Enhancing IT agility and data compliance at the British Council

About British Council

The British Council champions peace and prosperity by cultivating relationships, understanding, and trust between the UK and global nations. They leverage the UK's rich expertise in the arts, culture, education, and the English language. This fortifies the UK's international reputation, inviting global collaboration in various domains, from study to trade. They foster symbiotic relationships between the UK's and other countries, directly aiding individuals in enhancing skills and confidence for a brighter global future.

Collaboratively working with global governments, education, linguistic, and cultural sectors, their reach extends to over 200 countries. In 2021-22, their impact touched 650 million people. Founded in 1934, they are a UK charity under a Royal Charter and a recognised public body.

Industry:
Public Sector

Application:
SAP archiving and GDPR compliance

Product:
SAP ILM

Challenges to address: System efficiency and compliance

Despite its extensive global outreach, the British Council faced an operational challenge.Their SAP ERP system, in use since 2005, had grown considerably. The sheer volume of data was hampering system response times and performance. Alongside, there was a pressing need to establish a stringent framework for compliance, ensuring appropriate data access restrictions and eventual data removal when required. To address these concerns, the British Council sought to refine its database, aiming for agile operations while upholding GDPR requirements. The Council initiated a public sector procurement tender. After a rigorous review, the responsibility was entrusted to Proceed Group, one of the few that matched the Council's specifications.

The solution: Strategic archiving and data blocking

A significant portion of the partnership's early stages revolved around diving deep into the Council's data. The goal? Identifying the largest space occupiers and devising strategies for archiving.

With the British Council's business retention strategy serving as a guide, Proceed Group implemented SAP ILM to control access through data blocking and automate the archiving and deletion process. This pivotal step ensured data protection and readied the system to cap data growth, leading to system size reductions and improved system performance.

The business benefits: Leaner data footprint and enhanced compliance

A significant achievement was reducing the database size from 2.4 TB to a streamlined 1 TB by archiving 1.4 TB of data. While enhanced data blocking bolstered security, allowing precise control over the duration individual roles can access historical personal data, dictated by their role-specific permissions. Outlined below are the key benefits realised:

- A substantial reduction in database size from 2.4 TB to 1 TB.
- Improved report runtimes, reducing wait times by 80%
- Capped data growth enabled, for future-proof volume management and sustained high-speed performance.
- Robust blocking for enhanced data breach protection by achieving 98% GDPR compliance blocking for 2.91 million business partners. Progressing on customers and vendors with current rates at 74% and 9% respectively.
- Historical HR master data purged to align with the "right to be forgotten" mandate of the GDPR regulation.
- Data retention aligned with fiscal standards across 100+ countries, ensuring legal compliance and audit readiness.

Future prospects: Building on a robust foundation

With the immediate challenges addressed, the foundation has been laid for further digital transformation. The British Council now stands poised to leverage this refined database system for more extensive and impactful global outreach. The streamlined system serves as a stepping stone to further innovations and technological advancements.

> *"We reviewed several suppliers as part of this process and found Proceed Group to be a perfect fit for what we needed. Their experience is superior when it comes to archiving and information lifecycle management. We felt a strong connection with the team from the start; there was no nonsense or games played by them. Information lifecycle management is an esoteric part of SAP, so it pays to partner with Proceed who has made the area their niche and specialism."*
>
> **- Richard Symes, Head of ERP**

Contact us to find out more

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PROJECT STATS

1.4 TB

Reduced their database size by 1.4TB

80 %

Improved report runtimes, reducing wait times by 80%

Proceed Group has been running data management projects for over twenty years – helping hundreds of customers worldwide.

Our services include SAP archiving, content management as well as the decommissioning of SAP and non-SAP systems.

This, combined with our team of expert consultants and our range of state of the art products, is the key to delivering success for our customers.