

Case Studies

ESS Super



ESS Super (Emergency Services & State Government Super) provides superannuation benefits for members in the Police, Fire and Ambulance services within Victoria and for Victorian public sector employees who previously had their super managed by the Government Superannuation Office (GSO).

ESS Super is a great example of an organisation making real progress on the environmental agenda. They started from an investment perspective by signing up to the UN principles on responsible investing, an industry wide guideline. More recently, they joined the investor group on climate change (IGCC) and are also progressing a number of staff-driven initiatives. ESS Super commissioned external consultants to review and focus their efforts.

Brad McSwain, GM Strategy and Technology, stresses that sustainability is a strong driver for continuous improvement for the organisation, and that part of ESS Super's strategy is to change the processes and influence behaviours at the level of members and staff. For example, members are encouraged to use online rather than printed resources; considering power usage and recyclability of hardware

is de rigueur when purchasing IT equipment; and staff are encouraged to bring in their used toner cartridges from home as part of the ESS Super cartridge recycling scheme.

It's in this context of evolving standards and rapid product change, along with the fact that the company is still in the process of integrating two previous entities (GSO and ESS), that Pitcher Partners was brought in by Brad to help ESS Super develop their eCommerce and IT strategies, items high up on the agenda of the recently defined four year business strategy agenda.

Pitcher Partners is extremely experienced in this field and brought a team of experts to act as mentors to the ESS Super teams in charge. The focus of the Pitcher engagement was to bring an approach and frameworks, as well as industry expert knowledge to make key ESS Super stakeholders self sufficient in taking the strategy forward.

The Pitcher approach is based on robust engagement of stakeholders during the strategy development phase to ensure it addresses the issues that matter and that the outcome is owned and implemented. ESS Super used a more iterative approach to engage, analyse, review and validate the outcome.

ESS Super's particular areas of focus for the strategy included:

- eCommerce;
- Business/IT applications with a focus on enterprise architecture;
- IT services and assets.

Each was a particular stream of work. All stakeholders were kept engaged through the projects via 1-1s and workshops and an additional stream looked at financials and resourcing.

The strategies and plans defined (up to 80 projects to 2011) and have been endorsed by the ESS Super executives. The teams are now working on refining some elements and locking the various initiatives into the organisation plan before implementing. Additional challenges include addressing skills gaps and getting organised around moving forward on some of the more structural initiatives.

Brad McSwain acknowledges that the IT and eCommerce team are now able to influence or contribute more proactively to the organisation agenda. The robust stakeholder engagement throughout the project together with the link to financials and resources provided the key to enabling the organisation to implement the strategy.

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