

Stanley Gibbons Plc sets out its strategic IT direction

> ITSS Success Story

Stanley Gibbons Group Plc is an international leader in the dealing, auctioning and online trading of collectables, fine arts and antiques. The Groups collectables business includes Stanley Gibbons, the world's longest established rare stamp merchant and AH Baldwin & Sons, one of the world's oldest dealers in rare coins, tokens, medals and bank notes. Its furniture and fine arts business includes the prestigious Dreweatts & Bloomsbury Auctions and Mallett Antiques.

With a well advanced business strategy to develop the premier online Marketplace for collectables trading and grow its core businesses, the management identified a need to crystalize and articulate the requirements of the different parts of the Group with regard to what future IT solutions must deliver and the responsibilities for making it happen. There was also a need to clearly set out and prioritise the programmes of work required to effect the transition.

“The business had grown by acquisition and we needed to use technology to support and enable an effective integration process” explained Anthony Gee, the Chief Operating officer. “We also knew that experienced, independent expertise would be very beneficial to help us pull together the thoughts and views of the Senior Management team and provide guidance on what our future IT resourcing and initiatives should look like.”

Anthony turned to IT Solutions and Services (ITSS) for assistance.

“Michael Hully and Chris Brown at ITSS put forward a clear proposal that demonstrated how their expertise as CIOs, Business leaders and IT Cost Management experts would help us” said Anthony. “They identified that an



IT Strategic Framework was required that clearly defined how IT direction could be effectively governed in the future, that linked business strategy to an IT strategy and defined programmes of IT change that could be agreed by the Board.”

The ITSS consultations with senior managers and the IT Team and review of existing processes took place over a two month period, with the result that a Strategic Framework was delivered and approved by the Stanley Gibbons Plc Executive Committee.

“Our senior team were particularly impressed with how quickly ITSS understood what we were needing to do as a business and then translate that into clear IT strategies whilst avoiding confusing IT jargon” said Anthony.

Now there is one clearly defined view and a clear direction on how future IT needs will be identified, decisions taken, funding allocated and then procurement, delivery implementation and support effected.

A review and restructure of the Group IT function is underway with assistance from ITSS and a range of prioritised strategic IT work programmes are to be initiated across areas such as Data Analytics and Business process and IT solutions standardization.

One of the first programmes of work will be to consolidate and integrate IT infrastructures, telecommunications, office systems and support services within the Group and ITSS have been engaged to help define, procure and manage delivery of this important change programme.

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Anthony Gee, Chief Operating Officer, Stanley Gibbons Plc