

Shared Services Connected Limited (SSCL) is a leader in critical business support services for the largest Government departments and agencies, the Ministry of Defence, Police and CITB across the UK.

We transform services through digital solutions and innovation, including end to end Finance and Accounting, HR and Payroll, Procurement, Pensions Administration and Resourcing Services - enhancing the customer experience, enabling smarter public services.

We employ around 3,000 people who, with their in-depth client knowledge and collaborative approach, sit at the heart of our business strategy. SSCL operates at size and scale across the UK public sector and has already delivered savings of just under £750 million - providing more funds for front line public service.

The Challenge

There is no doubt that we are entering a world where digitisation is playing an increasingly important role in enhancing and innovating business processes. The introduction of Robotic Process Automation (RPA), Artificial Intelligence (AI) and virtual agents across every business sector is fast becoming the norm. The use of these tools has had an undeniable positive impact on service and resource efficiency.

At SSCL we process 550,000 Incoming Service requests annually that include excel documents,

with some 950 different types of excel spreadsheets predominantly handled manually - that's a lot of time spent processing information by hand and is time that could be better utilised in other ways and on other projects.

Although these manual tasks are essential for the ongoing success of our business, they can also introduce operational inefficiencies, higher error margins, and compliance and security risks.

Digitisation for next generation Business Process Outsourcing

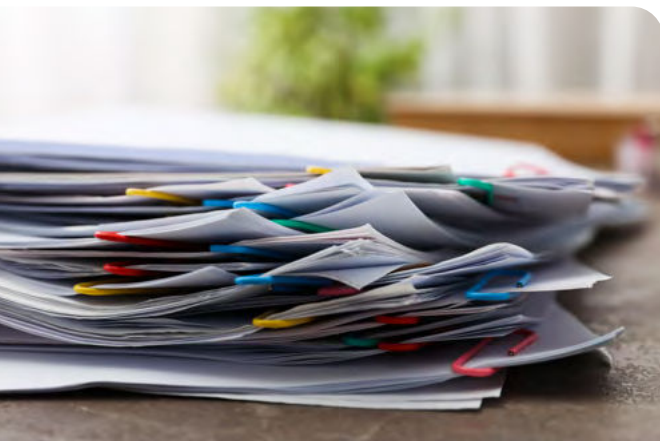
Repetitive manual business processes can be a drain on resources and have a lack of progress visibility. We recognised that to continue providing the highest customer service to our clients we would need to radically overhaul our document processing through digital transformation.

SSCL's objective was to balance and align the need to achieve business aims whilst delivering enhanced user experience and sustainable environmental improvement.

We began this ambitious transformation project in November 2022, moving time-consuming manual processes to automated and intuitive solutions with the aim of improving accuracy, efficiency, and compliance.

Collaboration with clients was essential and they were embedded within the team. This ensured clients felt reassured SSCL was listening and responding to their needs to enhance the customer experience and we didn't take the 'human' element out of this project!





In fact, we are proud to have worked collaboratively with our clients throughout the entire process, offering opportunity for their input and harnessing their expertise and feedback, which used in tandem with our own team's transformational knowledge has resulted in a sustainable and effective solution.

Additionally, SSCL worked closely with our end clients, to ensure adoption and use of forms was as smooth as possible. Aided by the production of end user guides and support packs for clients, both the team and the Contact Centre endeavoured to keep people informed of changes, equipping them with tools to deal with any resulting queries.

The solution takes information directly from the Single Operating Platform (SOP), pre-populates a digital form and validates further information keyed by the user, resulting in cleaner data, better MI and improved user experience.

All digital forms are validated before submission, resulting in reduced completion time for clients and vastly reduced rejection rates. The application of human centric and eco digital design principles also ensured that all digital forms adhere to a high and consistent standard and data is always presented with the fields in the same format and pages in the same order. Previously excel forms and layouts varied resulting in additional processing time.

Results

Over 260,000 digital forms have been processed so far following the introduction of our digital solution - for context this is approximately 5000 forms processed every week totalling over £3bn in payments!

Since its deployment the solution has had profound transformational success - revolutionising how we process forms and how our clients process their information too. The new solution's success has given clients the confidence to promote the use of digital forms with their internal users and encourage critical business and cultural change.

The eco-design principles that were applied to the forms have resulted in a decrease in CO₂ emissions for these processes and WCAG compliance has ensured that our Accessibility Tool users can finally independently submit their own HR and finance requests.

The key to this mammoth project's success was the distinctly collaborative approach between humans and technology which enabled our team to drive results, meet joint transformational objectives and continue to support our sustainable digital targets.

Immediate gains



Reduced rejections from 25-35% to 15%



Reduction in errors by 90%

Additional updated stats



Sustainable Digital techniques conservatively estimate a reduction of more than a tonne of CO₂ so far