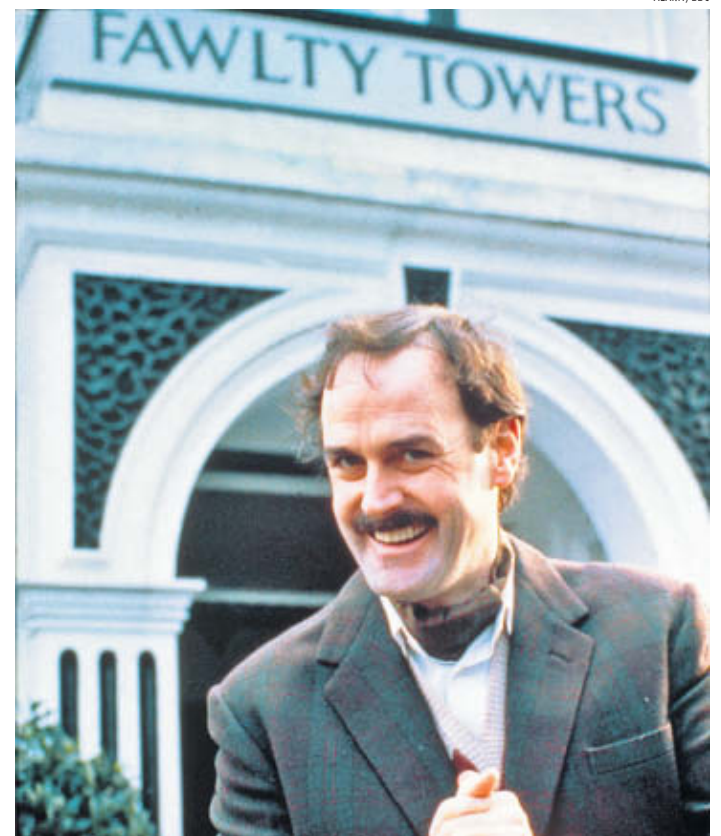
They broke down the solution into six key factors. The first is personalisation, which covers whether customers feel that they get unique, individualised experiences. Next is resolution, which is fixing mistakes in a way that makes the customer feel good. Then integrity, incorporating trust, keeping promises and whether or not the organisation has a "sense of moral purpose" beyond profit.

The fourth factor is valuing time: most people today are time-poor, Conway says. "The new wealth is having lots of time to do things you want, so organisations that make life easier for customers will see greater loyalty. Amazon's one-click purchasing option is a great example of this."

Fifth is setting the right expectations, then exceeding them. The final element is empathy: whether or not employees can put themselves in the customer's shoes and adjust their response to show sympathy, urgency or other appropriate reactions.

Companies that get these factors right see distinct business advantages in the shape of customer and employee loyalty and faster growth.

Most organisations start by measuring things and prioritising



For every Basil Fawlt there is a diligent Sybil in the background ready to right the situation

the areas where work is most needed. "Most organisations think it is all about wowing customers but typically, organisations that make mistakes are better off fixing things that go wrong first, as making errors in day to day transactions can undermine attempts to wow customers," Conway says. "A great experience is about getting all the small things right."

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Thanks a million, partners

A management consultancy specialising in the needs of large organisations with complex IT infrastructures has helped Ireland's leading telecommunications provider to identify a new market potentially worth up to €500 million (£394million).

London-based Hudson & Yorke won the MCA Performance Improvement in the Private Sector Award for its work with eir Group.

The catalyst for the change was when eir's enterprise arm, now known as eir Business, successfully bid for a contract with a major Irish retail bank to provide all its communication network services.

Hudson & Yorke, a previous recipient of an MCA award, was engaged to provide specialist advisory support to help eir Group create a new line of business focusing on outsourcing and the provision of managed services.

As part of the project, completed on schedule in August last year, Hudson & Yorke identified a €476million potential market for the company in Ireland, of which about 10 per cent was already committed to eir Business.

Ray Clarke, of Hudson & Yorke, says the consultancy identified several options to allow eir Business to streamline its delivery and extend this to a sustainable business model.

"As this new line matures and evolves — now entering its second year — there is an active programme underway to optimise the underlying service delivery model, allowing it to serve multiple customers," he says.

"Although it is still early stages, eir is happy that things are going in the right direction."

Clarke adds that eir Business has now won a second deal — a "key indicator of a sustainable business model".

MARK FRARY



However you choose to contact Virgin Media, agents will have instant access to your previous dealings with the company

Repeats are turned off

Deloitte has eased the sales journey for Virgin Media's customers, reports

Mark Frary

"Please wait while I transfer you to a colleague" are words that are guaranteed to strike fear into the heart of anyone who has ever phoned a call centre — the chances are that every detail will have to be repeated. But at Virgin Media, a new system implemented with consultants from Deloitte should make this a thing of the past.

Virgin Media is a "quad-play" provider, offering broadband, TV, fixed and mobile telephony services. It has 5.2 million cable customers as well as 3 million mobile subscribers in the UK.

The company added 110,000 new cable customers in the first quarter of this year and sells services to customers in six distinct ways: inbound and outbound contact

centres, face-to-face marketing, 80 retail stores, 110 "pop-up" kiosks and digital.

In the past, it made most of its sales through calls to its contact centres. But as this declined, the company decided to move away from a culture that fostered competition between the different sales channels towards a unified approach that makes no difference to a customer.

The integration project, winner of the MCA Customer Engagement Award, sought to bring together channels that historically would have been kept separate. "We needed to integrate the sales journey and that inevitably meant we needed to integrate the technology," says Giles Warner, a partner in Deloitte's telecoms practice.

Deloitte's team, which included Andy Bourne, this year's digital and technology consultant of the year (see panel, right), joined Virgin Media at several locations. "We had a combined team of 50, including people from Virgin Media, representatives from the technology companies as well as our expert team. It shows how successful a blended team can be," Warner says.

As with many other projects handled by the consultancy, Deloitte

used what is known as "agile methodology" to deliver the project. In this, the consultant and the customer hold frequent meetings to make sure that the solutions being worked on fit what is required. Necessary changes are quickly identified and work programmes reprioritised.

The result is a tool known as Prospect Management that works across all of Virgin Media's sales channels. This gives the company's 2,000 agents a single view of the customer and their dealings with the company. Therefore customers will be handled by agents who know their journey, however they choose to contact the company. The company expects these "quicker and easier" sales conversations to convert into positive buying decisions.

Prospect Management has changed the nature of the customer experience, Warner says. "Customers don't have to repeat themselves as they go across channels, saving them time. From Virgin Media's point of view they can understand their customers better."

Warner believes the solution is a first. "Even if you look in other sectors, no one has that joined-up journey."



The Bourne supremacy

Andy Bourne, inset, this year's Digital and Technology Consultant of the year, leads a team of 45 at Deloitte Digital and has more than 15 years experience of technology consulting.

Giles Warner, a Deloitte consulting partner, says: "Starting originally in the coding space, Andy has progressed quickly and now heads large digital transformation projects."

"He is incredibly technology-savvy and passionate about what he does. He has an amazing ability to articulate and share his knowledge with clients and colleagues in an engaging way."

Bourne was heavily involved in Virgin Media's

Prospect Management system, which won Deloitte this year's MCA award for customer engagement.

Chris Coleman, head of multi-channel sales at Virgin Media, says Bourne has all the attributes of a great leader.

"He has a 'can-do' attitude and a real ability to get everyone on board. His willingness to truly understand our project and business was really important."

MARK FRARY

Intuition is just so last year...

Using "analytics-driven methodology" Laurence Collins has helped to push up clients' revenue, reinspire disaffected employees and cut waste and cost.

Put simply, the technique means that rather than relying on common sense or intuition, data and analysis are used to spark more objective HR decisions.

The methodology has enabled Collins, a director in Deloitte's Human Capital consultancy, to help HR departments to have more impact and to get the best value out of their workforce.



Collins, the MCA HR Consultant of the Year, works with clients for up to 24 months. "We forensically review customer experiences and reveal inefficiencies — systems down, email not working, printers out of cartridges. Then we make the business case for investing in improvements."

He helped one retail company to increase revenue by analysing the optimum number of sales staff: too few and sales are lost, too many and the wage bill is unnecessarily high.

JENNY KNIGHT

No boundaries to success

Put together a British consultancy working with a Mexican partner for the New Zealand operations head of a multinational based in Belgium on a project involving 14 Latin American countries — then add a touch of Stockholm syndrome — and what do you have? The 2016 MCA International Award.

This collaboration was driven by the poor performance of the Latin American division of Aliaxis, global makers and distributors of plastic pipes, fittings and other products for the construction industry. Although the division (ALILA) turned over €400million with 3,500 staff, it was consistently the worst performing in the group with inefficient production and diminishing return on sales.

The Aliaxis board appointed Curzon & Company, a small London-based

consultancy, to improve performance on a one-year contract. Andrew Morgan, managing partner, says: "We won because the board felt that we had a more focused approach. We don't just find the answers but we make sure the solutions work."

The board expected ALILA to achieve earnings before interest and tax of at least 5 per cent but it was managing only 3.2 per cent and the figure looked likely to fall.

Curzon was expected to meet the 5 per cent target and established a base in Costa Rica in June 2014 to launch its Building Our Future programme with Spanish-speaking staff from London and from a consulting partner in Mexico.

Morgan says: "We looked at individual businesses in the different countries to decide which levers we

should try to pull in which countries. Among the things we discovered was that sales staff in two countries were suffering from 'Stockholm syndrome' — they had been hijacked by customers and were offering excessive discounts."

Research also revealed duplication among clerical staff and inefficiencies in marketing, manufacturing and distribution. Morgan says: "As we tackled these issues, dials began moving upwards and by Christmas 2014 earnings were above 5 per cent. By the end of the contract in June last year we had got to 10 per cent."

The programme also delivered an increase in operating profits of more than \$18million. In its submission to the MCA, Curzon said: "The division had gone from being the worst to the best performing in the group."

TONY DAWE

People skills set winner apart

A victory for the “softer” skills of consulting is how this year’s MCA Young Consultant of the Year describes her award.

While Rachel Tustin, from GE Healthcare Fimmamore (GEHF), is no stranger to the technical challenges of consulting — she knows her Lean Six Sigma from her Agile processes [management methodologies] and lists analytical thinking and a logical approach as two of her key attributes — she believes it is her people skills that have set her apart from her peers.

“Whenever the client is singing your praises, it’s never your project management skills that they single out,” she says. “Those are taken as read. It’s the personal engagement, the passion and the commitment, that impresses the client and gets the results. This is a people business, so you have to be able to relate to people in some really challenging, political or hostile situations.”

A chemistry graduate, Tustin joined GEHF after a stint in the pharmaceuticals

industry. She was keen to put her interest in process improvement to work in a sector that she believed in.

“I was interested in working with the NHS and helping to improve the care for patients,” she says. It is this direct link between her work and the quality of patient care that makes the job both challenging and rewarding.

“A lot of the work I do is in hospitals, looking at things such as A&E performance. There is a big link between how long people wait in A&E and their mortality and morbidity, so if you improve that you really are having an effect on people’s lives.”

Tustin hopes to remain in the healthcare sector, perhaps moving into a more strategic role. “I didn’t expect to win the MCA award but it’s a big honour and hopefully I can build on it to take my career in a direction of being some kind of senior leader in health,” she says. “I certainly see myself continuing in healthcare because I’m incredibly passionate about it.”

MARK HUNTER



Why putting the records

Hospital patients can now be treated faster thanks to two consultants, says Mark Hunter

When a patient is rushed into hospital, doctors often face the frantic task of tracking down GP records to decide on the most appropriate care. It is a process that can involve phone calls, faxes and complicated consent agreements.

But in Birmingham it can now be completed in 16 seconds — even if the patient is unconscious. About 1.8million patient records from 318 GP practices in Birmingham, Sandwell and Solihull have joined in a data-sharing programme linking 17 hospitals, ambulance services, social care organisations and mental health trusts.

It is the culmination of four years’ work by the Birmingham CrossCity Clinical Commissioning Group. But two years ago, the project looked to be going nowhere.

“We were facing capacity challenges and because of that, the buy-in from local organisations was ad-hoc,” says Dr Masood Nazir, a local GP and the programme’s chief clinical information officer.

It was decided to bring in a consultancy, “initially to run an audit to tell us how to get the programme back on track”.

Enter GE Healthcare Fimmamore (GEHF), whose audit identified several key issues. “They told us we needed much clearer leadership,” Nazir says. “We needed to make the programme simpler, more robust and we needed greater capacity.”

Tim O’Hanlon, chief operating officer at GEHF, says: “We interviewed the stakeholders, who were all equally frustrated. The data sharing was taking too long. People working on the project had other demands on their time — they were doctors, GPs, people working in local authorities. Their meetings were good but things didn’t always get done between the meetings.”

Two of GEHF’s senior consultants, Rob Holt and Paul Johnson, were brought in to run the project management office. Their approach was to spend as little time as possible in front of flip charts and more on talking to people and transferring key skills to the in-house team.

“We are not a company that works a lot with pretty pictures and charts,” Holt says. “We work on the quickest and safest way to get the job done. It’s about breaking the milestones down into the steps that need to be taken, who needs to do what and by when, identifying the risks and putting mitigating actions in place. It’s about getting the job done.”

Within three months the project was back on schedule. A successful “proof



Records of patients in the Birmingham area can now be fast-tracked to hospitals if needed

of concept” trial phase helped win the trust of GPs and their patients and the scheme even gained a name — Your Care Connected — suggested appropriately by a local patient.

Negotiations with suppliers produced savings of £600,000.

“The business case was never to deliver financial savings, it was simply to deliver better and safer care for patients,” O’Hanlon says.

“But in doing that we’ve saved

straight may be saving lives

An insider’s view of health care

Years ago, when Tim O’Hanlon was running a training course in Brazil, he decided the translation service was too expensive. The solution was simple: he learnt Portuguese.

It is this uncompromising approach to life that has seen O’Hanlon cross the world, consulting in 46 countries and in sectors ranging from finance to defence.

He has seen many models for managing change.

“There are mechanical models using charts and meetings, technical models where you focus on whatever it is you are changing, and then there is the inter-personal model. This is what many agents of change fail to master.

“Change management is done by talking to people. You can’t do it by telephone and email. You have to do it by looking into the whites of their eyes.”

Now chief operating officer at GE Healthcare Fimmamore — and the MCA Change Management Consultant of the Year — O’Hanlon believes he has found the most rewarding sector of his career.

“Only now can I say I have saved a life because of what I’ve done.”

However, it was when he became a patient himself that

O’Hanlon began to fully appreciate the changes that he had helped to introduce. While in the middle of the Birmingham project (see main story, left), he

developed epilepsy. “I got to see the benefits from the patient side. There aren’t many consultancy projects where that really happens,” he says.

One consequence of the diagnosis is that he can no longer drive. That has meant making a few changes — but O’Hanlon is good at those.

MARK HUNTER



Deloitte’s prescription for success

In 2014 GSK, the pharmaceutical giant, agreed a \$30billion three-part transaction: it bought a global vaccines business, sold its marketed oncology portfolio and created a new consumer healthcare business.

With a merger, acquisition and divestment (MA&D) all happening simultaneously, GSK needed a communications strategy to support the transfer of thousands of staff to patient-critical services with minimal disruption.

GSK engaged Deloitte to support the communications and change management for its global back office services, including IT, real estate and facilities, procurement and finance.

Deloitte’s role was to structure and execute a communications plan to distribute information to more than 14,000 staff in up to 70 countries.

Richard Baderman, partner at Deloitte’s technology consulting practice, says GSK wanted a “layer of protection” to identify and mitigate change and ensure continuity.

“Ultimately it wanted to ensure a very positive user experience, supporting the different work across the different activities and the suppliers across all three businesses.”

Baderman and his team of up to six developed a plan that dovetailed with GSK’s overall external strategy. It has won the MCA Change Management in the Private Sector Award.



Regular clinics allow staff to ask questions

The team carried out an impact assessment and drew up a robust plan to ensure the right message reached the right person at the right time.

Specific communication messages were put together for the different communities. For example, when logins needed to change, Deloitte worked with IT and relevant suppliers to design user messages that dovetailed with GSK’s existing channels.

It also set up regular clinics on specific topics to allow people to both access information and ask questions.

“Putting a plan in place that allowed us to robustly drive out what was going to whom, when and how was critical because it had to fit in with the broader global communications process,” Baderman says.

Getting the messaging right was essential to avoid any disruption that could have damaged GSK’s reputation.

“Recognising that there were lots of suppliers and lots of moving parts, we used our judgment to identify where we thought something might not work . . . and influenced changes to ensure the solution was going to work.”

From GSK’s perspective, Henryk Feszczur, its MA&D lead, says Deloitte was “focused on flawless execution. It , was professional in approach and demonstrated the ability to develop high-quality solutions that were right for the business.”

PHIL THORNTON

A force for real change

A team of advisers has transformed the fortunes of a county’s police, writes Tony Dawe

Bedfordshire Police was a force in crisis two years ago. It was facing budget cuts and yet, with such a poor level of performance and record on responding to and investigating crime, it was under threat of intervention from Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary.

Senior officers debated whether to seek outside help. Mark Collins, the deputy chief constable, says: “There were mixed views among the senior team — with two to three hundred years’ experience between them — about what added benefits young consultants could bring.

“But we had to face reality. We were

cash strapped, couldn’t meet demands, weren’t certain what they were and there had been no community policing for two to three years. All this had an effect on confidence in policing.”

The decision was taken to seek consultants to advise on a new operating model and KPMG won the bid because, Collins says, “they were level headed, down to earth and a team we could gel with.”

The collaboration has been so successful that Bedfordshire Police is now better able to protect the public and fight crime and KPMG has won the MCA Performance Improvement in the Public Sector Award. It is the firm’s third MCA award for work with police forces in the last four years.

Andrew Lea, KPMG director and head of policing, says: “We were able to bring the experience of having worked with 30 police forces, including in Canada, the US and Australia. We started in November 2014 and produced an opportunity assessment report by Christmas. It was quite an eye-opener for senior officers.

“Our approach was to find the top

the NHS three times what we cost the project.”

The true test of a consultancy is what happens when the consultants leave. “In terms of how to walk away from a project and leave the skills behind, this was a role model,” O’Hanlon says.

“We trained, coached and mentored their in-house team and they brought in a professional project manager. Then we took the stabilisers off and

they are up and running it on their own now.”

It was this successful handover that O’Hanlon believes helped win GEHF the MCA Award for Change Management in the Public Sector.

“This was a very politically sensitive project, very dynamic and there were a lot of legal ramifications. For two members of our staff to go through that and have it recognised nationally is one heck of an achievement.”



team’s targets and to engage with front line officers, walking the floors in police stations and spending time in custody blocks. This helped us understand their issues, listen to their ideas for improving performance and create a case for change supported by the front line and by senior officers.”

The consultants ran workshops, bringing in members of the policing team who had worked abroad to

New practices mean that Bedfordshire Police now prioritise the most serious cases

provide a different perspective on tackling the problems, and referred to a peer review of the force by Durham Police, which is rated outstanding by the inspectorate.

Analysis of the way police responded to calls revealed that they were often deployed unnecessarily because there was insufficient focus on the highest risk or threat. A new procedure was therefore introduced to

encourage decision makers to give priority to the most serious cases. Inevitably, this means that crimes that are unsolvable because of a lack of clues, forensics or CCTV coverage are not investigated.

Shift patterns were changed to provide the right officers in the right place at the right time and operational centres expanded to cover areas of the county, around Biggleswade and Leighton Buzzard for example, that were in danger of being neglected.

The KPMG team, comprising ten staff, also instigated a return to “old fashioned” policing by encouraging officers who attended a crime to see a case through investigation and, if justified, to prepare a report for the Crown Prosecution Service.

Collins says: “We were working in silos previously but with the new Team Bedfordshire approach we can bring crime and community teams to work together.

“KPMG gave us demand profiling software which identified red areas and community needs. The style and personality of the individuals who came in guaranteed we could work well together. When they put different ideas on the table, they did so very carefully and sensitively. They came in with a genuine desire to deliver a better police service.”

The performance improvement programme was completed by the end of last year but Collins says the KPMG team “continue to be our critical friends and we still meet to ask what they think about some of our plans.”

Diversity over the decades

The MCA celebrates its 60th anniversary this year. Things have changed a lot since 1956, when it was founded by Urwick Orr, Inbucon, P-E International and PA Consulting, all firms rooted in Britain’s manufacturing and industrial heritage.

A recruitment ad from the period called for “men of personality and ability who have held responsible posts in industry”. Aged 30-37, they would have an engineering degree and “a capacity for dealing with people at all levels”. Remuneration was “high” and there would be opportunities to work in other parts of the world.

In this already international industry, a challenger soon emerged: McKinsey & Co opened its London office in 1959, winning blue-chip UK clients such as Shell, Dunlop and ICI. But the corporate restructurings of the 1960s meant boom years for British consultancies too, and, by 1970, PA Consulting was still one of the largest in the world.

The 1970s were relatively lean but the end of the decade crystallised two developments: the growth of strategy consultancy and the emergence of accountancy firms.

Companies were also swift to adopt the new ERP (enterprise resource planning) systems, IT firms such as IBM moved strongly into consultancy, and outsourcing and offshoring took

The 1990s were the era of the management fad

more and more “non-core” activities outside the organisations altogether.

The 1990s were the era of the management fad, usually expressed as a TLA (three-letter acronym). None was bigger than BPR, or business process re-engineering (swiftly reddubbed big personnel reductions).

The consultancy industry reached new heights: Andersen Consulting rapidly outgrew its consultancy “parent”, Arthur Andersen. But by the end of the century consultancies, too eager to join the dot.com boom, soon were losing money at “espeed”, while attempts to link the worlds of consultancy and venture capital proved equally costly.

When the Enron affair provoked the collapse of Arthur Andersen in 2002, regulator pressure moved the remaining “Big Four” firms to dispose of their consultancy arms: PwC to IBM, Ernst & Young to Cap Gemini and KPMG to various buyers. But Deloitte drew back and in next few years the others crept back.

Most recently the industry has faced competition from digital players and smaller firms, something recognised by the MCA. The 2016 awards are a tribute to the modern consultancy industry’s diversity and scope.

MICK JAMES



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