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Bloom*
*Opening up procurement

Bloom launches UK's first public sector-focused source-to-pay platform with XoomConnect

About Bloom Procurement Services

Bloom provides a full end-to-end marketplace solution for the procurement, contract management and payment of all consultancy and professional services. Bloom's procurement solution supports and assists the entire UK public sector to buy and manage professional services from a choice of regional and national suppliers. It allows them to move quickly and at the lowest possible cost, whilst achieving better outcomes.

Established in 2012, Bloom have a large network of registered suppliers who have ease of access to contracts being placed by over 330 public sector bodies. Already, Bloom have successfully completed over 4,500 projects.

Bloom is the UK's exclusive operator of the NEPRO[3] professional services solution, on behalf of NEPO (The North East Procurement Organisation). On average public sector buyers working with Bloom save between 11% and 19% against budget.

The current system had been developed in-house a number of years ago, and would need considerable investment to upgrade it to meet the business needs of the growing organisation.

Challenges

With a unique business model, Bloom acts as a neutral vendor securing professional services procurement on behalf of its public sector customers. Bloom wanted to enhance their technology platform to develop a solution specifically customised to the needs of the public sector, offering customers a source-to-pay solution. Bloom needed to ensure that the new technology solution was both scalable and flexible to incorporate their specific workflow and approach to procurement, as the organisation drove its expansion plans.

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Solution

Following careful analysis, the decision was made to reach out to a third-party vendor who had the components Bloom needed to configure their unique procurement model.

Jaggaer, the world's largest independent spend management company, was selected to develop the platform. Jaggaer had the capability to configure Bloom's demanding criteria. Xoomworks Procurement was chosen as the integration partner for its XoomConnect solution that met Bloom's SME positioning and pricing point. XoomConnect would be used to integrate Jaggaer seamlessly with Bloom's existing finance system.

"I had previously worked with Xoomworks and was aware of XoomConnect. I was confident it would firstly meet our needs as an SME and secondly give us the scalability we needed to grow," says Amabel Grant, Chief Technology Officer, Bloom.

With four parties involved; Bloom, Jaggaer, Xoomworks and a consultant focused on the finance system, the teams worked together to optimise the sourcing solution. The process works by a customer submitting a request to Bloom's procurement team, who then reviews it and invites relevant and approved suppliers to tender for the work. The service enables public sector customers to select professional services suppliers without any sales pressure, providing them value, control and compliance.

The platform will give Bloom the flexibility it needs to evolve and respond to the ongoing demands in the public sector. The integration took around three months to get up and running, and is now perfectly aligned with Bloom's business model for managing professional services spend through the NEPRO[3] solution.

In addition, the source-to-pay solution has enabled Bloom to concentrate its effort on where it adds value, working closely with customers on their own specifications and ensuring they are able to select the best supplier for their particular projects.

Amabel adds *"We worked closely with Xoomworks in order to enable the optimum architecture for the integration. Xoomworks ensured we got the right advice and best results for our integration."*

Key Benefits

- ✓ Bloom ensures successful procurement outcomes to its customers with its seamlessly integrated end-to-end processes, from the customer submitting a requirement, right through to payment of the supplier
- ✓ Processing efficiency has improved as manual processes have been replaced by automation
- ✓ Bloom is able to scale up its procurement operations without the direct need to increase headcount.

Working with Xoomworks

"Our source-to-pay solution is a UK first, specifically designed for the public sector and will enable us to scale our business, while ensuring that our processes are effective, consistent and efficient. Bloom has grown rapidly over the last four years and has virtually doubled in turnover every year for the last four years, and with the right technology in place with Xoomworks we look forward to continuing this rapid growth whilst providing a best-in-class solution for our customers."

Amabel Grant,
Chief Technology Officer, Bloom

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