

# JLT chooses Hitachi Consulting as partner to deliver BenPal benefits management system

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JLT BENEFIT SOLUTIONS LIMITED - CASE STUDY

JLT Benefit Solutions Limited (JLT), part of Jardine Lloyd Thompson Group plc, is one of the UK's leading employee benefit consultancies. Authorised and regulated by the Financial Services Authority, JLT employs over 1500 staff in 12 offices in the UK with revenues of some £130m.



## BUSINESS CHALLENGE

JLT identified a major business opportunity and decided to build an online integrated benefits management system using its extensive industry knowledge combined with the vision and experience of a leading team of individuals who had already developed an online benefits solution in previous employment.

Duncan Howorth, Chief Executive, JLT Benefit Solutions, commented, "We have very high ambitions for this business. It gives JLT the capability to offer new and existing clients what we believe are market-leading services and support in the growth areas of DC pensions and online benefits. This exciting proposition is central to JLT's growth in employee benefits in the UK and internationally."

The BenPal system gives companies a benefits data management platform and the ability to develop an integrated online benefits strategy on a single database. Employees go online to enrol for benefits, manage their pension and protection schemes, receive automated messages and alerts and enjoy online access via mobile devices, like the iPhone, as well as PC and laptop. Other BenPal innovations include giving employers their own capability to

manage employee and benefits data, draw down management information and control monthly payments to payroll and benefit providers and insurers. These organisations also have access to the accurate and comprehensive dataset held in BenPal for simpler and more efficient processes.

JLT required an experienced development partner for the design and build of the new system. The JLT management team responsible for the project had worked with Hitachi Consulting previously and awarded it the contract.

Jennifer Yates, Development Director, JLT Online Benefits, commented, "This was not just a software build. We had the opportunity to use our extensive, existing experience in online benefits to create a next-generation pension and benefits platform with an enhanced operating model for both JLT and our clients. We needed a supplier that would work with our own experienced team to deliver a fully operational and scalable application to a very demanding timescale. Hitachi was our first choice and they responded to the challenge by deploying an expert team of senior consultants who were 100% committed to delivering on time and on budget."

## Overview

### Project Objectives:

- Build an online benefits platform to give JLT Benefit Solutions a new, integrated proposition for defined contribution (DC) pensions and employee benefits
- Enable JLT to broaden its service offering and move to a more efficient, client-centric operating model
- Increase efficiency of client servicing through seamless integration between JLT divisions and with benefit providers
- Deliver an enterprise class application architecture that provides a resilient and scalable platform for rollout across JLT's network of international offices

### Scope of Solution:

- Architectural review
- Requirements gathering
- Scope agreement
- Design of architectural framework
- Software development service
- Implementation
- User acceptance testing
- Training and handover
- Hosting and maintenance

## THE SOLUTION

The new application supports four user communities with four unique dashboards and streamlined back-end processes:

1. End user employees - enrolment and management of company benefits, including pension fund valuations and projections, with access through PC and mobile devices
2. Employer administrators - maintenance of employee and benefit scheme data, reporting on employee take-up and costs, payroll report to calculate contributions
3. Benefit provider administrators - access to accurate data on risk and health schemes
4. JLT administrators - delivery of procurement and administration services

Hitachi's consultants delivered the pension module in a first phase, closely followed by risk, health and flexible benefits. Its architects needed to allow for the future scope of the environment and deliver a platform that could scale to accommodate numerous benefit applications for up to 500,000 users.

Hitachi Consulting has extensive web solution experience. As well as developing a previous employee benefits application, it has also delivered easyJet's ecommerce website and Bupa's enterprise integration customer solution. Its consultants were able to draw on valuable experience, tools, frameworks and methodology to deliver a platform that met JLT's extensive requirements, timelines and budget.

Hitachi consultants conducted a requirements gathering exercise to ensure a rapid understanding of JLT's immediate and long-term objectives. JLT had already employed the services of a third party company to design the dashboards. Hitachi Consulting was tasked to reverse engineer the proposed designs into a working model and scoped out a framework solution that combined best of breed technologies based on JLT's preference for a Microsoft technology stack.

Hitachi Consulting took into consideration many architecturally significant requirements such as the number of users who will access the site, the number of applications that will be added in future phases and the support requirements. As the site needs to be available 24/7 and cannot afford to fail, the scope and budget needed to allow for the build of a mirrored environment.

By drawing on its extensive web solution experience, Hitachi Consulting identified the risks within the project and prioritised them against the budget. Using predictable and preferred technologies, including a .NET application on a BizTalk platform and proven delivery methodology, Hitachi Consulting was able to design, develop and successfully deploy a scalable platform.

Jennifer Yates said, "I was very impressed with Hitachi Consulting's project management and delivery capabilities. Their agile approach made sure that they were able to accommodate change and still meet our fixed timelines."

To accommodate the increasing number of organisations that demand high quality solutions, low risk delivery, short timescales and competitive prices, Hitachi Consulting has an established Offshore Practice based in Pune, India. This resource includes high calibre developers and a dedicated testing practice that operates to the same unified delivery processes as its UK consultants. By scaling out the majority of JLT's development and testing work to Pune, Hitachi Consulting was able to drive down the cost of the project whilst scaling up resources to ensure that deadlines were met.

Jennifer Yates added, "Hitachi Consulting's combined model of onshore and offshore consultants significantly broadens the scope of what they can achieve for clients. They have robust processes and communication structures in place to ensure effective delivery and, as a result, they were able to control the budget and ramp up resource to ensure our aggressive deadlines were met."

Although JLT had initially intended to outsource the hosting and application support to another provider, on completion of the first phase Hitachi Consulting was awarded a three year contract to host, support and maintain the environment and applications.

Jennifer Yates commented, "We have to consider our hosting and support suppliers very carefully as they pose a significant commercial risk due to the nature of our business. We conducted robust due diligence on Hitachi Consulting's Managed Services Practice and took up several references. We were highly impressed with the results and, when we combined this with the exceptional service we'd received throughout the development project, appointing them as our Managed Service supplier was an obvious choice."

## Why Hitachi Consulting?

- **Qualified:** Hitachi Consulting has been an accredited Microsoft Partner since 2003, and a Gold UK partner since 2004. We have the following Gold competencies:
  - Microsoft Business Systems
  - Integrated E-Business
  - Information Worker
  - Customer Development
  - Data Management (Business Intelligence)
- **Experienced:** With a proven track record of delivering successful web solutions for many of the UK's leading organisations, including easyJet, Orbit and Bupa, Hitachi Consulting can demonstrate an unrivalled understanding of the critical success factors required to implement complex IT technology programmes of this scale.

The quality of service demonstrated by its Managed Service Practice has meant that many customers have turned to Hitachi Consulting to deliver their support requirements. In 2007 around 70% of Hitachi Consulting's new managed services customers converted from failing competitor services

- **Resources:** Hitachi Consulting combines the skills and delivery capabilities normally provided by a specialist niche technology practice, with the additional depth and breadth of capabilities typically only found in large global consultancies. Its resource model combines on-site, offsite and offshore consultants to scale implementations seamlessly using proven delivery processes
- **Approach:** Hitachi Consulting's advantage lies in its ability to bring together the best people with the benefit of the frameworks and intellectual property developed from numerous successful projects. By deploying its tried and tested tools and methodology its consultants can automate complex processes to deliver significant savings on project timings and costs

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