

# PLACING INTERNAL CUSTOMERS IN THE CENTER –

## Agile tools support the growth of leading Nordic pet retailer



**Tiina Hietamies,**  
**Head of IT Support Service,**  
**Musti Group Nordic Oy**

and it's growing the fastest. The company operates with brand names like Musti&Mirri (Finland), Arken Zoo (Sweden) and Musti (Norway).

### Driving change with an agile team and the right tool

Tiina Hietamies, Musti Group's Head of IT Support Service, explains: "In 2016, Musti Group's IT was in a state of chaos with high risks to the business. There was no visibility to operations, no group-wide systems, and quality of data and competence of the teams were inadequate. Additionally, integration of acquired businesses was not complete and many local suppliers lacked sufficiently management from Musti Group's side. Reason for the chaotic situation was the rapid growth that Musti had experienced in the previous years. At that point, Musti Group made an aggressive plan to renew the whole business infrastructure – the processes, systems, data, and people – with an ambitious timeline.



Musti Group has an over 270-store chain of pet specialty retailing that annually serves over a million pets and their "parents." The company has grown to be more than ten times bigger than its closest competitor in the Nordic market. On top of its wide network of physical stores, digital channels bring 25% of Musti Group's sales,

Musti Group's daily IT operations also needed to change. "We decided to insource majority of our IT operations and adopt a DevOps model," Hietamies says and continues: "There was no way of managing the transformation with so many disconnected outsourcers and vendors. We even had seven different IT service desks in place!" With business' wheels turning as fast as they did, very few external vendors could keep up the speed. Therefore, it seemed that an agile in-house team, "shared support services," with fewer "handpicked" external partners was the right way to go.

To back-up the insourcing and DevOps transformation, Musti Group needed an IT Service Management (ITSM) system that would help them automate processes, enable self-service, and allow transparency to systems and SLAs. In 2016, they chose Efecte as the tool for this. "The main reasons for choosing Efecte were the speed of the implementation, total cost, solution's scalability to support our growth and it's flexibility to serve different parts of our business," Hietamies explains. "A good proof point of the implementation speed is that in 2016 when we decided to go with Efecte, we had 100 service requests in the system. In 2017, already, that number was up to 10 000."

### KPIs charting the course

Musti Group set four key performance indicators to the internal IT team's transformation: **business continuity, customer experience, cost, and service quality and speed.**

"First of all, with Efecte, we have been able to **stabilize our environments** with proper release management. Alerts about major incidents are automated and change management and new development done through Efecte. Additionally, establishing group-wide ways of working with agile methods has helped teams develop things and solve

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issues much faster,” Hietamies explains. Musti Group manages all its applications and vendors through Efecte. To comply with the EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), they implemented security incident management and the response process to Right to Know requirement. The solution has proven its value as numerous other functions outside IT have adopted it, too. For example, the HR team now has full transparency to tickets, workloads, and training needs. “Our HR is probably very exceptional in how happy they are as users of an ‘ITSM tool,’” smiles Hietamies.

**Customer experience** is a priority for Musti Group’s IT. “Our internal customer satisfaction has gone up, and feedback has been very positive,” says Hietamies. This progress is due to recruiting the right people with a customer service attitude and having the right processes and tool in place. “Efecte’s self-service portal is a one-stop-shop for our employees and stores for all their requests and problems,” says Tiina Hietamies. “A store, for example, can manage most of their requests through one portal, no matter if it is related to HR, IT, assortment, shop design, or a broken light bulb in the store. Such clarity increases job satisfaction, cuts the burden of training new shop employees to our internal tools, and lets them concentrate on what matters the most – the pets and their parents,” Hietamies continues.

With clearly improved transparency to external cost, Musti Group has been able to reduce its IT costs under the industry average. Cost-consciousness and transparency will help IT continue to respond to the increasing demands of Musti Group’s growing business without exploding their budget.

And finally, the **service quality and speed** are both better and more transparent to the entire organization. “When you insource your IT services, the role of management changes to leading people instead of processes. In such an environment, the people managers need transparency on

how their people are doing and their training needs, for example”, Hietamies explains. “My work has changed from managing daily routines and incidents to coaching and helping my team succeed. Nowadays we also have the time to do agile development of small incremental improvements – those things that previously were always postponed to ‘later when,’” Hietamies rejoices.

## Road ahead

Going forward, Musti Group is looking to expand the use of Efecte’s service management platform further. Plans include, e.g. a ticket-based feedback functionality and a knowledge base both for project work and for end-users. In the fall of 2019, Efecte’s upcoming Kanban view is expected to bring great value to the agile development in different parts of Musti Group. They also plan to streamline the process how a new store is established by creating a workflow that takes care of the entire process in a standardized way, similarly as they do for on- and off-boarding of new employees. “With Efecte’s visual analyzer, we plan to map our entire infrastructure so, that in case of a major incident – which we nowadays have very few of – it will be easy to pinpoint what systems are causing it and affected by it,” Hietamies explains. “With Efecte’s new Identity Governance and Administration solution, in turn, we could bring the administration of access requests on the same platform, and further streamline the process of, e.g. onboarding new employees into our stores,” she concludes.



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