



IT Consultants Case Study:

Advanced electronic payment services in an emerging economy environment

Challenge

- to establish a robust, scalable, secure and flexible yet user friendly platform for developing country-wide EFT business
- to embrace the issuing of international cards
- to attract more financial institutions by offering them an unlimited range of products and services able to meet individual customer requirements

Results

- recognition as the market leader
- achievement of Third Party Processor and national processor status
- the ability of offer customers a broad and ever increasing range of innovative products and services

The client

IT Consultants Limited are the local leader in the rapidly developing environment of electronic payment & transaction systems within Bangladesh. ITCL provides banks and retailers with advanced infrastructure for transaction processing whilst operating a substantial POS terminal network and the largest shared ATM network in the country.

An active player in the EFT market of Bangladesh since 2000, ITCL originally began its operations by offering an offline e-purse capability to local banks based on a proprietary solution.

The challenge

The existing system could only cope with fairly small card and transaction volumes, was not very secure or sufficiently robust, lacked sophistication and required a lot of manual operations. As the company's business began to grow and mature, the management decided a solution that was larger and more suited to the industry was essential if business was to develop further. This need for a new solution was reinforced by the company's aspirations to embrace international card products and operations.

Embracing innovative technology

The decision to procure a new solution was made in 2003 with Compass Plus Technologies being the chosen option. The key reason for selecting Compass Plus was the broad range of functionalities available and the fact that the platform is continuously being upgraded and expanded in accordance with the market. Whilst the systems are known for their robustness and scalability, an important additional consideration was ease of use.



Succeeding in the market place

It was largely due to the distinctive features of the solution, that despite certain infrastructure and human resource issues still prevailing in Bangladesh, the initial implementation was reasonably smooth and quick – the system went live on time and within budget. Moreover – the flexibility of the platform, its vast configurability and Compass Plus' approach towards new demands from its clients, allowed ITCL to quickly rise to become the leader in the market by providing its customers with all the necessary services.

As of the end of 2008, ITCL offers a suite of integrated retail banking products that include ATM management, POS and merchant systems, credit and debit card management systems and an exclusive Islamic Credit Card Management system, all on its Compass Plus Technologies platform. ITCL is also a certified third party processor for a number of Visa member banks in Bangladesh.

ITCL serves 15 commercial and state-owned banks and this number just keeps growing, as does the range of services on offer. A significant indicator of ITCL's success is the fact that the Central Bank of Bangladesh has taken a considerable stake in the company, thus making it the de facto national processor.

According to Managing Director & CEO of ITC Ltd. Dr. Kazi Saifuddin Munir: *"ITCL is committed to be the leader of the Automated Transaction processing in Bangladesh. Our Motto "Value Added Cost Effective Services" is focused towards providing our best to the clients to enhance their productivity and profitability.*

"Furthermore, we enable our clients to gain and sustain a new competitive advantage over their competitors. Our clients also move a long distance ahead with innovative customer service. ITC Ltd believes in technological advancement, creative thinking and dynamic activity. We are both doers and dreamers. Our Q-Cash network is the 'One Stop' solution for all these banking necessities."

The future

Largely as a result of its successful business operations, driving its market share growth and ensuring its financial stability, ITCL has recently taken over its key competitor in the local market, and as a consequence of this merger, will be migrating a number of new banks to its Compass Plus Technologies platform.

All of the services provided by ITCL to its customer banks are delivered using a core set of products from Compass Plus Technologies – switch, card management system and card personalization system. Further business initiatives are in the pipeline that will require this basic product set to be expanded to include; interchange, internet banking, e-Commerce, and fraud management.

The success of ITCL is further proof that in today's e-powered world, technology acts as an enabler and business strategies are invariably interwoven with technology strategy. The correct choice of processing platform may act as the catalyst for business success.