

Partners

How Adaptavist collaborated with the John Lewis Partnership to build a comprehensive, scalable and resilient managed services platform for more than 2,000 Atlassian users.

JOHN LEWIS PARTNERSHIP NEEDED:

- ✓ A platform on which the value of JIRA and Confluence could be maximised
- ✓ Very high system utilisation, underpinned by reliable service level agreements and robust disaster recovery provision
- ✓ Access to more plugins, as well as version control
- ✓ An expert delivery partner, capable of highly collaborative execution

ADAPTAVIST SUPPLIED:

- ✓ A meticulous approach to defining the client's needs
- ✓ A managed services platform that was seamlessly implemented and meets JLP's high expectations
- ✓ 99.9% utilisation in line with the Service Level Agreement
- ✓ Full off-site disaster recovery provision
- ✓ Technical expertise and a deep commitment to client-centric delivery

THE CHALLENGE

The John Lewis Partnership (JLP) is a 150-year-old UK retailer. Owned by its 91,000 employees, it operates 42 John Lewis shops and 322 Waitrose supermarkets across the UK, as well as the award-winning ecommerce sites johnlewis.com and waitrose.com.

Unhappy with their previous system for a number of reasons JLP looked to Adaptavist to provide better control over plugins and service level agreements. JLP knew that JIRA and Confluence had the potential to deliver much more, and as Claire Nelson, JLP's Methods and Tools Lead (Technical Services) puts it, "We wanted to establish the maximum value that could be gained from the tools." This prompted JLP to go looking for a strategic delivery partner that could provide hosting support and consultancy expertise across the complete Atlassian suite of tools.

The procurement process

The Partnership looked seriously at three potential suppliers, all of them accredited by Atlassian. Adaptavist rose to the top of the list, according to Nelson, because of the focus and expertise they could provide. "Key factors," she adds, "included their passion for the toolset and demonstrable close links to the Atlassian team." Adaptavist was hired.



Key factors included their passion for the toolset and demonstrable close links with Atlassian.

John Lewis



DELIVERING THE SOLUTION

Requirements gathering

Adaptavist began the engagement by running more than half a dozen workshops with different sets of stakeholders from multiple development departments. Each group had their own OnDemand accounts. The workshops pinned down JLP's initial requirements and then scoped the more complex elements, including the need to consolidate the approach. Adaptavist was very thorough, wanting to really get under the skin of what was needed. The process was conducted in an open, transparent way over two months, and was highly collaborative so that JLP always understood what decisions were being made and why, while the platform was being built.

Implementing the solution

The first tranche of users – just over 500 of them – moved to the new platform in June 2013. JLP's goal was that they would transition as seamlessly as possible. "We wanted them to come in on the Monday and start working without noticing anything different apart from a different URL," explains Nelson. "Any filters or dashboard favourites they had and all their profile information would look exactly how they'd left it when they signed off on the Friday. That was very important."

In reality, however, this was, in Nelson's words: "amazingly hard work to achieve." As well as build the platform, in the background Adaptavist had to map the profiles of every user to meet JLP's stringent information security requirements. "The amount of work that went on," continues Nelson, "this is something where again, Adaptavist just showed how great they are. They had to do a lot of work for basically no gain, just housekeeping in the background. And it was very complicated."

Adaptavist worked tirelessly to get everything ready on schedule, and ultimately the move to the new platform was near-flawless. "There were a couple of little things, but they were so minor. Everybody was able to come in on that first Monday and just start working. We picked up things during the day and fixed them, but it was a complete success. Given people's concerns prior to the transition, I think everybody was very, very happy."



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What the solution provides

Adaptavist has supplied and now runs a secure and stable managed services platform. It is a place where JLP's users can quickly and easily share information, access the full range of Atlassian plugins, and reliably get work done more quickly and efficiently.

In less than two years the number of users has quadrupled in a succession of closely-managed and successful roll-outs. Currently more than 2,000 people in London and Bracknell use the platform, as well as offshore users in India and Europe and some external suppliers. "What's great is because there's a URL, it can be accessed anytime, anywhere," notes Nelson. Since JIRA is used for rolling out new code against set deadlines, this universal 24/7 access is of real commercial value to JLP. Meanwhile the system still meets all of the Partnership's security requirements.

The platform has also given JLP the ability to collaborate seamlessly across the whole business. "It's now a consolidated place where everybody can do what they need to do," notes Nelson. "They can interact with each other across projects. You can put anything on there – any document you can think of. It's just a great way to share knowledge and get work done quickly when you're not sitting next to the person that you are working closely with."

The platform also hosts all of JLP's operating processes. This ensures that a diverse user population adheres to the same protocols and procedures. It enhances collaboration and means that JLP's best-practice standards are easier to maintain.



Managing the platform

Meanwhile, Adaptavist also handles the day-to-day management of the platform which continues to be rolled-out to new users all the time as JLP expands internally, and new areas of the business want to start using it. Any questions or issues that arise are ranked and dealt with against four levels of priority. Whatever the level, says Nelson, “Adaptavist always get back in contact with us within that working day.”

The service level agreement is for 99.9% utilisation – a target that is assessed at regular service level reviews and which Adaptavist continues to meet. “It has meant we have consistency,” notes Nelson. The entire system is also backed up with a robust disaster recovery solution which gives JLP peace of mind.



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HOW ADAPTAVIST MADE A DIFFERENCE

Adaptavist made a difference in the way it set about the task of determining what the client needed in a transparent, open and collaborative way. “The experience that Adaptavist has is really important,” notes Nelson. “They don’t just nod and say yes if you ask for something. They will challenge you if they think that something might not be right and offer you alternatives with the pros and cons of each, and that is very much appreciated.”

Importantly too, the Adaptavist team is stable and accessible. JLP has confidence that they can always get hold of and talk to the same people. It makes for consistency and quicker resolutions. Nelson also highlights their patience. “When you’re trying to keep 2,000 users happy,” she says, “there will always be people who want something resolved instantaneously. Adaptavist will always answer the questions and go back until the user has said, ‘Yes, I’m happy.’ They are very good in that way.”

In conclusion, what does JLP think of Adaptavist? “We have high expectations and Adaptavist matches them,” says Nelson. “We are very pleased and I think we have a good relationship. It’s partly their attitude, partly their consistency, and partly the experience of the people working at Adaptavist. We can have open and honest conversations with them about everything.”

See how we can help you, talk to our experts today ➤

ABOUT ADAPTAVIST

Adaptavist, established in 2005, is a London-headquartered IT services company providing premium professional services, support, hosting and licenced products to a wide range of national and international clients including over half of the Fortune 500 companies. Adaptavist, an ‘Atlassian Platinum and Enterprise Partner’, is widely recognised as the most technically advanced Enterprise Partner in the Atlassian ecosystem.

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