

case study:  
ARAB BANK

Discover how **assyst** by Axios Systems enabled Arab Bank to lead IT trends in its region with a modern ITIL-based IT Service Management solution.

## Axios turns ITIL into hard currency in the Middle East

With the IT Infrastructure Library (ITIL) starting to gain momentum in the Middle East, one of the region's leading banks is helping drive the adoption of these internationally accepted Best Practice guidelines, having installed its first integrated IT Service Management software solution.

Arab Bank believes its implementation of **assyst** by Axios Systems and the associated introduction of ITIL processes into its IT operations will improve service delivery and quality, boost customer satisfaction and ultimately cut costs.

### The Organization

Based in the Jordanian capital, Amman, Arab Bank has the biggest branch network in the Middle East and is the largest banking group by equity in the Arab world. In 2005 the group reported net profit (after taxes and provisions) of \$US 503.2 million - a record since it began trading 75 years ago - and assets of almost \$US 27.5 billion.

Arab Bank has 12 IT centres worldwide - in Jordan, Palestine, Egypt, Lebanon, Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco, the United Arab Emirates (serving UAE, Bahrain, Qatar and Yemen), and the UK (serving UK, France, Italy, Spain, Germany, Austria, Cyprus, Singapore, Australia and the USA).

It employs some 6,300 staff, of whom 2,700 are based in its home country Jordan. Each IT centre has its own local team responsible for day-to-day operations, field support and second level support for business staff.

The Global IT Team, located in Amman, is responsible for designing, selecting and implementing systems for all IT centres, and provides third level technical support.

### The Background

Already an extremely successful organization experiencing continued growth, Arab Bank recognizes that in order for it to remain at the forefront of its market, it is essential that it continues to be innovative and remain in tune with global IT trends.

For its IT Service Management (ITSM) it was relying on a mixture of tools, either developed in-house or purchased from external suppliers.

"We were facing a number of issues which led us to the conclusion that we needed a unified, best-of-breed tool," said Mr. Ma'n Zada, Global IT Strategic Planning Senior Manager.

"The Incident Management process needed improvement. Follow-ups on second level support escalations were difficult and sometimes manual.

**ARAB BANK**over  
the solution was **assyst** >

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Mr. Ma'n Zada,  
Global IT Strategic Planning  
Senior Manager.



Management reporting information from the existing Help Desk was limited. Configuration items and asset information required improvement.”

A starting point was to launch a Process Enhancement Project, in which working procedures were documented and mapped. Reviews with managers were carried out which included deleting redundant steps, using forms to improve management and follow-up, and identifying workflows to automate processes.

**The Solution**

ITIL, which has been widely adopted in many parts of the world, was identified by the project team as the key to improving IT operations and quality of service delivery.

“Proper implementation of ITIL was regarded as crucial in helping improve service delivery and quality, thus improving customer satisfaction and lowering costs,” commented Mr. Ma'n Zada. “We needed a solutions supplier who understood it thoroughly.”

Arab Bank realized that, although ITIL awareness was only in its infancy in Jordan, with some large corporates planning to introduce it, it was a growing global trend with which it needed to keep pace, especially in view of its substantial international branch network. Arab Bank believed the introduction of ITIL boosts the image and stature of organizations and their IT centres. Furthermore, implementation of common standards and language was considered a major benefit.

The bank also needed a solution with Arabic language capability and was looking specifically for one that would correct and prevent errors and delays, enhance productivity by identifying and measuring Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), clarify process ownership, roles and responsibilities and improve internal and external co-ordination amongst groups.

To achieve this, it decided to implement a single, integrated solution and after a comprehensive review of the market chose the award-winning assyst from Axios Systems.

“Having a single tool gave us the benefits of standardization, efficient support and economies of scale,” said Mr. Basil Abdel-Nabi, Deputy Head of Global IT.

The project committee assessed products based on pre-defined functional and technical requirements, the vendors' capabilities and their proposed approaches and methodologies as well as a financial evaluation.

Benefiting from nearly two decades of development and investment around Best Practice principles, Axios' core solution, assyst, intuitively steers users through ITIL processes. Implementing assyst in an organization optimizes IT infrastructure efficiency, reduces total cost of IT ownership and ensures a rapid Return on Investment.

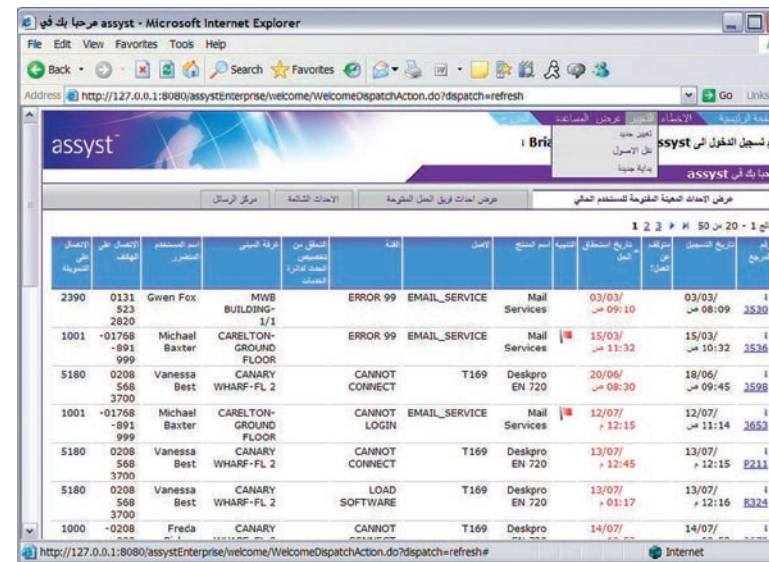
“We selected Axios because it is focused on ITIL and ITSM,” commented Mr. Abdel-Nabi. “ITIL is considered essential for aligning IT services with the business and providing full transparency our IT operations,” he went on. “assyst was built from inception around the ITIL framework.”

“Availability of an Arabic-language service was mission-critical,” Mr. Abdel Nabi went on. assyst is Unicode-compliant and therefore supports any language.

“Axios also offered the most effective solution from a value perspective,” Mr Abdel Nabi added. assyst has initially been deployed at the IT centre in Amman to support the Jordanian business staff. This will be followed by global roll-out starting with Egypt, Lebanon, the United Arab Emirates and the UK.

The bank is also taking advantage of assystDiscovery. assystDiscovery integrates up-to-date asset inventory information from external inventory management into assyst allowing the organization to strategically control its IT infrastructure, one of its largest investments.

“assystDiscovery provides us with automatic and accurate data on all our assets and ensures our Configuration Management Database (CMDB) is continually up-to-date,” Mr Abdel Nabi commented.



assyst Arabic Screenshot

A single underlying CMDB is integral to any ITIL-based solution. The CMDB, which provides an accurate inventory of IT resources and the relationships between them, is at the core of assyst instead of being simply a bolt-on as it is with some other ITSM tools.

The Web-based self-service companion product for assyst, assystNET, will also be implemented throughout the bank, allowing staff to log and track their own incidents, easing pressure on the Help Desk and giving end-users greater control and sense of involvement.

Further planned developments include using assyst for managing Service Level Agreements

**Benefits**

- Standardization, efficient support and economies of scale due to a single, best-of-breed solution
- Effective and consistent Best Practice IT processes
- Improved management information available
- Arabic language version available out of the box
- Accurate and easily accessible asset and configuration data in a single underlying CMDB

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harnessing its Knowledge Base to help Help Desk staff handle Frequently Asked Questions. Correct and swift knowledge retrieval is essential to ensure customer satisfaction, business efficiency and profitability.

### Why bank on Axios Systems?

Arab Bank was impressed by Axios Systems both before and after the sale. "We knew it was the first organization in the world to achieve certification in BS 15000, the precursor to ISO/IEC 20000 - the international standard for ITSM, and that it had been voted Software Company of the Year," Mr. Zada said. "It was also reassuring that Axios was rated by Dun & Bradstreet as being in the top 0.9% of companies for financial stability."

"Axios' consultants are specialists in ITSM and ITIL, and are qualified in ITIL to a minimum level of IT Service Managers. The product training they provided was effective. Furthermore, Axios' multi-lingual Service Desk is efficient and responds to our queries very quickly." ■



ARAB BANK



"We were impressed by the understanding of our business needs demonstrated by Axios and found that assyst is the ideal tool to meet our requirements."



"assyst offered all the functional and technical features we were looking for in our outsourcing platform. Our biggest clients are moving towards ITIL so assyst was the logical choice."



"We chose assyst based on our long term objectives, which were to implement ITIL and a solution that would support this."



"The key in selecting Axios was their in-depth knowledge of ITIL."



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