

Delivering a platform to underpin Fotech's rapid growth plans

Please note: Kerv Consult was recently rebranded from Monochrome Consultancy when it joined the Kerv Group. This project was delivered at a point when the team was known as Monochrome Consultancy.

How Kerv Consult supported Fotech Solutions, founders of advanced DAS photonic sensing technology, to evolve their vision, become process driven, and develop a growth-ready culture, all whilst also managing a key technology project



The Challenge

Support Fotech to build a foundation for rapid growth and to drive towards customer excellence.

The Ask (the originally defined scope)

- Project manage the implementation of Microsoft Dynamics to improve customer support and experience
- Map 10 key processes to begin the move for Fotech to become process driven.
- Perform a cybersecurity and data handling review to support Fotech to meet information security standards.
- Deliver wraparound business change to support delivery and embed outcomes.

The Added Value (things we delivered above the original scope)

- Delivered a complete process library (~150 processes mapped).
- Implemented Triaster, a market leading Business Management System (BMS)
- Facilitated development and embedding of a new corporate vision and new approaches to leadership and culture.
- Kerv Consult supported business wide internal communications for Fotech, building on the comms approach that we used across our projects



The Outcome

- Fotech launched a new Corporate Vision, with a mission and objectives to focus the whole company in one direction.
- A company and Corporate Vision re-launch event was delivered for all staff.
- All of Fotech's processes (c. 150) were mapped, and a new BMS (Triaster) was implemented to act as a Process Library.
- Fotech is now process driven.
- Microsoft Dynamics was successfully implemented by a third-party MS partner, with project management provided by Kerv Consult.
- Fotech passed the information security review, which was enabled in part by our cyber consultancy input and the data inventory that we developed.
- Employees remained well informed and engaged through regular communications about each workstream.
- Training and embedding strategies were developed, and key Fotech staff received dedicated support to implement them.



The Benefits

- Cultural and operational legacy issues have been eliminated or in some cases reduced, meaning a high trust, collaborative culture has been developing, underpinning readiness for growth.
- Numerous operational practices have been standardised to improve consistency, coherency, collaboration, and communication.
- Becoming process driven has made Fotech more efficient and resilient, and has helped to ensure ongoing ISO 9001 accreditation.
- Being process driven means Fotech leadership are confident that they can scale the team rapidly whilst protecting the quality of the service that they deliver.
- MS Dynamics has improved the customer experience, and is facilitating higher quality customer engagement.
- Cyber security certifications have ensured Fotech can deliver services to all clients. (ISO/IEC 27001)
- Project outcomes are being actively embedded, reducing risks and improving returns on investment.

The Client

Fotech are a pioneering technology and services company who provide their customers with monitoring solutions to protect vital networks. They achieve this through developing and deploying pioneering fibre optic monitoring technology, that allows customers to assess the activity along an asset and make informed decisions about their response strategy.

Delivering Monitoring Solutions Using Fibre Optic Sensing and AI

A Launchpad
company from bp



About Fotech

The company was founded in 2008 and within 5 years had supporting investment from BP Ventures. Fotech's achievements as founders and world leaders in DAS technology continued to present an excellent opportunity for investors.

In 2020 BP secured their stake by acquiring Fotech through Launchpad, BP's incubator, with the intention to both hyperscale the business, and deploy their tech stack to BP's assets.

The introduction of a more strategically focused c-suite brought the beginnings of a transformation programme aimed at tackling legacy issues and building a sustainable foundation for scalable growth, whilst protecting the core of what made the company special.

As part of this, Kerv Consult was invited by Fotech's Chief Operating Officer, Susan Moritz, to support the work to ensure that the operating model underpinned the ambitions.



The Ambition

Fotech's leadership team had a clear plan to capitalise on their recent acquisition by BP Launchpad to scale rapidly and achieve a market position that allows them to self-invest in new technologies.

However, some of the legacy practices and cultural tendencies presented a risk which could throttle capacity for further growth.

With the appointment of three new executive officers within 18 months, and the influx of their experience and ideas, the company was set on course for a programme of transformation that will carry it from SME to large organisation.

Kerv Consult was brought on board to support key elements of the foundation work that will underpin that programme. In particular, the standardisation of operating practices, the focus on customer engagement, and the evolution of leadership approaches and working practices to create a high trust, collaborative culture.

Fotech had several objectives that they wanted to work with Kerv Consult to achieve:

To improve both the internal and external customer experience by upgrading and better integrating the ticketing system through the implementation of Microsoft Dynamics.

To become 'process driven' – Implementing a standardised approach to mapping processes, and using them to improve consistency and collaboration, find efficiencies, and reduce risk / improve resilience within operations – a key factor in maintaining ISO 9001 accreditation.

To ensure the highest standards of compliance around information security, cybersecurity, and data classification. A requirement both for deploying products and services to BP, and for maintaining ISO/IEC 27001 accreditation.

To evolve cultural attitudes and practices regarding change projects, increasing communication to ensure stakeholders are well informed, using regular feedback to anticipate challenges, and to use embedding activities to improve adoption.



Mobilisation

This was the first time that Kerv Consult and Fotech had worked together so we both felt it sensible to define a clear initial scope.

Our initial scope included deliverables across four workstreams:

- **Project Management** – Project manage the first release of Microsoft Dynamics for customer services.
- **Process Consultancy** – Map approximately 10 key processes to begin the move to becoming process driven.
- **Cyber Consultancy** – Deliver a review of information security, cybersecurity, and data classification to meet a set of defined cyber security standards that bp required Fotech to align to.
- **Business Change** – Deliver wraparound business change to support the delivery activities above and embed their associated outcomes.

The Delivery

Soon after kicking off our engagement with Fotech, we developed a strong relationship and mutual trust. We realised that to deliver the most value to Fotech would require broadening the scope of the overall project, but we also wanted to find a way to do so without increasing either the time or cost that we had committed to.

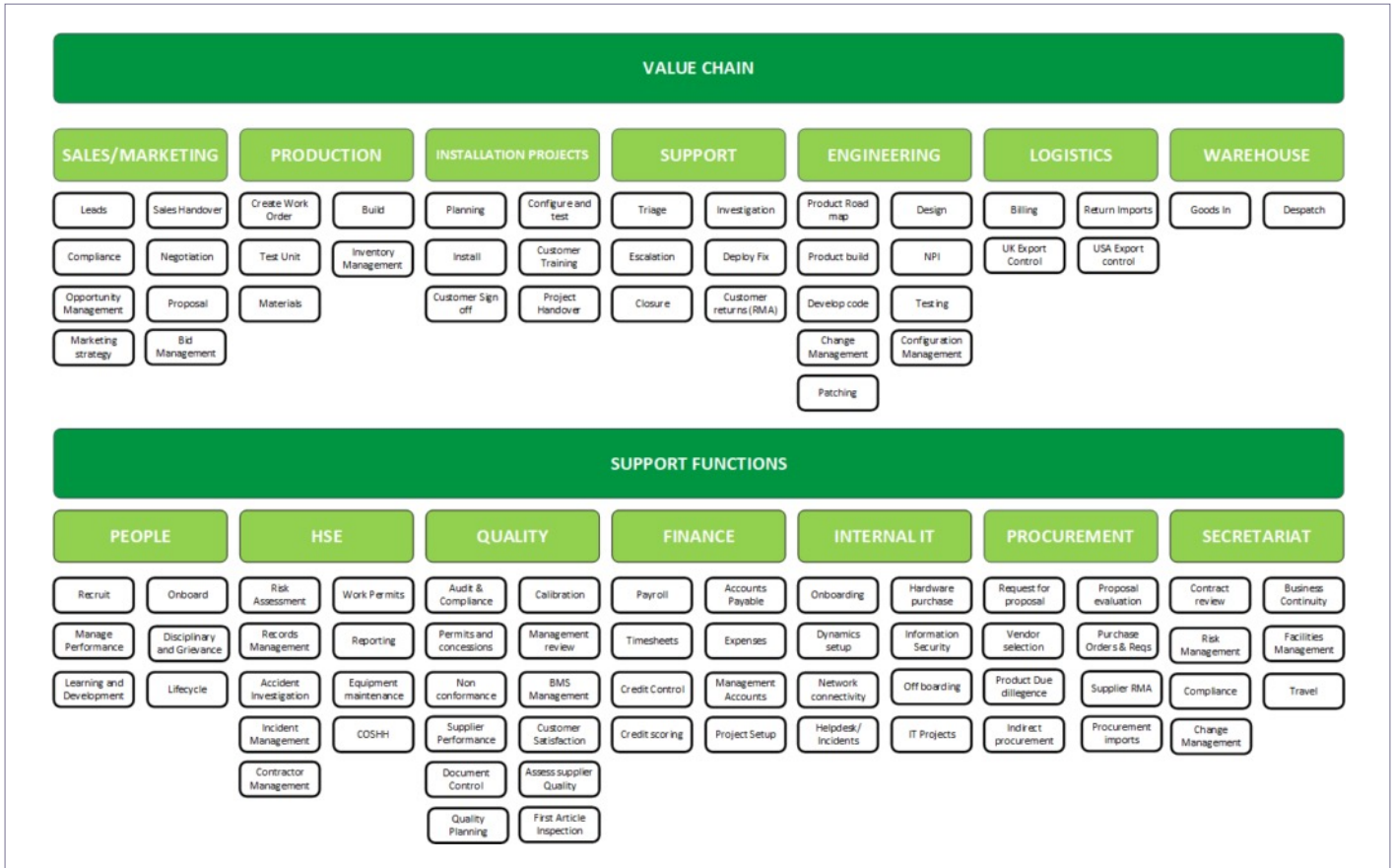
Thanks to both strong focus by the team within Fotech and our previous work with the Digital Security function of BP, we were well acquainted with their requirements for information security and data classification practices, so we were able to hit the ground running and achieve that deliverable within a third of the time anticipated, creating a saving that facilitated an expansion of the process and business change workstreams.

Whilst work on the Dynamics implementation was delayed due to timing issues onboarding a third-party supplier selected by Fotech as their technical partner, we got stuck into process mapping workshops with teams across the organisation, and began exploring the idea of implementing a business management system (BMS).





Fotech's keen desire to become process driven and realise the associated benefits precipitated discussions about several possible solutions, and following a business case assessment Fotech opted to implement Triaster, which we often cite as 'the Ferrari of business management systems'.



Coverage of the expanded Process Workstream (each area supported by several maps)

As the business change work progressed, it became clear that Fotech would also benefit from refreshing their corporate vision and re-launching it as a way of unifying their various teams, some located overseas, behind a clear mission, vision, and identity.

Through a series of workshops with the executive team, and key stakeholders across the organisation, we produced a new corporate vision that sought to overcome several cultural legacy issues, whilst laying the groundwork for successful future growth across four key areas: Technology, Customer, Culture, and Revenue.

When the Dynamics implementation got underway, we set a 'go live' date, and despite some challenges along the way, we hit our target and so were able to roll-off our project manager shortly after launch, creating more capacity for the vital process workstream.

With two of the major projects delivered, and with communication, training, and embedding strategies handed over, our business change manager was also able to roll-off, leaving further capacity in the budget to allow our process consultant to continue to support Fotech in a flexible way for several weeks longer than expected.

“ In the second half of 2021, we engaged Kerv Consult (previously Monochrome) to support us with four business outcomes, one of which was to document our processes. As a small company growing up we had processes but they were out of date, not complete, not in one place and not complementing each other.

Through the excellent work by Kerv Consult and specifically the knowledge of Paul Elson-Vining, each team has worked through the processes they thought they had and added new ones that they should have had. We now have a comprehensive list that can be reviewed and maintained by the company. Thank you.”

Gary Connel
Chief Financial Officer



The Outcome

As a project this was highly successful in the eyes of both Fotech and Kerv Consult and the outcome was as follows:

Schedule

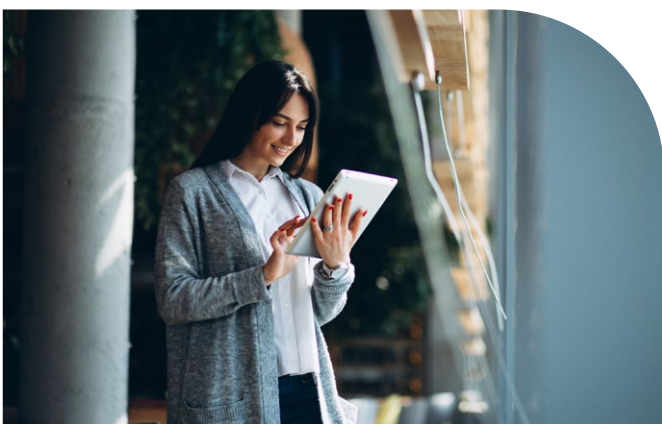
We delivered the initially agreed scope on time in all cases, with the cyber workstream and initial scope of the process workstream being delivered very early. The Dynamics project launched on its planned date, though the agile approach meant some initially assumed features were pushed to a future stage and some others were added into the first launch. There is a clearly defined backlog of features for future Dynamics releases once the initial launch is embedded fully across the customer base. The business change workstream wrapped around the others to ensure that the team were informed at each step.

Scope

We also delivered significantly more scope than was originally planned, especially in the process workstream. We were able to flexibly reallocate some of the planned cyber consultant time and some of the project management time, to allow for the process scope to grow from 10 key processes, to a full BMS including 150 process maps. This was because of the collaborative and flexible ways of working across both teams, and the clear decision making from both Fotech and Kerv Consult at the regular fortnightly governance reviews.

Budget

The overall project (including the wider scope) concluded 5% under budget and the remaining budget in the order has been allocated to providing adhoc support for further process training and communications.



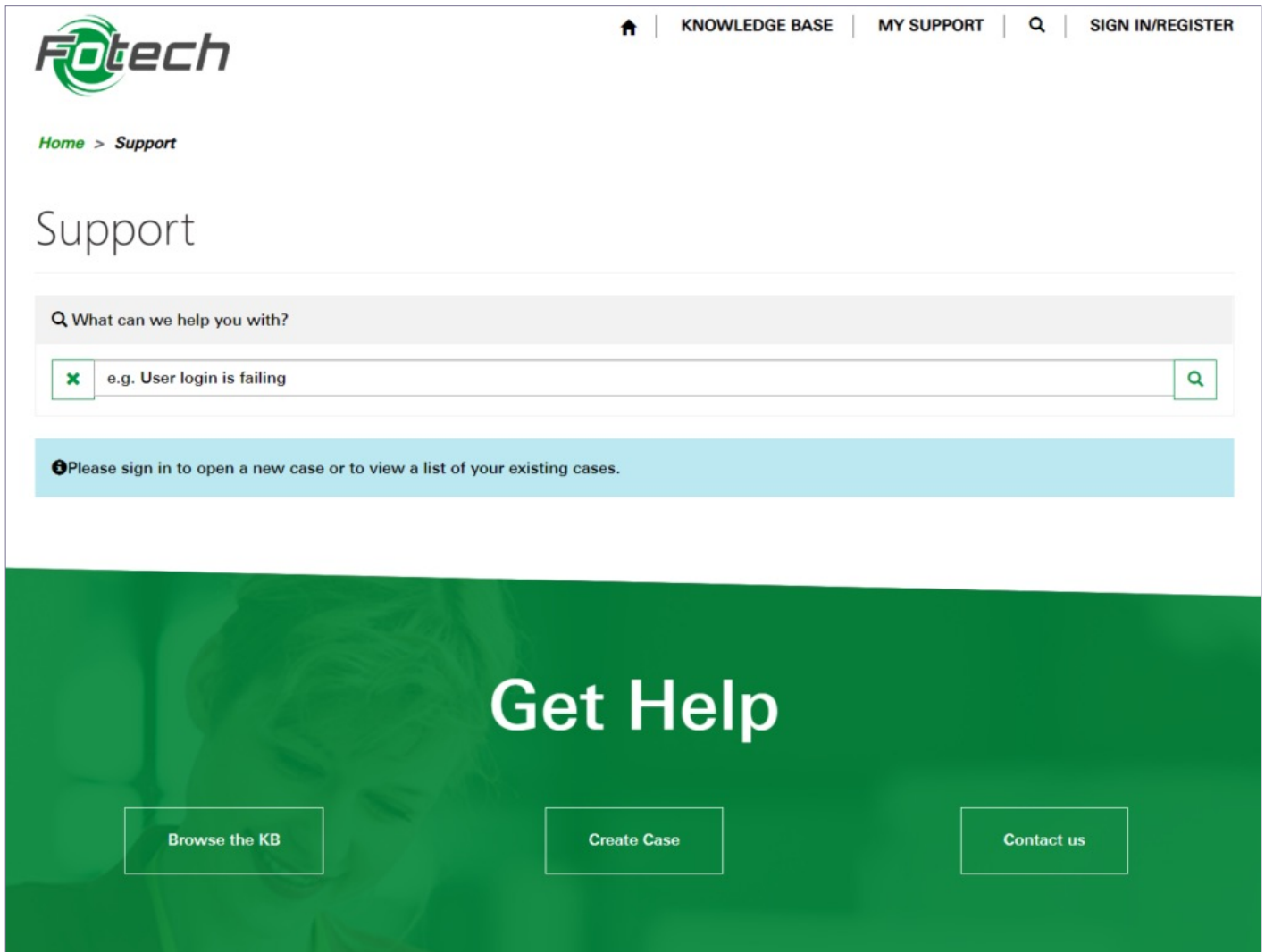


Image of Fotech's new customer portal delivered under the Dynamics project

There were also a range of specific Fotech business outcomes that we achieved together:

- Information security, cybersecurity, and data classification practices all meet both regulatory standards, and BP's internal standards.
- Fotech are now actively embedding new ways of working and becoming a process driven company.
- Over 150 of Fotech's processes have been mapped, and a new BMS (Triaster) was implemented to act as a Process Library and a 'single source of truth' for all business documentation.
- Microsoft Dynamics was successfully implemented, and further phases of work to further improve the customer experience through better use and integration of systems are now being planned.
- Regular communications about each workstream kept employees informed and engaged with key projects and changes to business-as-usual activities.
- Training and embedding strategies were developed, and key Fotech staff received dedicated support to implement them.
- Fotech launched a new Corporate Vision, with a mission and objectives to guide and focus their strategic decision making for the next five years, and to unify their people around a common goal and help to develop a stronger sense of unity.
- A company and Corporate Vision re-launch event was delivered for all staff, creating new links across business areas, and enhancing the sense of belonging to a community.

Most importantly, there are two key outcomes for Fotech that we have achieved collaboratively:

1. Fotech are now much better equipped to scale up as they intend to. They can do with clearly defined ways of working through a BMS, which ensures quality deliver, with a workforce that understands the company vision and mission, in a secure way.
2. Fotech can also now deliver leading customer service, supported by a toolset that enables clear focus on customer excellence which is fully linked to their CRM.

Put simply, the common thread to the work we have done together is to reinforce the platform from which Fotech will grow, which directly underpins the ambition of the company and its leaders.



“ I have enjoyed working with the team at Kerv Consult (previously Monochrome). They have made our projects much easier to accomplish and have been amazingly supportive and flexible with our agile way of working.

The team worked with us across four separate workstreams and have helped us successfully accomplish our deliverables in our desired timeframe despite the scope changing along the way. Their way of working as part of the customer team really helped us get the entire company aligned on the changes and made communication much easier.”

Susan Moritz
Chief Operating Officer



The Relationship

For us, the relationship with Fotech has been fantastic. Kerv Consult's mission is 'to become the trusted partner for our customers' and we feel we have made great progress toward that with Fotech.

We have been able to build rapport quickly because we have been able to work with innovative, engaging, and friendly people. The strength of the Fotech team is not to be understated and the outcomes above would never have been possible without their focus and effort.

The trust that rapidly developed between us all enabled us to work flexibly as an extension of Fotech's teams, giving us the opportunity to provide support beyond our deliverables, across a range of needs.

We were particularly privileged to have become a source of advice and guidance for our contacts at Fotech on areas outside of our core deliverables, being trusted for our knowledge and experience.

Together, we showed that high-trust relationships organically generate high-performance, and that is absolutely key to how we work. We aspire to become our clients' trusted partner, and we achieved that here.

But it takes two to make a partnership work, and Fotech people's willingness to share both ideas and concerns openly and honestly, and to give fair consideration to our input, motivated us to work all the more closely. From their CEO to their frontline teams, we couldn't have asked for more from a client.



Final Word

We look forward to continuing our relationship with Fotech, and even as this project concludes it is very gratifying that several key contacts have requested regular opportunities to touch base after the end of the engagement so that we are prepared to respond quickly, from a well-informed position, when we are needed again.

Get in touch with us

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