CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY REPORT

To society Business always means responsibility

ICL SERVICES

2020

CONTENTS

24/7/365

Customer Support in English, Russian, French and German

Quality and standards (availability of certificates):

▶ ISO 9001
▶ ISO/IEC 20000
▶ ISO/IEC 27001

80 large customers

in 30 countries

Included in the IAOP*
TOP-100 rating

ICL Services is a Russian company that provides world-class managed IT services to its clients. We are the IT company in ICL Group and operate on the international market since 2006.

ICL Services provides:

– integrated services for all IT infrastructure components from data centers and user workstation to complex business-critical applications with modern methodologies and flexible service models;

– guaranteed availability of IT infrastructure and applications, as well as full compliance with the SLA;

– minimizing and sharing IT infrastructure management risks with the customer;

– transformation and upgrading of IT infrastructure using effective technology;

– business performance increase through reliable and stable IT services.

1997

Fujitsu acquired ICL company and transformed it into Fujitsu Services. New business model was developed following by formation of a team of qualified managers. From this time point ICL-KME CS had become a part of Fujitsu Limited.

2006

Formation of Fujitsu Russia GDC (later ICL Services) as a separate subdivision of ICL-KME CS.

2007

Creation of competence center for integrated solutions used in retail automation and logistics. Development of Application Services (AS) and Test and Validation (T&V) - subsequently - Workplace Services (WS).

2008

Formation of Infrastructure Services. Beginning of remote administration of IT infrastructure of customers. In 2014 IS and WS formed a single structure called Managed Infrastructure.

2012

The division of Fujitsu Russia GDC was opened in Voronezh.

2013

ICL Group withdraws from Fujitsu Group in order to implement an independent development strategy in the Russian market. At the same time Russia GDC continues to cooperate with companies of the Fujitsu Group with the status "Fujitsu's preferred supplier of Services".

2014

Russia GDC enters the Russian market under the brand ICL Services. The brand's main idea of unique services based on the Western experience, international standards and highly qualified personnel.

2015

ICL Services is now among world top 100 outsourcing companies. Solution developed by ICL Services experts won in the innovation time contest in the category "Technology Innovation of the Year".

2016

ICL Services opens its first foreign office in Belgrade (Serbia). Our company was listed for the second time in the TOP 100 of the largest outsourcing providers in the world according to the IAOP. Partnership agreements with the largest IT vendors (Cegid, Omninet and Red Hat) are formed.

2017

The Expert Council of the annual award "Innovation Time-2017" named ICL Workspace solution as the " Product of the Year" in the "IT and Digital Technologies" category. For the third year in a row, our company entered the Global Outsourcing top -100 rating, compiled by the International Association of Outsourcing Professionals (IAOP).

2018

Expanded partnership in the Asian region (Japan, Singapore). We actively develop competencies in IoT, machine learning and robotization. ICL Services is planning to complete 2018 year with 30% service volumes increase.

2019

The company became a finalist of the international SDI rating in the nominations "The best automation project" and "The best large managed service provider", and also got into the TOP-7 rating of the European IT & Software Excellence awards. The number of employees of the company exceeded 2000 people. A Vladivostok ICL Services department was opened.

Opening new office in Usady, Kazan

COMPANY FACTS
GEOGRAPHY OF WORK

13 000
servers supported

>2300
employees
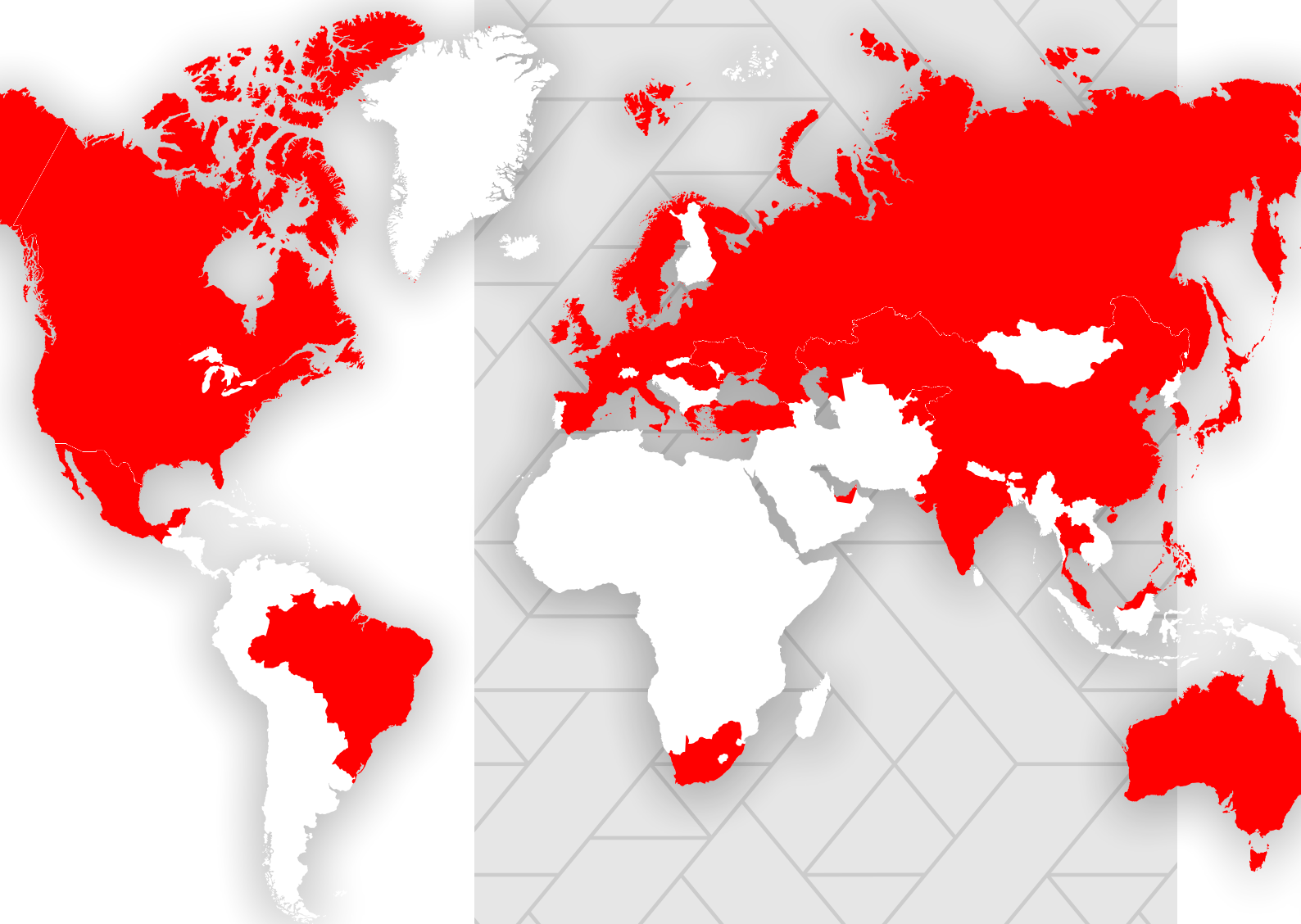
250 business
applications

>80 large customers
in 30 countries

>1000
jobs were created in the
Republic of Tatarstan

25 PBytes of data
warehousing and
8000 DBase with 6,45
PByte in total volume

97%
level of compliance the SLA*

77 000
USERS
WORLDWIDE

CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY POLICY

GOALS

ICL Services sets GOALS in assessment of Social Responsibility:

Increasing Customer loyalty by expanding their involvement in the resolution of socially significant issues;

Consolidating the Company's competitive edge by creating an image on both markets – on domestic and global markets;

Promoting the sustainable development of society on the territories where the Company conducts business.

THE MAIN OBJECTIVES

The main objectives in assessment of Social Responsibility:

Using Social Responsibility principles integration into the Company's business activity;

Creating mechanisms for determining and registration of stakeholder's interest in the operations of the Company as well as informing the interested parties on the results of the Company's activities in the sphere of social responsibility;

Attaining an additional positive effect from social Company's activities and increasing of its brand value;

Controlling over management of the Company's reputation risk level as it pertains to Social Responsibility related matters;

Achieving excellent management skills in assessing social responsibility by organizing systematic work. A planning process organization of the activities in assessment of Social Responsibility, attaining cost effectiveness.

The company's principles towards corporate social responsibility

Company recognizes its responsibility in economic, social and environmental implications of undertakings and observes following principles defined by international standard ISO 26000:

01 TRANSPARENCY

The company strives to disclose its policy, decisions and activities in a clear, accurate, complete, reasonable and sufficient form for which it is responsible including the known and likely impacts on society, economy and environment. The principle of transparency does not imply the disclosure of confidential information or information which disclosure may result in a violation of legal, commercial, security and privacy obligations.

02 ETHICAL BEHAVIOR

The company considers the ethical behavior of its employees, which corresponds to the company's mission and values.

03 THE PRINCIPLE OF TAKING STAKEHOLDER'S INTERESTS INTO CONSIDERATION

The company continuously interacts with parties concerned on a regular basis it identifies, assesses and takes into account the expectations and interests of those parties through meetings, interviews, surveys, and analysis of complaints.

RESPECT FOR THE LAW RULES AND INTERNATIONAL BEHAVIOUR NORMS

04

ACCOUNTABILITY

05

The company respects human rights, realizing that they are inseparably applicable in the countries where the company operates, in all cultures and circumstances, it takes measures to comply with them, considers it to be unacceptable to benefit from situations where the law or its implementation does not provide commensurate protection of human rights.

The company complies with all applicable laws and regulations, takes steps to identify and study such applicable laws and regulations, informs employees about the responsibility for compliance and promotes the adoption of appropriate and timely measures to ensure compliance with the law in all company's jurisdictions.

The company recognizes the need for regular reporting on the impact of its activities on society, economy and environment. It considers constructive criticism of parties concerned as a source of the improvement of its activities and will respond to such criticism, which includes measures aimed at preventing the recurrence of negative impacts. The relationships between Company and our main stakeholders are the area of application and Social Responsibility controlled object. In order to implement the Policy we identify the following stakeholders and their groups *(Table 1)*.

To make the relationship management to work with our stakeholders, we focused our activities in assessment of Social Responsibility on following priorities *(Table 2).*

TABLE 1

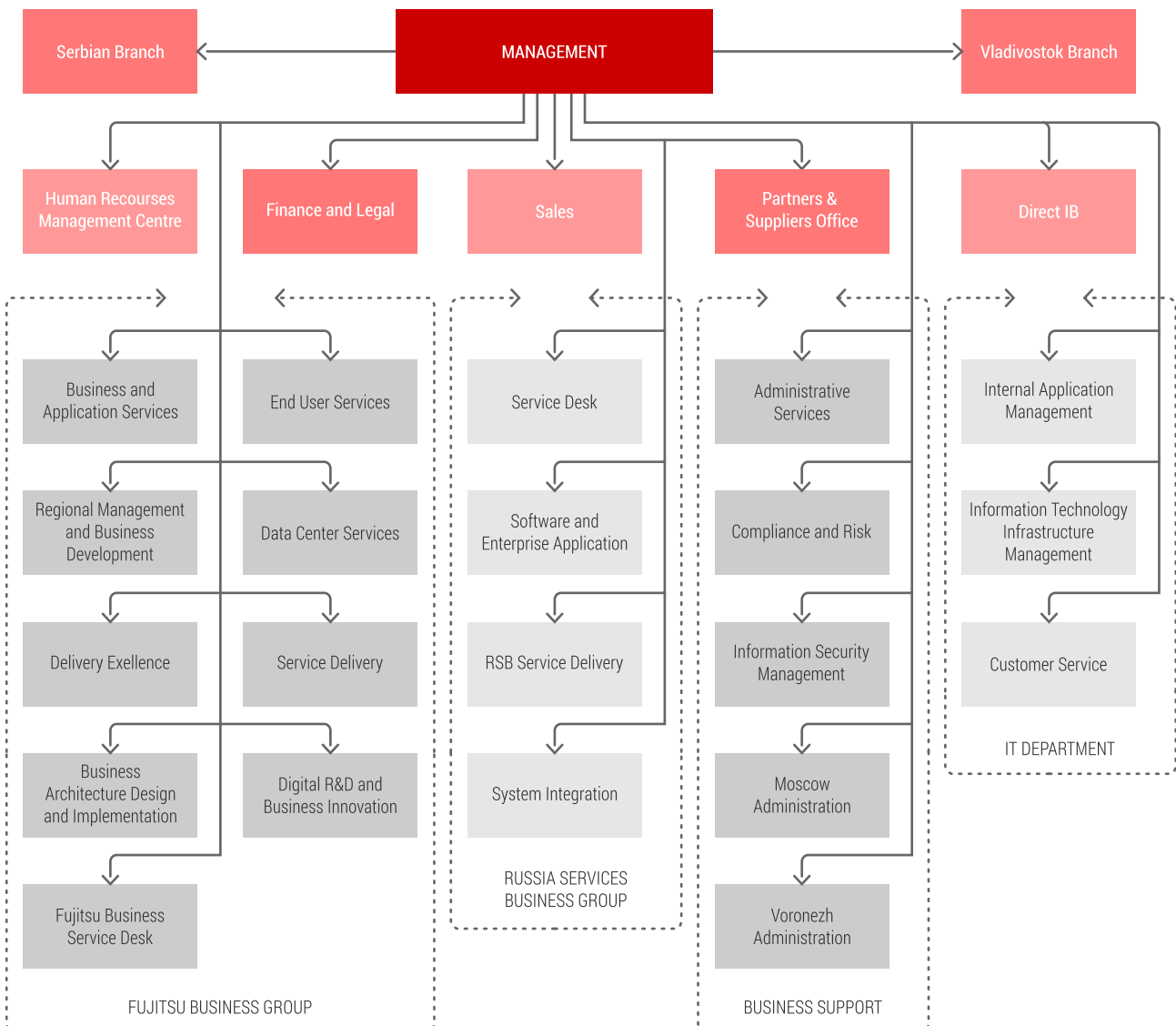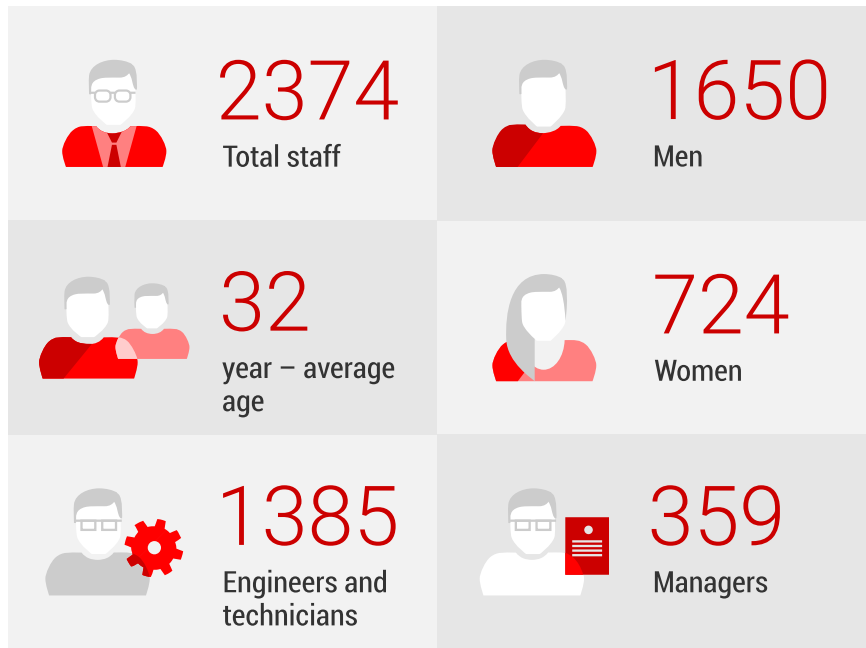Definition and classification of major stakeholders

Group	Justification
Customers	Customers are service consumers. Their preferences define the sustainability of the company's business.
Employees	The company is a major employer. Employees are the company's main asset; they work with its customers, develop its reputation, and implement the company's strategic and business goals.
Society (local communities)	The company interacts with society (local communities). Its activities are connected to the social and ecological environments in which it is active.
Founders and investors	The company is interested in maintaining transparent and open relationships with its founders and investors.
State	The company is a major division of a large tax-payer. The state is an important partner of the company.

TABLE 2

The company's corporate and social responsibility priorities

Stakeholder group	Corporate and social responsibility priorities
Customers	Quality of products and services. Availability of services.
Employees	Investing into human capital. Supporting the family as a social institution.
Society (local communities)	Charity and sponsorship. Minimization of negative environmental impacts.
Founders and investors	Responsible corporate behavior.
State	Contributing to the economic development of the regions where the company is active.

FACTS ABOUT COMPANY STAFF.
CORPORATE STRUCTURE

2374 Total staff

1650 Men

32 year – average age

724 Women

1385 Engineers and technicians

359 Managers

MANAGEMENT

Serbian Branch ← MANAGEMENT → Vladivostok Branch

- Human Recourses Management Centre
- Finance and Legal
- Sales
- Partners & Suppliers Office
- Direct IB

FUJITSU BUSINESS GROUP

Business and Application Services	End User Services
Regional Management and Business Development	Data Center Services
Delivery Exellence	Service Delivery
Business Architecture Design and Implementation	Digital R&D and Business Innovation
Fujitsu Business Service Desk	

RUSSIA SERVICES BUSINESS GROUP

- Service Desk
- Software and Enterprise Application
- RSB Service Delivery
- System Integration

BUSINESS SUPPORT

- Administrative Services
- Compliance and Risk
- Information Security Management
- Moscow Administration
- Voronezh Administration

IT DEPARTMENT

- Internal Application Management
- Information Technology Infrastructure Management
- Customer Service

VALUES

For getting high-effective results, it is equally important to have high professional knowledges and skills and share correct values inside the Company. We share 5 core values in internal and external relations and interactions:

RULES

01

pooling knowledge and experience which help us in our work and communications

RESULT

02

the outcome of joint efforts which satisfies us and our customers completely

RESPONSIBILITY

03

ability and readiness to be responsible for the result

DEVELOPMENT

04

continuous improvement in completing tasks and achieving new goals

TRUST

05

confidence in each other's responsibility and reliability

While the company has had some remote working experience before the lockdown, online corporate events remain an unchartered territory yet to be explored for the first time. Here are 9 exciting options for your team.

Let's start from the key performance indicators achieved by a major IT company in 2019: more than 180 events were held, 90% of them offline. Then in March 2020, in just two weeks, 90% of the employees shifted to remote working. How was event production supposed to readjust in these circumstances?

Luckily, they had a solid base. Here's the first tip: when organizing any major event, try to involve talented employees within the company. Our co-workers formed rock bands and performed at corporate parties, developed cyber games, hosted quizzes and competitions.

Once you switch to online mode, this tradition will stand you in good stead. Reach out to those talented co-workers, and the ideas for events will come naturally.

Organize a party featuring a DJ set with vinyl records. Or even two parties. That's awesome if the DJ is your co-worker. You can bring the turntables and the streaming equipment to their place, post the event announcement on social media and your intranet portal if you have any, and your co-workers from the IT department can help set up the live stream. Take our IT company with 2,000+ employees as an example: just two events attracted 550 participants and got positive feedback.

If you don't have a co-worker doubling as a DJ, you can hire one. Since parties are still banned in this country, you can get a good discount. Go live on YouTube!

Photo created by marymarkevich - www.freepik.com

The next major event can be a virtual home concert of a rock band formed by the co-workers. Launch the live stream on YouTube, available to everyone interested. The performance will be attended not only by the employees, but by their family members, prospective job applicants, and your social media followers.

In every team, there is usually a co-worker who can play the guitar. Invite them to give a heartwarming evening performance. And your company's YouTube channel will give exposure to these lockdown homegrown artists and gain new subscribers.

We are now offering our office yoga classes online. They are held twice a week in exchange for a donation. It's hard to believe but the yoga instructor is our co-worker too. In addition, the attendance has increased compared to offline classes at the office — they are more convenient, as you don't have to rush home right after the class.

If you don't have a yoga instructor in your team, launch any type of workout online — even if it's only "Holding a plank every day at 12.00" via a video call. Yes, the audience is small, but the engagement numbers will go through the roof at zero costs.

Photo created by freepik - www.freepik.com

"Doctors vs Corona" adventure quest through Russian cities inspired by Plague.Inc

13 teams of five participants each "conquered" the cities, guessing the objects located on online maps, looking closely at monuments, and learning about the history of Russia. The quest was hosted by our co-worker, and she was the one to come up with all the activities.

All you need to do is launch the online registration, put the teams together, buy the game engine (the quest hosting platform), and provide prizes for the winners.

We deliberately centred the quest on a hot topic. But if the company doesn't have a game designer, you can simply cover the cost of the employees' participation in a third-party quiz. There's a wide selection of those now, and they are not very expensive.

"DOCTORS
VS CORONA"
ADVENTURE
QUEST

4

Photo created by pressfoto - www.freepik.com

Being with kids 24/7 is a bliss and... hard work. In addition to articles for parents with ideas on how to keep your child entertained during the lockdown with materials available (completing quizzes around the apartment, playing the chemist or the cook, staging amateur plays, etc.), get ready to award the kids with certificates of gratitude that they did not interfere with their mothers' and fathers' working from home, that they lived through this difficult period without breaking restrictions - and did a brilliant job overall!

The certificates may be both printed and digital. We chose the online option, published an announcement for the employees with a link to the template so that everyone could download it and write in the name of their little lockdown hero.

These can vary from quizzes to social activism. For example, we took part in the "I Know About Autism. Do You?" campaign launched by the Zvezda Foundation. We shared the campaign information on our corporate social media with the audience of more than 5000 people. As a result, more than 50 people were able to take the test on early detection of autism in children and became more knowledgeable about this issue.

Make informative compilations of online resources on how to work from home. On a regular basis, put together articles on online courses and training options, on free quizzes or live streams and tours, on good films and TV shows to while away the quarantine time.

For events with zero budget, monitor online activities and send invitations to your employees. Activities of this kind have multiplied during the lockdown. It will cost nothing to the company, but provide the variety and change of scene for the employees.

For people who have never worked from home, this is a stressful situation. That's why it is crucial to keep in touch with the co-workers and stand by them. Competitions titled "How to Work from Home Efficiently" and "Remote Work Challenge", in which everyone can share their secrets to stay motivated, always attract a large number of participants. Our pets had been our greatest solace. It's a lot of fun when someone's cat ambles into the frame during a live stream. Having had our share of laughing, we assumed a more serious attitude, compiled the best remote work practices, shared them via our official channels and communicated them to our team leaders.

The lockdown period also involved two environmental events: Earth Hour and Earth Day. We launched competitions on social media and intranet portals: our co-workers posted photos of how they spend time without electricity (the winners shared images of the moon as seen through a telescope and a theme-based origami). We also invited a famous environmental blogger to give us a Zoom lecture on sustainable living habits.

COMPETITIONS

7

Currently, there is an ongoing contest for the best crafts project using recyclable materials. Our co-workers enjoy such things. All winners will be awarded after we return to the office.

Competitions and lectures can be held in any format. It entirely depends on your imagination. Just get your co-workers together and try to see the positive side of events. Invite teammates to lectures and discussions that might be of interest to them! Award prizes for active participation or just post updates naming the winners and send them attractive digital certificates. Sometimes recognition is more valuable than any prize.

Photo created by freepik - www.freepik.com

8
EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES

At the moment, it's crucial to keep the employees informed about the pandemic and other diseases. Set up an online meeting with a virologist. This will mitigate the emerging panic noticeably.

We are sure that you and your colleagues have something you could teach others, either related to your professional activities or your hobbies. Let it be known and share it with everyone.

9
PLANTING HOUSEPLANTS INSTEAD OF TREES

Twice a year our team members plant trees: fir trees and flowers around the office building, apple trees in parks. Since we are going to be on the lockdown at home till the end of May, these events will be held online. We'll host a lecture on how to repot houseplants properly and tell about the plants you can grow at home – from scallions and basil to avocados. Speaking of which, you can grow beautiful two-meter plants from seeds of store-bought avocados. 30 people have already signed up for the lecture, so it seems to generate some interest. The lecturer – gardening expert – is our co-worker as well.

You can follow the results of planting online and share the pictures of your thriving plants.

Photo created by senivpetro - www.freepik.com

WHAT CONCLUSION CAN BE DRAWN FROM THIS ALL?

Events in the online format, remote learning and working from home are a new reality that has its benefits and drawbacks. We are forced to change and adapt very rapidly, doing a lot of things for the first time.

Now we are looking forward to returning to conventional events and real-life meetings with co-workers. But we will definitely keep some of the virtual events. Experience has shown that this format has some undeniable advantages:

1. A wider inclusion of managers.

Experience suggests that managers make up only about 5% of the participants of offline events — it is lower than their share in the company staff. 95% of the participants are frontline employees. With the transition to the online format, we have significantly increased this ratio, by almost 20%. It might be attributed to the fact that the managers usually have a heavy workload and no time for an offline event. However, all they need to do to join a virtual activity is to turn on their laptop.

2. A greater degree of engagement.

Our co-workers' performances leave a more vivid impression than those of hired musicians. 1000+ comments left during the live stream and dozens of reposts on social media prove it.

4. Novelty and simplicity.

If your colleagues are left unimpressed with regular events, try to approach them from a new angle. Look into engagement and audience reach - probably, that is exactly what you were lacking. To learn about your audience's wishes, just ask your co-workers what kind of events they would like to participate in.

3. Involvement of all offices.

Integrated virtual space makes it possible to bring employees from all regions together. It is increasingly complicated at offline events.

5. Apparent budget savings.

The need for event venues, office rentals, catering and other expenses is eliminated. You need to find equipment and prizes, as well as spend some time on planning and communication. It results in substantial savings.

VIRTUAL CORPORATE EVENT PLANNING CHECKLIST

☑ Select an audience-appropriate event and announce it at least a week before via the available channels: the intranet portal, the newsletter, social media and instant messengers. This way the employees will set their schedules accordingly and won't make other plans for Friday evening.

☑ Make sure to ask the co-workers to register for the event. This way you will be able to predict the number of participants and see whether the activity needs any additional promotion.

☑ Test different online platforms. Use those that do not cause any audio or image distortions. It's a major advantage when the platform is accessible from different devices, such as laptops and smartphones.

☑ Prepare the script and the timing. Prior to the event, come up with interactive activities (competitions, prizes) and select those who will livestream them during the event.

☑ Run a test live stream with a focus group.

☑ On the day of the event, send out the relevant information to the participants: share direct links to the live stream via email and instant messengers.

☑ At the end of the event, collect the participants' feedback and analyse the statistical data to gain insight into what to consider in the future.

Our company is a major system integrator: we have 2,000+ employees and eight offices in Russia and abroad. The HR Department is responsible for recruitment and onboarding, performance review and motivation, internal communications, employee training and related processes.

Conventionally, the HR budget is comprised of three large components: payroll budget, budget for employee training and development, and operating HR budget (covering the rest of the expenditure categories from recruiting to office parties). Initially, we drew up the budget for a year, later on, we did it twice a year, more recently — every three months. This allows for better budget management in a dynamic environment.

A pandemic is not just a change of environment, it's "a black swan". It didn't take us long to realise that we didn't know how events would unfold in the long term (no-one knew, really). However, in just two weeks, we managed to transfer 90% of the employees to remote work and ensure prompt response to the daily inflow of the Government decisions (particularly, those imposing lockdown). The HR budget has been revised appropriately as well.

First of all, we have reviewed our plans and selected those that could be implemented remotely and those that could not (meaning that we had to scrap them or change their format). In the face of uncertainty, we have elaborated several scenarios:

How to Keep Going: HR Budget Reallocation

The primary mission of the HR department of any company is to maintain a well-functioning and efficient team. Currently, it means bolstering the staff's confidence in the future. But how can this mission be reconciled with budget cuts, all but inevitable In a situation of uncertainty and crisis? *Lilia Mingaleeva, Head of the Human Resources Operations Department at ICL Services,* explains how HR expenses can be redistributed.

The optimistic scenario was based on the previously approved HR budget for 2020.

The realistic scenario involved amendments in response to the changed conditions (the motto was, "everything essential is done but not overdone").

The moderately pessimistic scenario was formulated as follows: "the customary is abandoned in favour of the critically important."

The worst-case scenario included "the bare minimum needed for the business to survive". We haven't yet developed the latter in detail; hopefully, we won't have to.

The feature specific to the IT industry is the qualified personnel everyone lines up to hire. It's not an "employer-driven market" but rather a "candidate-driven market". And this defines the boundaries we navigate: unlike at some other companies, it is crucial for us to maintain the budget for the key HR expenditure categories at the level to which the employees are accustomed. If the situation was different, our way of approaching the budget reallocation would be different as well.

So, to sum up, what has been adjusted? First and foremost, those expenditure items that are technically impossible under lockdown.

Rewarding the best employees in 2019

01

Corporate events: How we maintain the proper amount of communication with employees while optimizing the budget.

In 2019, we held 200+ events. The most expensive ones were the company's summer anniversary celebrations held at our regional offices (Kazan, Moscow, Voronezh, Vladivostok, and Belgrade). Mass events are currently banned in this country - not that we're going to hold them anyway. First, they pose a certain risk to the employees' health. Second, many employees will choose not to attend for fear of infection.

Rewarding the best employees according to the year-end performance review has been switched to a different format: the director will congratulate the winners in a special address but their awards will be waiting for them at their workplaces — those will be the first things they will see on their first working day after the lockdown is lifted and the remote work mode is over. In doing so, we have cut down expenses by skipping the official part and saved on renting and catering.

Naturally, some of the activities related to sports (sports grounds rental, taking part in marathons, running courses) and environment protection (planting trees together, lake clean-ups) are not in demand now. We hope to return to them in the second half of the year.

Some events have not been waived, for example, giving presents to the retired employees on Victory Day. We have moved a lot of activities online: yoga classes, training courses, parties, home concerts, quests, environmental lectures. That has significantly reduced the costs while the engagement increased. For example, an online party brought together 400+ people. Most of the events have been organized by our employees — DJs, yoga instructors, quest writers. You can't put a price on that.

02

Branded products and merchandise. Optimizing the budget.

We have cut the costs of corporate gifts for offline and office events by half. Online events have been supplied from last year's stocks. Buying souvenirs in bulk for future use has proved to be both cheaper and more reliable: the contractor market and international shipping are currently under threat.

However, the budget for welcome kits for entry-level employees has remained intact. In 2019, our staff expanded by 400+ employees. This year, despite the lockdown, 100+ new employees have already been hired. Recruitment and new employees are our priorities, and we are not going to cut these expenses down.

03

Recruitment: redistribution of expenses within the expenditure category

We have opted out of renting premises for group job interviews because of the ban on mass events, factored in a slight reduction in costs due to the natural decrease in recruitment in other cities, and waived the services of recruitment agencies.

Unfortunately, in our case, they have rarely provided the desired result. However, we have allocated more funds to the access to job search resources and preserved the referral program budget (a referral bonus is granted to anyone who successfully refers a candidate for a vacancy to be filled).

04

VHI (voluntary health insurance) and employees' health and wellbeing: no reductions

The COVID-19 pandemic does not cancel out all other health issues; therefore, we do not cut the costs for voluntary health insurance. If any of our employees feels unwell, they'll make an appointment at a commercial medical clinic and see a doctor at a specific time thus minimizing contact with other people waiting in line.

They will also undergo a thorough examination and receive high-quality treatment. Moreover, voluntary health insurance is included in the employee benefits package that we provide upon recruitment. Making amendments to it means violating the employment contract. We haven't suspended the new employees' application and enrolment for the VHI coverage either.

05

Maintaining loyalty is the key

The first thing that should be triggered by a crisis is common sense. And common sense dictates that the "lost cause" attitude will not get things done. Budget reallocation forms a part of the crisis management strategy that we have developed during the pandemic and it provides valuable experience in a fast-changing environment.

Let us stress this point: when you decide to eliminate something that you've always provided for your employees, make sure they understand your decision. Otherwise you risk losing their loyalty. Currently, the prime HR objective is to preserve the staff's confidence in the future. And what works best here is a decent salary and benefits, open communication, the ability to maintain corporate spirit online and help your business develop while meeting its recruitment needs.

Corporate Social Responsibility Practices for the Protection of Human Rights

These days the society is faced with multiple challenges: large-scale COVID-19 pandemic affecting more than 5 million people worldwide, financial recession, unemployment, political and social confrontation caused by human rights violation, environmental disasters. The list can go on forever. It is hard to believe that those issues can be resolved by initiatives of individuals or companies. However, the case of ICL Services, a major IT services company with 2,300+ employees worldwide, testifies to the contrary.

In its operations and corporate culture, the company applies the principles of respect and protection of human rights and adheres to the ISO 26000 international standard providing guidance on Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). In an effort to streamline the company's policies, ICL Services takes it one step further and applies this approach to its contractors. To achieve this objective, the Code for Suppliers and Business Partners is implemented. All counterparties must sign it before concluding a contract with the company and strictly observe these provisions thereafter.

By adhering to the CSR principles, including the protection of human rights, ICL Services becomes more competitive in recruiting and retaining the employees. Moreover, the research has shown that socially responsible companies not only acquire more visibility in the labor market but also achieve their financial performance objectives more effectively.

In this article we speak about the universal human rights promoted by the company and the opportunities provided to the employees of ICL Services.

1 THE RIGHT TO FAIR AND FAVORABLE WORK AND REST CONDITIONS

2 THE RIGHT TO EQUALITY

3 THE RIGHT TO HEALTH PROTECTION AND MEDICAL CARE

4 THE RIGHT TO A SAFE ENVIRONMENT AND A STABLE FUTURE

5 EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

6 THE OPPORTUNITY TO EXPRESS YOUR OPINION OPENLY

ICL Services not only creates comfortable workplaces conforming to the occupational health and safety requirements, but has also allocated and equipped onsite recreation rooms, eating areas, and sports grounds. All offices have water dispensers and systems of air recirculation and antibacterial treatment installed. Active sports facilities are located on the territory of the office building.

Offices are equipped with wheelchair ramps and have tactile markings for the visually impaired. The employees complete fire safety training courses.

ICL Services offices in the Technopark.

1 THE RIGHT TO FAIR AND FAVORABLE WORK AND REST CONDITIONS	2 THE RIGHT TO EQUALITY	3 THE RIGHT TO HEALTH PROTECTION AND MEDICAL CARE
4 THE RIGHT TO A SAFE ENVIRONMENT AND A STABLE FUTURE	5 EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES	6 THE OPPORTUNITY TO EXPRESS YOUR OPINION OPENLY

Emergency evacuation training

ICL Services provides a vacation premium bonus and a year-end bonus. In addition to the essential benefits (a smooth transition to parental leave and assistance in paperwork), the company supports family values and offers a wedding benefit and a child's birth bonus, organizes events for the employees' children, and gives out New Year presents. The company also covers mortgage interest, develops an IT village next to the office, and invests in the construction of apartment buildings for employees.

421

employees were promoted In 2019. That makes up 22% of the company personnel

GENDER EQUALITY

The IT industry is stereotypically considered to be a "male-dominated" one, as the majority of university graduates with a degree in Information Technology are men. However, year after year the company strives to equalize the gender imbalance: it conducts training courses at schools and universities intended to showcase the opportunities offered by the IT industry to girls. It hosts the Women Tech Club meetings where female managers can meet the employees, sharing their success stories. The company "'talent pool" aimed at fostering future managers always includes female employees.

ICL Services always adheres to the principle of equal rights while hiring employees or considering a promotion. Any talented employee, regardless of their gender, age, or other differences, can be hired or promoted exclusively based on their proficiency and skills.

WORKING WITH DISABLED PEOPLE

In 2019, the company launched online training for people with musculoskeletal disorders. During the course, the employees introduced the basics of the IT profession and business communication to the students, so that they could pursue their future careers as technical specialists.

Since 2018, the company has been participating in the Career Path events and conducting workshops. It sponsors sitball (sitting volleyball) competitions.

THE RIGHT TO
FAIR AND
FAVORABLE
WORK AND REST
CONDITIONS

1

THE RIGHT TO
EQUALITY

2

THE RIGHT TO
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3

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AND A STABLE
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4

EDUCATIONAL
OPPORTUNITIES

5

THE
OPPORTUNITY
TO EXPRESS
YOUR OPINION
OPENLY

6

SUPPORT FOR THE REGIONS

ICL Services offers a relocation program for employees from other cities: after moving, they can receive a relocation allowance or live at a corporate apartment for the first 3 months.

A sitball competition (with the participation of an ICL Services employee)

THE RIGHT TO FAIR AND FAVORABLE WORK AND REST CONDITIONS	1	THE RIGHT TO EQUALITY	2	THE RIGHT TO HEALTH PROTECTION AND MEDICAL CARE	**3**
THE RIGHT TO A SAFE ENVIRONMENT AND A STABLE FUTURE	4	EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES	5	THE OPPORTUNITY TO EXPRESS YOUR OPINION OPENLY	6

HEALTH

The company endorses sports as an essential part of a healthy lifestyle: it offers partial compensation for the purchase of gym membership, promotes participation in regular sporting events (marathons, sports and athletic contests, "Race of Heroes") and organizes its own events. ICL Services holds yoga classes at the offices, and puts up special stickers encouraging the employees to take the stairs instead of elevators.

HEALTHCARE

The company runs a voluntary health insurance (VHI) program for the employees comprising 40 health clinics and a dentistrye, organizes free annual vaccination, and photofluorography. The employees can invite a doctor for a home visit; all offices have medical rooms in case anyone feels unwell. Every Monday, a general practitioner sees patients free of charge. A few times a year, the company employees voluntarily take part in Blood Donor Days.

PROVIDING HEALTHCARE INFORMATION

ICL Services conducts webinars on mental health, lectures on healthy lifestyle and proper nutrition, and first aid workshops.

2000

employees were transitioned to remote working In one week

COVID

Given the rapidly changing situation with the pandemic, the company management took prompt action to reduce the risk of infection. The company organized lectures given by virologists, maintained consistent communication (93% of the employees gave the messages a 4-5/ 5 score, rating them as useful or very useful), and explained to the personnel how they could protect themselves and their families. These efforts continue today: the employees are strongly recommended not to return to their offices unless it is necessary for business. Nevertheless, if an employee wants to work onsite, ICL Services has already introduced appropriate measures: the employee's body temperature is checked before entering the office, the floor is marked to enforce social distancing, face masks are provided, and the premises are equipped with information stickers reminding of the safety measures introduced during the pandemic. In cafeterias and eating areas, tables are socially distanced, and re-usable tableware and cutlery are replaced with disposable ones.

THE RIGHT TO FAIR AND FAVORABLE WORK AND REST CONDITIONS 1	THE RIGHT TO EQUALITY 2	THE RIGHT TO HEALTH PROTECTION AND MEDICAL CARE 3
THE RIGHT TO A SAFE ENVIRONMENT AND A STABLE FUTURE 4	EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES 5	THE OPPORTUNITY TO EXPRESS YOUR OPINION OPENLY 6

The company attaches great importance to environmental issues, supports the employees' volunteer movement, and champions the [international right to a healthy environment](). ICL Services organises environmental events and supports city initiatives, takes part in community clean-ups, hosts ecology lectures and waste sorting workshops, arranges green spaces in offices, and plants trees in city parks.

Beautifying Technopark

EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES 5

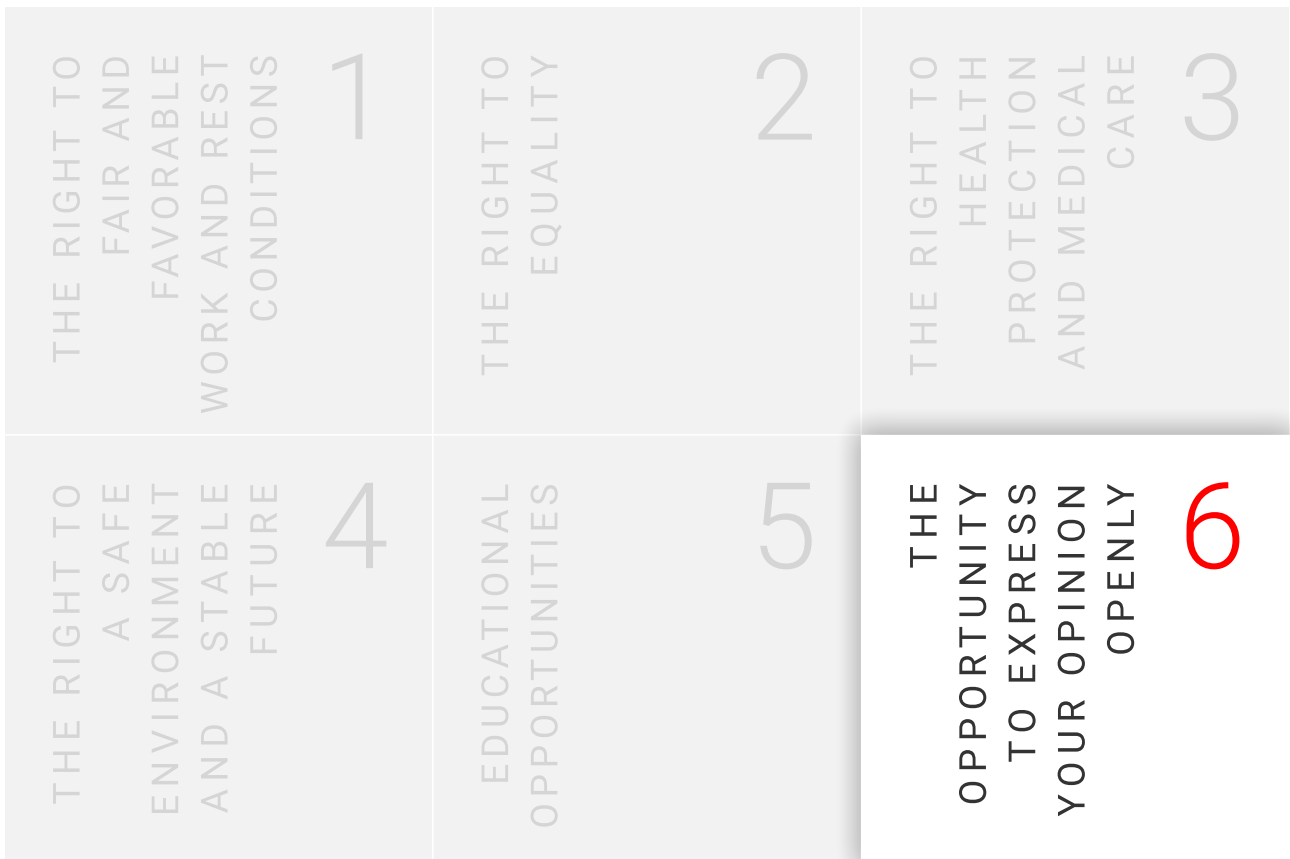In 2019 we held:

301 vendor courses

313 exams

1200+ individual workshop participants

ICL Services School

Employees are offered ample opportunities for training and professional development: onsite and online English courses, technical training and business workshops, internal and external training courses, international IT and business certifications.

For students and university graduates, the company offers free short-term courses in various IT fields the ICL Services School. In 2019, the company organised 11 schools, enabling 150+ trainees to graduate and launch careers of system administrators, project managers, software developers, and technical specialists.

THE RIGHT TO FAIR AND FAVORABLE WORK AND REST CONDITIONS **1**	THE RIGHT TO EQUALITY **2**	THE RIGHT TO HEALTH PROTECTION AND MEDICAL CARE **3**
THE RIGHT TO A SAFE ENVIRONMENT AND A STABLE FUTURE **4**	EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES **5**	THE OPPORTUNITY TO EXPRESS YOUR OPINION OPENLY **6**

ICL Services corporate culture encourages an open and inclusive dialogue supported by the working environment: open-plan offices facilitate prompt resolution of work issues. Special interest clubs and open discussion sessions are of particular interest to the co-workers.

The company has an extensive internal communications network. The employees can send their questions to a dedicated email address operating 24/7. Strategy update sessions with the executive staff that are held 3 times a year are also transparency-oriented: the management team talks about the company's mission, plans, and projects, answers the questions from the offline and online audience. ICL Services conducts an annual engagement survey. The issues identified by the survey are prioritized in order of importance and promptly resolved. Surveys are always anonymous and are aimed at eliciting the feeling of transparency and safety for the respondent. This way the company determines the weakest points and seeks to process every request.

By implementing these principles, the company demonstrates the importance of respect for human rights and their protection. By showing respect and giving support to each employee, ICL Services enjoys their respect in return. Knowing that their rights are protected, the employee feels secure and remains loyal to the company -and the company employs profoundly motivated professionals ready for new achievements, both in public life and in business.

Anti-Corruption Policy as the Guiding Principle of the ICL Services Corporate Values Development

With the development of modern capitalist society, corruption-related offences have become a pervasive economic issue both throughout the Western world and in post-Soviet countries. According to the statistics provided by the Russian Prosecutor General's Office, in the past year, the damage caused by corruption offences in this country amounted to more than 55 billion roubles, which is a 9 billion increase compared to 2018.

Overall, the statistical information is quite impressive: the Prosecutor General's Office registered more than 30 thousand cases of corruption, half of which led to criminal proceedings. Russia also stood out due to its position in the Corruption Perceptions Index: specifically, according to the report by Transparency dated January 23, 2020, Russia, along with Kenya, was ranked 137th out of 180 possible positions in the rating, scoring only 28 points.

Thus, the most pervasive offences have been and remain passive and active bribery, as well as mediation in bribing a high-profile legal entity or individual. Due to the global scale of this situation and in order to maintain the internal corporate economic world, effective anti-corruption measures have been implemented not only in politics, but also in economy. In companies around the world, compliance with these measures has become mandatory both for managers and frontline employees. ICL Services has implemented an appropriate step-by-step process to resolve the issue.

This major player in the Russian market of IT services proved that the enforcement of anti-corruption measures within the company, as well as in interactions with customers and partners, is the requirement of the modern global market system.

As one of the leading IT outsourcing companies in the world, ICL Services has aimed to pursue only the best global business practices from day one. The company has always been competing for customers located in more than 30 countries of the world fairly and transparently. In particular, the global experience in IT services provision has been instrumental in developing a consistent approach helping the company employees comply with the anti-corruption law in Russia and in customers' countries.

Therefore, it is not surprising that large-scale anti-corruption action has become one of the key areas of the company's social responsibility policy.

Elaborated by the company's specialists and compulsory for every employee, the ICL Services anti-corruption policy comprises the standards, guidelines, and protocols for interaction with government agencies, political parties and associations, as well as the provisions for the company's charitable activities. It is worth noting that the foreign colleagues' experience was foundational for development of the policy of zero tolerance for bribery and corruption.

The compliance manager, a designated company official supervises the corporate anti-corruption portal, maintains the operation of the corruption risk management system within the company, and also ensures protection of staff from potential threats and harassment.

All employees undergo anti-corruption training which includes tests and are compulsorily informed of the concept of a "conflict of interest".

When it comes to the consequences of fraudulent activities, the first thing that springs to mind is financial loss, but in practice there are other business failures: loss or deterioration of corporate reputation which is critically important for both customers and competitors. Psychological climate cannot be overlooked either. For these reasons, ICL Services adheres to the anti-corruption principle in its operations and includes a compulsory clause of compliance with current anti-corruption legislation in all contract, since transparency in identifying fraudulent activities and provision of information to parties about the preventive measures help minimize or avoid damage.

"Corruption risks pose a real threat to business, so we take all kinds of response measures to prevent them. These actions are of strategic importance to us."

Sergei Soloviev,
CEO of ICL Services

Being aware of all the potential threats associated with economic and financial crime, ICL Services establishes an appropriate corporate culture not only for its employees, but also for its business partners. The company has been implementing a number of response policy measures for risk mitigation. For example, in order to create the conditions for fair competition in the IT services market, ICL Services conducts annual internal analysis of prospective suppliers, which allows to identifying whether the partner companies meet the prerequisites for productive cooperation.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

Green Initiatives of ICL Services: Aiming for the Future

ICL Services is a major system integrator that provides IT services to more than 80 customers in 30 countries. Employees of 8 offices from Belgrade to Vladivostok ensure 24/7 service and combine their work duties with a busy corporate life. This life has the following development focuses:

clean business and lean manufacturing;

The last area — green initiatives — is the most popular among employees. Here is an overview of our 2019 activities.

Over the past year, the company has held more than 150 events in various formats. One-fourth of them were devoted to environmental issues. Employees endorse the company's ideas and offer their own, as they see their contribution realized immediately during eco-focused campaigns. They are well-versed in environmental issues and interested in the topic. The traditional events with the largest coverage are eco-runs and clean-ups in city parks. They attract 100+ participants each.

equality in all aspects of life and work;

charity and help to society;

Next, we will introduce the main pillars on which the company's green initiatives are built. They make it possible to implement socially desirable projects and unlock the potential of proactive employees.

environment protection and green lifestyle.

A clean-up in the Gorky Park, Kazan
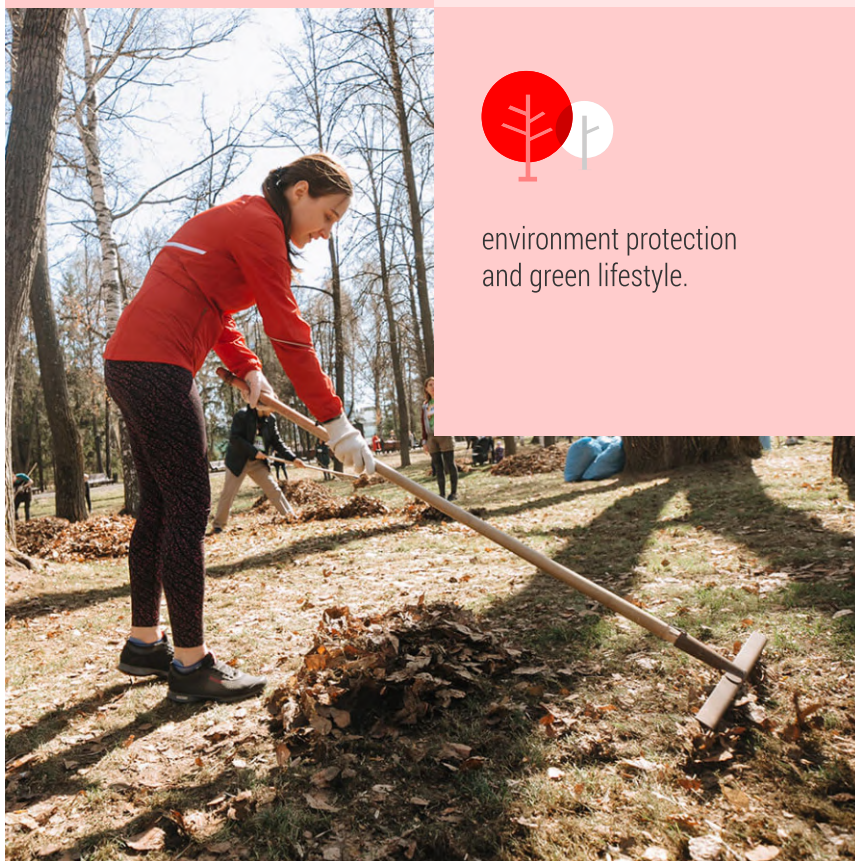
Clear and transparent ideas are easier to implement. When the company speaks about the benefits of its green initiatives, issues and ways to solve them, educating employees about the environment, everyone can decide for themselves whether this corporate culture is close to their heart.

The introduction to the company's eco-orientation begins immediately after a new employee is hired. In addition to work-related topics, onboarding training includes a section dedicated to the environmental aspect. The colleagues present the completed projects and explain how to join the green movement. Participation in eco-events is voluntary. All you need to do is describe your idea, meet with an initiative group of volunteers, and discuss implementation steps. The only requirement for the employee is their desire to take on the project.

To increase personnel's interest in environmental issues, ICL Services uses both traditional communication channels (intranet portals, newsletters, meetings with employees) and non-trivial means. Among them are:

Organization of various events in particular competitions and forest clean-ups, participation in the "Cycling to Work" and "Earth Hour" campaigns, the "Endangered Species" and "We Are Against Plastic" photo contests, drawing competitions on eco-topics for employees' children, and the all-city ecological quest on the "World Cleanup Day".

Adding a fun component to an eco-project increases engagement. And when such events are held annually and integrated into the daily life of the company, they certainly become a good tradition.

Eco-quest "World Cleanup Day" on the Glubokoe Lake, Kazan

The use of quick communication channels.

Social media and messengers with attractive graphics help enlist the sufficient number of participants. Attendees are sent reminders a day before to reduce the risk that they would miss out an upcoming event or forget about it. Also, each participant can get a quick response from the organizers to clarify the points of interest.

Social media help attract participants who do not have access to intranet portals, such as job applicants, and people interested in the company's activities. This allows expanding the reach and maintaining the reputation of a socially responsible employer in the eyes of prospective employees.

Combination of various event formats.

An original touch to ongoing initiatives helps preserve the interest in them within the company. If employees want to take part in a sports event or an educational lecture, it can be combined with an environmental theme.

One of the most memorable events in the life of the company was the eco-run in the Gorky Park (Kazan) which gathered 100+ participants. After the race, the employees went to participate in the all-city cleanup day.

An eco-run in the Gorky Park

The bike ride, combined with an excursion to the observatory, was also highly appreciated by colleagues and had a good reach.

Volunteers of the company complement educational lectures on the separate waste collection with practical training. During such event, employees are invited to sort waste into the necessary sections independently and solve the problem of separate collection and recycling of waste as a group. The knowledge received is reinforced by practice in the office.

Everyone has the opportunity to control the separate collection of different types of waste on sectional containers on each floor. When the containers become full, an eco-organization transports waste to city sorting points.

WE ENSURE FREEDOM OF ACTION

Eco-activists in the company are volunteers interested in projects from the moment of their inception. They are willing to devote time and energy to the implementation of these ideas because they realize their value and impact on society. Corporate support of proactive employees and trust in them is the path that ICL Services chooses. By handing over the full implementation of green projects to employees, the company enjoys returns and results. An employee passionate about their idea takes every effort to implement it successfully.

Eco-souvenirs awarded to volunteers at the end of the year

WE SUPPORT INITIATIVES

Leadership support also plays an important role. It has become ICL Services' tradition that managers and team leaders participate in tree planting on the office surrounding territory.

Sometimes the leaders become the main force behind such campaigns. For example, the company's CEO Ruslan Vagizov made a great contribution to the organization of the eco-run.

WE PROVIDE FEEDBACK

As a part of the ICL Services' corporate culture, after each event we get feedback from the participants. Seeing that your project was appreciated properly is always heartwarming. Publishing news with the names of the "heroes" of the event on the intranet portal makes this feedback even more valuable, and award ceremonies for volunteers held at the end of the year with the personal participation of top managers create motivation for further success.

WE FOCUS ON THE FUTURE

One-time campaigns usually have an extensive reach, since the event is new and the interest in it is high. It is much more difficult to maintain a permanent interest in environmental issues. ICL Services takes a forward-looking approach with a focus on the future. To motivate employees to lead an eco-friendly lifestyle all the time, the company "plants a green line" in everyday activities and creates an atmosphere of respect for nature.

Environmentally-friendly office.

It's easier to be mindful of the environment if the workplace supports this kind of thinking. In the offices of ICL Services there are containers for separate collection of waste, paper, and batteries. Volunteers collect clothes which are sent to the local free market and then to those in need. The traditional planting of trees and flowers around the office building makes the surrounding territory both beautiful and green.

Mugs lost or misplaced by employees are used as pots for houseplants which emphasises the idea of recyclability.

Eco-souvenirs.

During onboarding, new employees receive a beginner's kit, which contains a mug (to prevent them from using disposable plastic cups), an eco-friendly pen made from recycled materials, and badge cases — all with minimal packaging.

When choosing gifts, the company always focuses on environmental friendliness and natural materials. ICL Services also increases support of regional contractors to minimize environmental impacts of cargo transportation.

Bicycle parking in the Technopark

Communications.

Stickers on office walls urge employees to turn off the water if they don't wash their hands and cut down on water consumption. When printing, it is preferable to use dirty copies. If an employee is going on vacation, they will get an email reminder to turn off their laptop. More detailed information about the company's environmental activities is published in the special portal section.

Minimum transport use.

The company strives to decrease the use of corporate shuttle buses during events by looking for volunteer drivers who will pick up and drop off colleagues along the way or organizing events in the office which eliminates the need to go to another location.

There is a bicycle parking near each office. Everything is arranged in such a way that employees can get to work without using their cars.

Eco-friendly souvenirs

Sustainability of events.

When organizing large corporate events for 1000+ people, instead of purchasing individual water bottles, the company orders large containers. Employees are encouraged to bring their thermal tumblers.

Containers for separate waste collection, reusable photo zones, no plastic, eco-friendly design — these principles have been implemented in the company since 2019 and become commonplace.

With the transition of employees to remote work, online campaigns, lectures, contests and events are becoming increasingly popular. At the same time, their environmental impact is minimal because the issues of transportation to the event venue, power consumption, disposable tableware, and packaging for catering are eliminated.

For instance, during the lockdown, the company held an online meeting with an eco-blogger, workshops on growing microgreens, and environmental lectures.

Online microgreens planting: on the other side of the screen

All these steps make the corporate life both exciting and environmentally friendly. By organizing special events and campaigns, creating comfortable conditions in the office, educating colleagues and helping them implement their ideas, the company lays the groundwork for the future: future projects, further engagement in the corporate life, and interest in the topic. An environmentally conscious employee should feel supported and receive positive feedback on their work. In this way, they will always be motivated to implement new initiatives both inside the company and externally. Even if a colleague decides to change the employer, they are likely to maintain respect for nature and continue to support and promote the "green" lifestyle.

How Can Lean Practices Help to Optimize Work of Technical Support?

The world around us is changing rapidly. The conventional working practices may stop yielding the desired results one day. And the quality of service, which once seemed incredible, eventually becomes commonplace. For example, these days, the possibility to buy something at your favourite store without leaving the house, with home delivery to boot, will leave only few people impressed.

The compliance with the contractual SLA is believed to result in the high level of customer satisfaction. Yet, an opposite situation has become increasingly frequent: the service is provided in accordance with the agreement, but the customer is dissatisfied, citing innovation and improvement.

To keep up with the changing customer needs, companies have to adapt to the current environment: learn to collect feedback faster, provide the customers with what they really need, while keeping track of their own cost efficiency. Companies start using various approaches, frameworks, and engineering solutions to increase their flexibility and improve customer satisfaction.

To this end, ICL Services uses Lean manufacturing practices, focused on creating value for the customer, continuous quality improvement of the provided services, and elimination of waste.

01

Involve each employee

in the company's business operations, in the continuous improvement process, all the while providing the environment of trust and transparency. As an example: the managers show their involvement in the improvements, personal and team goals are set collectively, conforming to the customer needs.

02

Learn from experience

completing real-life tasks, together with your colleagues. Acknowledge your achievements and learn from your mistakes. Share expertise and best practices.

03

Standardize

document current best practices as standards and keep them up to date.

04

Understand customer needs

select team performance indicators which reflect customer requests. Make the employees aware of the value they create to the customer.

05

Visualize

bring the invisible into view. Focus the team's attention on the aspects of the service which are important to the customers. Visualize the results of teamwork and promptly register any deviations from the process.

06

Eliminate waste

of time and resources in the activities performed. Increase customer satisfaction by eliminating those process steps of the service for which he is not willing to pay.

07

Measure the workflow performance

Focus on those performance indicators which are within the team's reach. See the direct connection between the customer needs and the performance results.

One may claim that the continuous improvement culture is truly being instilled and maintained only while adhering to these principles in one's work on a daily basis.

ICL Services actively uses Lean principles in the work of the technical support, which helps to improve the quality of the support team work and increase customer satisfaction. Further I will provide three scenarios of using Lean practices and, using the completed cases as examples, describe the workflow and the results that have been achieved.

In the preface, we note that all the scenarios share a number of constants:

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1. We review the work of the first-line or the second-line support

2. We suppose that there is an ITSM system

3. We believe that query statistics can be exported from it, which includes incidents and service requests.

We must also point out that the provided cases belong to the IT services field, but the key aspects of the article can be applied to other business areas.

SCENARIO № 1

Reducing the Number of Routine Tasks
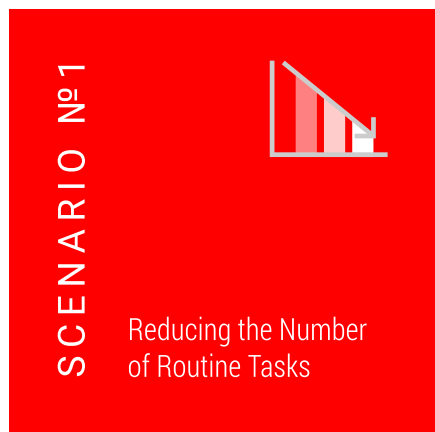
Background:

Service requests submitted to the second line of support generate a stream of routine and repetitive tasks. The specialists spend a significant part of their working time on managing them. This workflow needs streamlining.

Supporting principles:

visualize, involve everyone and measure the performance.

Action plan:

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1. Compile the statistics on service requests: categorize and sort the data according to the number of requests in each category.

---

2. Together with the team, deliberate on how managing the categories with the largest number of requests can be optimized.

---

3. The solutions generated in the course of the discussion are constantly displayed in a place accessible to the team, and their implementation is monitored during regular meetings.

An example, illustrated:

Request ID	Owned By	Category	Owned By Team	Priority	Status	Team Assignment Time
IN378736	************	Create folder	AD Support	4	Closed	06.12.2019 10:13
IN392282	************	Delete folder	AD Support	4	Closed	09.12.2019 11:31
IN403831	************	Provide access	AD Support	5	Closed	26.12.2019 7:35
IN416557	************	Remove access	AD Support	4	Reopened	19.12.2019 9:24
IN418513	************	Laptop	AD Support	4	Closed	31.12.2019 6:59
IN418528	************	Service desk	AD Support	4	Closed	31.12.2019 6:58
IN418676	************	Other	AD Support	4	Closed	12.12.2019 11:26
IN418986	************	Permission report	AD Support	4	Closed	20.12.2019 13:32
IN419044	************	Other peripheral	AD Support	5	Closed	10.12.2019 14:24
IN419858	************	Create folder	AD Support	4	Closed	04.12.2019 8:53
IN420125	************	Delete folder	AD Support	4	Closed	05.12.2019 19:27
IN420373	************	Provide access	AD Support	4	Closed	02.12.2019 1:02
IN420493	************	Remove access	AD Support	5	Closed	12.12.2019 13:03
IN420512	************	Laptop	AD Support	4	Closed	09.12.2019 9:35
IN420518	************	Service desk	AD Support	4	Closed	09.12.2019 9:35
IN420522	************	Other	AD Support	4	Rejected	02.12.2019 11:14
IN420544	************	Permission report	AD Support	4	Closed	02.12.2019 3:49
IN420876	************	Other peripheral	AD Support	4	Rejected	02.12.2019 11:14
IN421217	************	Create folder	AD Support	3	Closed	09.12.2019 9:51
IN421430	************	Delete folder	AD Support	5	Closed	01.12.2019 21:18
IN421438	************	Provide access	AD Support	5	Closed	02.12.2019 1:22
IN421590	************	Remove access	AD Support	4	Closed	04.12.2019 9:49
IN421664	************	Laptop	AD Support	4	Closed	12.12.2019 18:31
IN421708	************	Service desk	AD Support	4	Closed	09.12.2019 9:38
IN421709	************	Other	AD Support	4	Closed	09.12.2019 9:39
IN4218101	************	Permission report	AD Support	4	Closed	22.12.2019 3:08
IN4222947	************	Other peripheral	AD Support	5	Closed	01.12.2019 15:31

Category	Quantity
Create a folder	300
Delete a folder	125
Provide access	880
Deny access	568
Make out a report on current user rights	67
Laptop	24
Other devices	15
Service Desk	25
Other	50

1. Compress the data exported from the ITSM into a simple table

2. Categorize the requests

Category	Quantity
Provide access	880
Deny access	568
Create a folder	300
Delete a folder	125
Make out a report on current user rights	67
Other	50
Service Desk	25
Laptop	24
Other devices	15

Service requests
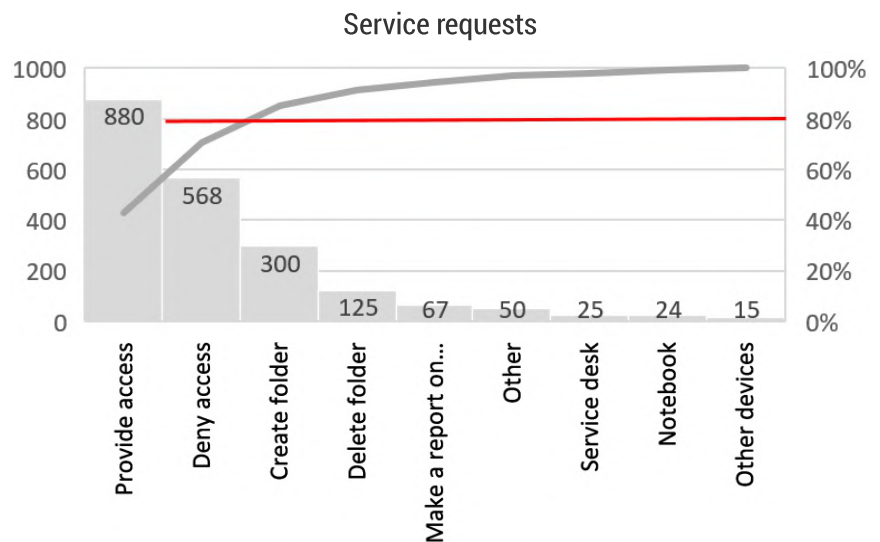
3. Sort the categories by number of requests. Reveal that the "Provide Access" category is at the top. Start the improvements from this category.

4. Here is the same table but as a Pareto chart, which can be quickly created in Excel. With the help of the chart, those 20% of categories that contain 80% of requests are easily identifiable. In our case, the "Provide Access" and "Deny Access" categories are worth addressing.

Results:

we understand which routine tasks need to be automated first;

we identify the requests which can be potentially delegated to the first-line support. If this step is feasible, the team can reallocate some of the routine tasks and make time for further service improvement;

visualizing the scope of incoming requests, for example, in the form of tables and charts, helps to quickly identify the starting point for improvements.

maximum team engagement facilitates finding new areas for optimization and improvement;

The completed case: Improved Categorization of Requests

In the course of the incoming requests analysis, the "Other" category was the top-ranking one. The team has thoroughly reviewed the makeup of the category and the reasons the requests were referred to that group. As a result, a new category for similar requests has been introduced. To manage these requests faster, the team has developed an instruction for the first-line support for processing tickets without involving the second-line support. The "Other" category has decreased by 85%, which has reduced the teamwork time required for managing the requests within this category.

Background:

Incidents constitute the major part of requests submitted to the first and the second lines of support. It is necessary to identify the common causes of incidents and set up proactive work to eliminate them.

Underpinning principles:

learn from experience, measure the performance.

Action plan:

1. Compile the statistics on incidents. As in the first scenario, identify the most popular category.

2. Determine what is needed to be done in order to eliminate the entire category or reduce the number of incidents in it.

3. If there are no obvious solutions aimed at reducing the number of incidents, look into this issue during the problem solving session, which is one more Lean tool.

4. Document the solutions, breaking them down into specific tasks: who does what and within what time limit. Then monitor the status of tasks and the change in the number of incoming incidents. If the solutions are effective, the number of incidents will decrease.

Results:

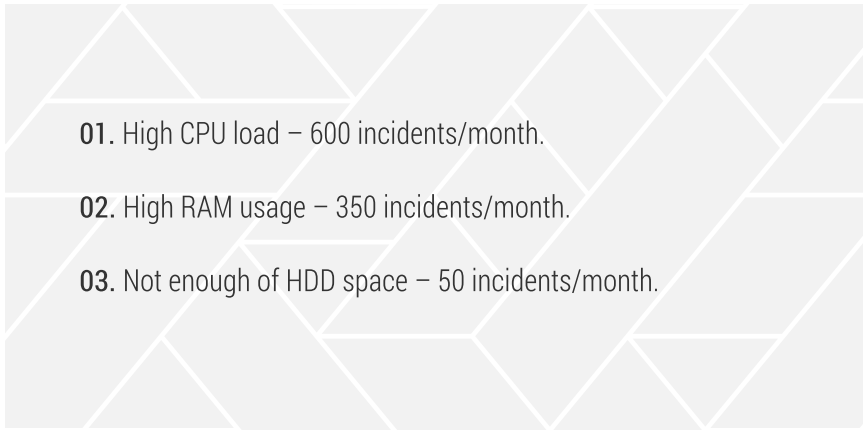The team frees up time for other tasks by reducing the number of incoming incidents.

When the employees, who deal with incidents first-hand, are involved in active measures to reduce their number, it helps to find the solutions faster. Getting in tune with continuous improvement, the team can set increasingly challenging goals: for instance, to reduce the number of incoming incidents by 10% annually (then by 15%, 20%, etc.)!

Identifying the common cause of a group of incidents helps to prevent these incidents from occurring in the future, which has a positive impact on the users' assessment of the service quality: "it's nice when nothing needs fixing".

The completed case: Reducing the Routine Tasks

The second-line support team analysed a stack of monitoring incidents. The following categories entered the top three.

On average, it took 5 minutes to process one ticket in these categories.

01. High CPU load – 600 incidents/month.

02. High RAM usage – 350 incidents/month.

03. Not enough of HDD space – 50 incidents/month.

	Number of incidents (incidents/month)	Incident resolution time (minutes)	Total incident management time (person-hours)
Before	1,000	5	83.3
After	500	5	41.6
	Saving		41.6

The team has taken a number of active measures to identify the root causes of these incidents. In particular, a program script has been written which identified the process causing high load on CPU and memory during downtime. Over 3 months, in the course of all measures, the number of incidents has decreased by half, which has freed up 40 hours per month for the team.

Background:

Incidents and service requests submitted to all support lines take significant time to process and resolve. This process needs accelerating.

Underpinning principles:

eliminate waste, standardize, understand customer needs.

Action plan:

1. As before, the first step is compiling the statistics.

2. In those categories where the number of requests cannot be reduced, look into accelerating the request management. In this case, a detailed workflow walk-through for each request type can be beneficial. For instance, reviewing the steps of providing access to folders involves identifying the bottlenecks and losses in the process, as well as finding the solution to the problem of how the process can be accelerated.

3. If the team doesn't have those yet, develop the standards describing the best current practices. For example, the most efficient and correct way to provide access to folders. If the standards already exist, update them progressively as the team accumulates new knowledge.

Results:

identifying the opportunities for "shift left": reallocating the request processing from the second line to the first line, and from the first line even closer to the customer via online channels and the self-service portal;

teamwork optimization due to the standardized process of request management;

revealing the ineffective stages of request management results in reduced processing time;

discovering a growth area through processing requests which are not included in the list of currently provided services. For example, customer requests which can be sorted out into a separate category and included in the contractual provision of services.

The completed case:
New Opportunities for the
Provision of Services

In the first-line support team, the number of requests registered by phone was significantly lower than the total number of received phone calls. This could mean that not all user requests were covered by the currently provided services.

The team has analysed all incoming phone calls. It has identified new popular categories of user requests which were not included in the current contract. It has discussed with the customer the possibility of including these request categories in the current scope of provided services.

Since only registered requests were paid according to the contract, the project margin has increased by 8%. At the same time, the customers have been provided with improved services: their requests have been resolved along with other queries.

Conclusion

The described scenarios demonstrate how Lean practices help to streamline the management of incoming user requests and incidents, improve the services provided to the customer, optimize the time and financial resources and reveal new opportunities for development.

You can automate the execution of the scenarios described above, customize a convenient method of data visualization (from Excel diagrams to Power BI dashboards); in addition, you can use various programs and tools for further data analysis, introducing machine learning and predictive analytics.

However, it is essential to keep in mind the key principles, which enable you to maximize the effect of these activities:

1. Vivid visualization of the team performance. Well-designed charts and diagrams enable the team to understand their current performance efficiency and identify the areas for improvement.

2. Understanding the customer needs: which aspects of teamwork provide value to the customer, and which aspects are a waste of time and resources, inefficient steps.

3. Involving the whole team in the search for solutions. It's great when there is a convenient platform for tracking the task progress, the team learns from mistakes, and the best practices become the standards of teamwork.

ICL Services provides a wide range of IT services to businesses. In 2018, In order to optimize this process and reduce the cost of proposed solutions without compromising their quality, a new Delivery Excellence division was created within the company. The main task set before this department is finding potential areas for improvement. One of these ideas was the automation of some works performed by the company's employees in the course of providing services to customers.

INCIDENT MANAGEMENT

In order to automate the distribution of tasks within service projects, the company's experts have created an automatic smart assistant (ASA). Initially, it was used for distributing incidents. Previously, the function of a project coordinator was carried out either by individual employees or passed to engineers. Upon receipt of the request, the employee determined the appropriate team to refer it to. The next step was to appoint a performer within this team, having previously analyzed their workload and availability. At the end, the performer received a ticket and a relevant notification in the system.

The manual distribution of incidents was quite a routine and time-consuming task that resulted in a lot of negative feedback from colleagues. The team members of Delivery Excellence decided to find a way to automate this operation. A similar solution was already implemented on one of the company's projects. Subsequently, it was implemented in two more projects to conduct a full-fledged pilot test. In the spring of 2019, the first automated smart assistant was launched. After presenting the results of the pilot phase in front of the company's management, the solution began to be applied on other projects. Presently, there are 6 of those.

In automatic routing of requests by a smart assistant, the availability of a specialist and their competence in solving such issues are taken into account. An engineer's workload is assessed through instant messengers (for example, Skype for Business, Microsoft Teams, and others), which show the status (available/absent) of an individual employee. The ASA receives this current status via the messenger's API and makes a decision about their availability and readiness to start solving problems in a prompt manner.

The level of expertise of an individual engineer is determined on the basis of a number of parameters, e. g. the amount of work performed by an employee within 24 hours, the percentage of the working day that a specialist must spend on solving requests or incidents. The assistant also considers whether this engineer has previously worked on this request or incident.

Taking these factors into account allows the system to transfer the task to the most qualified and accessible specialist, thereby significantly reducing the time for solving the issue.

On large projects, up to 100 tickets are submitted daily. Previously, it took about 5 minutes to coordinate each of them. On average, it took employees up to 8 hours a day to distribute all incidents.

After automating the work of the incident coordinator, the time of response to incidents and requests was reduced by 82%, and the time to resolve incidents – by 33%. As a result, the employees could focus on solving strategic tasks.

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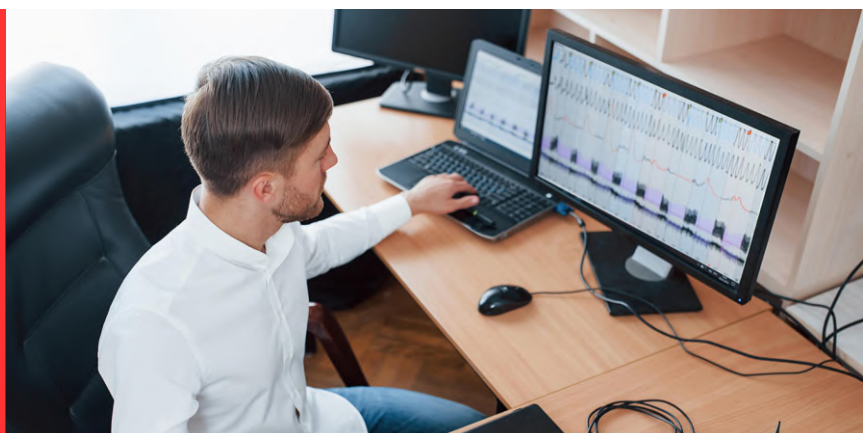
Following the successful implementation of the automatic coordinator, colleagues began to contact Delivery Excellence to automate some of the tasks performed by their employees. One of the first was a request to automate handling of change tasks that involve changing the configuration of the IT infrastructure, the user's workplace, etc. This functionality is similar to incident coordination — basically, you need to distribute tasks related to change requests.

The case was accepted for development; the Delivery Excellence team assessed the possible results and the potential effect of the implementation. Subsequently, this solution was successfully applied and implemented. Now, in addition to incident management, a stage in another ITIL process, change management, has been automated.

The ASA solution has not only shortened the lifecycle of change requests, but also made it possible to maximize the potential of the company's employees. Currently, the ASA helps reduce labor costs of coordination of incidents and requests by 5%.

Further expansion of the ASA functionality involved the development of smart prompts that pop up in front of the engineer distributing requests. When assigning a ticket, not only a description of the task is displayed — the system also provides a number of smart prompts: similar tickets that were resolved earlier, open changes and possible issues related to this ticket, tickets that were submitted earlier by the same user or for the given configuration item, and so on. The prompts are based on the data accumulated in the ITSM system currently. We search for similar tickets and collect statistics from the ITSM system using the established logic. Previously, the engineer had to look for comparable issues and requests through the slow ITSM-system interface. At present, the smart assistant groups and displays these items to the engineer as separate sections which reduces the time for processing a ticket.

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Thus, the current ASA solution not only coordinates tasks efficiently, but also helps specialists via a recommendations system, analyzes emergency situations and incidents, and contributes to the compilation of Knowledge Base for the quick resolution of similar incidents and user requests.

ASA is a multifunctional solution based on modern machine learning technologies that performs the following tasks:

— **text analysis** of user requests or incidents;

— **classification** of the received requests and their referral to the most available and competent engineer for subsequent resolution;

— **notification** of engineers about ITSM events, new assignments, expiring SLAs and other changes via the chatbots. For example, a bot can track pending/expiring tickets and inform the engineer (e. g. via Skype) about the need to update the ticket. At the same time, the engineer does not need to log in the ITSM system, they can respond directly to the bot, and, based on this dialog, the bot will make necessary entries in the incident log.

— **recommendation** of solutions based on the history of resolved issues etc.

Due to partial automation of tasks using a smart assistant, the provision of services at ICL Services is currently of a hybrid nature, since both employees and an ITSM assistant (AI, bot) are involved in this process. At the same time, this solution is being developed further; its functionality is gradually expanding. A number of ASA tasks are under development/implementation. Among them are: automatic trend analysis, automation of resolution of service requests, decision support, etc. The plans include further automation of solutions, in particular, the creation of fully automatic solutions for handling and intelligent grouping of incidents. More details on the features of the smart assistant are presented in Diagram 1.

Manage:

– ITSM-tool via bot service 2-way interaction ●

Predict and resolve:

– Prediction of Infrastructure problems ●
– Prediction of Infrastructure and project resources ●
– Auto resolve incidents ●
– Auto resolve service requests ●

Check and coordinate:

– Incidents coordination ●
– Change tasks coordination ●
– Complexity calculation ●
– Initial and standard checks ●
– Intelligence grouping ●

Control and notify:

– SLA control ●
– Suspend ticket control ●
– Empty due date problem tasks control ●
– Pending and Suspend problem tasks control ●

Consult:

– Propose solutions based on previous tickets ●
– Current situation assessment ●
– Decision support services ●
– Automatic demand and trend analysis ●
– Resource forecast ●

A S A

Diagram 1.
Features of the automated smart assistant

Reports and quality control:

– Change tasks deadline report ●
– Not updated Problems report ●
– Quality control report ●

● completed tasks

● tasks at the development/implementation stage

● tasks internally evaluated and included in development plans

Despite the existence of a universal recommendations for working with ITIL and machine learning technologies (for example, White Paper from Axelos regarding ITIL 4) which sets the areas of work in Service Desk and information security, they are mostly generalized guidelines. ICL Services has developed its own approach to further improvement of the smart assistant functionality. Task definition starts with ideas put forward by end users — the employees providing services. Voicing their own wishes and problems, they set the direction and contribute to the formation of a holistic ecosystem of smart assistants around our services.

Conclusion

With the advent of modern technology, tasks that once were performed by humans are now being delegated to machines. One of these tools is a smart assistant that allows automating some of the tasks in the employee's area of responsibility and redirecting the freed-up resources to service improvement. This solution is of particular importance in the context of the global trend towards business digitalization.

The solutions that support ITIL processes are not a know-how; they are already available on the market. However, those are mostly high-priced out-of-the-box solutions. The ASA's niche in the global IT solutions market is determined by the flexibility and adaptability of the toolkit, as well as by its economic efficiency. In the process of ASA development, ICL Services experts use both simple and complex ML models depending on the task at hand.

The smart assistant is not tied to specific ITSM systems and can be installed both at the customer's data centers (DC) and in popular cloud environments.

The ASA solution saves over 3,200 hours of employees' time. It coordinates over 150,000 service requests and incidents per year. More than 100 solution recommendations are issued daily.

Raising Information Security Awareness of Employees

Raising employee awareness is one of the key vectors necessary to maintain the information security (IS) management system of the company fully operational. According to statistics, employees have direct involvement in 70% of the total number of information security incidents, and 8 out of 10 company employees leak corporate information. Therefore, effective cooperation with the employees and raising their IS awareness are the cornerstone of every company's security. In the current climate, the significance of these processes is much higher than it has been before.

After the whole world went on lockdown in the second quarter of 2020, most business processes were reorganized to be run remotely. Since no company has full control over its employee's actions, especially one working remotely, raising the employee awareness and conscientiousness regarding information security comes to the fore. Under the circumstances, the responsibility for ensuring data security mostly falls on the employees themselves, and in this context, remote work can pose additional risks.

ICL Services has traditionally put particular emphasis on raising employee awareness of IS issues. Under current conditions, when the majority of the team members are working from home, it is crucial for them to know and understand the general and specific requirements for data processing, storage and transfer. In many cases, ICL Services customers, contractors and partners may also impose special requirements for information security within the framework of cooperation. In the course of the IS events held within the company, the team members are explained why it is essential to comply with the information security requirements of both our company and our partners.

Adhering to the IS rules established in the company helps to preserve the privacy, integrity and availability of the data of all the parties concerned. Employees possessing a high level of maturity in terms of IS are more likely to identify risks and incidents and propose improvements not only to the company's but also to the customer's business processes. ICL Services provides a wide range of IT services to large Russian and foreign businesses, therefore, immediately after formal employment (and sometimes even before it), all the employees familiarize themselves with the IS requirements established in the company.

In cases where a preliminary opinion on a candidate is required, the IS service specialists are invited to interview the prospective employees. All the employees hired for a remote job position undergo information security risk assessment, and those who, while fulfilling their job duties, decide to make the switch to full-time remote work, receive a personal phone call reviewing the critical elements. The call is aimed at checking whether the employee has all the contacts of the support services and has access to business continuity plans, as well as the employee's level of knowledge of the rules of sensitive data storage and transfer, etc.

Regardless of their work mode (remote or in-office), all the ICL Services employees, in order to perform their duties competently, to preserve the privacy of the information about the company, a partner or a customer, as well as to avoid reputational and other risks, need to comply with the following rules:

1. promptly respond to phishing emails;

2. ensure the protection of sensitive information in accordance with the existing laws;

3. prevent unauthorized access to sensitive information and corporate devices;

4. promptly notify the appropriate services of information security incidents;

5. promptly inform about the inability to provide the service to the customer (BCP incidents);

6. dispose of confidential documents beyond recovery;

7. avoid unauthorized repair of corporate equipment;

8. immediately inform the concerned services in the event of a loss/theft of the devices containing sensitive information;

9. comply with the clear desk and clear screen policy.

ICL Services has also introduced the practice of holding events where IS officers tell their new colleagues about the IS management system within the company, explain the basic requirements of the information security policies to them, analyse particular cases of security breaches in order to prepare the employees to handle similar situations at work. The event is called Security Induction and is obligatory for every employee on probation. The purpose of the event is not to "drive" the IS rules into the employees, but to raise their level of information security awareness/general competence.

In the course of the event, both real-life company cases and cases from the professional experience of information security officers are examined. It also covers the information security incidents that occurred outside the company, but received widespread coverage (for example, the "Star Wars Episode IX" script listed on eBay; the Rambler and Nginx developer confrontation). During the discussions, the Security Induction attendees themselves discern the connection between the incidents and the IS rules and come up with the "correct" solution that could prevent the incident. Focusing on case studies helps to explain the requirements of the company's IS policies in as much detail as possible and enables the employees of various departments to match them to their job responsibilities. Answering the questions posed during Security Induction — "how to destroy sensitive information correctly", "why is it important to transfer information via secure channels", "how information about the partners disclosed to third parties can damage the concerned parties", and others — "untangles the knot" of causal relations and demonstrates the safest and the most sensible course of action in challenging situations.

Due to the mass shift to remote work, Security Induction has become particularly relevant. Working from home has updated the primary educational vector "Which information policy rules need to be observed in our Company?" with the question "Why is it crucial to adhere to all the information policy rules when working remotely?". Particular emphasis is placed on the fact that while working from home, the employee needs to be even more scrupulous about complying with the rules, since maintaining the company's information security is the task of each and every staff member.

With the majority of staff working remotely, the format of the event has been changed. Whereas previously the meeting was held in person and was limited by the capacity of the meeting room, today the event is held in the form of a webinar, involves more people and enables the employees to connect in convenient ways (via a PC, a smartphone, etc.). However, despite the new format, the training includes a lot of interactive activities with the employees: surveys, discussions of the best course of action, storytelling by other participants, etc. Since it is harder to hold the audience's attention during an online event than at an in-person event, Security Induction materials have been redesigned to facilitate the perception of information: a part of the presentation is now designed using memes and short funny videos.

At the end of the event, the employees receive a newsletter containing useful links to corporate resources on information security. The employees are also assigned training courses in information security that supplement and expand the already known information. The employee feedback helps to update and improve the content of the awareness-raising event, which is beneficial for the learning process.

In addition to Security Induction, the new employee also reads the access control regulations, the rules for obtaining permission to take the equipment off the premises, explores the scope of the Information Security Management System, undergoes testing on the Password Policy, on handling sensitive information, on the non-disclosure agreement and workaround solutions, on Media Relations Policy. All the company employees take part in these activities, including those who work remotely.

Thus, by the end of the probation period, the employee can fully engage in the work processes and form part of the Information Security Management System. The employee who has acquired this knowledge will be able to detect and prevent potential IS incidents both in work issues and in everyday life. This, in turn, is one of the basic guarantees of the protection of sensitive information of the company, its partners and customers.

All the ICL Services activities aimed at raising the IS awareness of the employees help to keep the company's team on the alert, whereas the customers can be sure that their systems and their data are managed by the specialists who are knowledgeable in information security.

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