



DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION APPROACH FOR CONSULTING AND PROFESSIONAL SERVICES FIRMS WITH ORACLE CLOUD

Abstract

Consulting and professional services firms aiming for digital transformation have unique business challenges. They struggle with making key decisions on margin control and need a 360-degree view of project dashboards. Infosys industry solution based on Oracle Cloud that provides several critical capabilities to address these challenges.

This paper provides a comprehensive view of the process framework and workflows used by consulting and professional services firms. It examines the complexities of systems, communications, processes, and people. It describes the four-tiered framework of the Infosys industry solution, which helps these organizations define their primary business processes, bring out clear dependencies, and ensure successful digital transformation programs.

Introduction

Consulting and professional services companies focus on managing proposals, articulating opportunities, planning projects, and executing these. It includes complicated and interconnected functioning that requires dedicated coordination. Considering the complex nature of their business operations, these companies must consider a few crucial factors when embarking on digital transformation programs. Merely moving to Cloud may deliver only limited return on investment (RoI) without a structured approach that couples the best-fit solution suite with the right best practices.

Overview of processes in consulting and professional services firms

Typically, business operations in these firms begin with crafting responses to a request for proposal (RFP) from a customer or a client organization, followed by more complicated tasks such as assess the risk within the opportunity, approvals based on the delegation of authority (DOA), to mapping the right data entities, and making

these available in downstream processes. Once the opportunity is won, it is converted into a project for execution.

During project execution, the cost center aggregates the financial information and uses this to analyze and monitor project performance through the financial

dashboard. Oracle Project Portfolio Management (PPM) has been a proven solution to control internal access and secure data by defining the project expenditure organization. The project expenditure organization is inherited from the organization hierarchy defined in Oracle HCM Cloud.

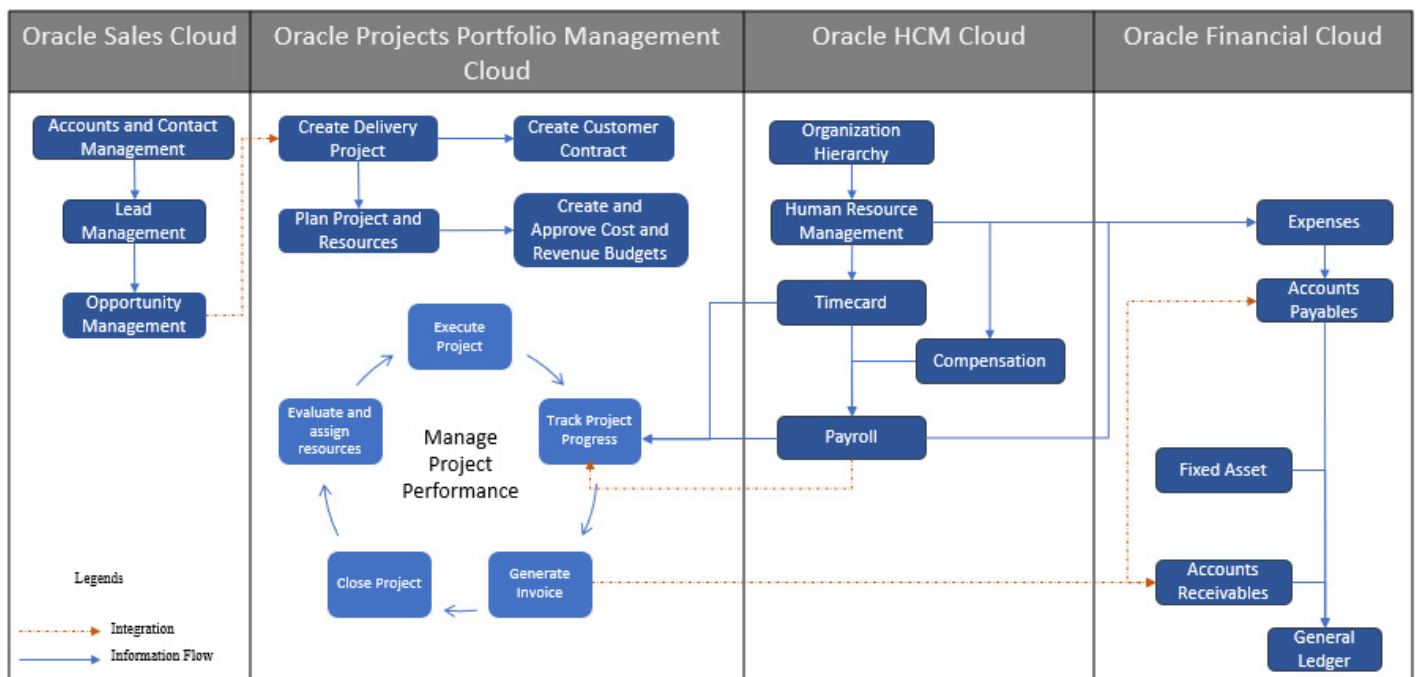


Figure 1 – Functionalities of various Oracle products needed for consulting and professional services firm

Challenges

Revenue for consulting and professional services comes from their charges for providing expertise in project management for a particular domain or technology. To do this, they must nurture and sustain talent to develop the requisite skills and expertise. Moreover, they should optimize operations to provide high quality expertise rapidly.

Here are some common challenges facing consulting and professional services firms with respect to their business operations:

- Ensuring continuous flow of talent and skill to provide uninterrupted services to customers
- Creating the most effective response to RFPs that identify and mitigate all possible risks at the most appropriate price to stay competitive
- Providing a solution that is scalable to meet future needs and functionality adaptations
- Balancing existing project backlogs while procuring new projects and customer RFPs
- Enabling access to real-time data to manage the project dashboard with project KPIs
- Creating a smooth and automated flow of information, project schedules, timecards, expenses, and billing processes with appropriate levels of approval

Infosys Industry Solution for Consulting and Professional Services Firms

Infosys has developed an industry solution that empowers consulting and

professional services organizations to embark on successful digital transformation journeys that enhance their business operations. The solution helps organizations leverage various Oracle Cloud pillars such as Sales, HCM, and ERP in a planned manner for digital transformation.

Built on Oracle PPM, Oracle Financial, Oracle Sales, and Oracle HCM CCloud, the solution offers a single platform through which organizations can access standard product features without tedious customization. It supports smooth adaptation, transition, and future acquisitions. The solution leverages best practices, standard configurations, and proven business scenarios derived from the vast Infosys experience in executing similar implementations for global enterprises.

Some of its top benefits include:

- Validates decisions to address current challenges around unique business processes and digital transformation
- Provides a robust business architecture that streamlines the digital transformation experience
- Enables better decision-making around process compliance and key internal controls (KIC) that are built into the platform and few others which are managed offline
- Streamlines interactions and communication flow between different business lines across geographical regions through strong data governance, data access controls, and compliant business processes

The Infosys solution provides a four-tiered framework that taps into various Oracle Cloud pillars. These are:



1. Robust business architecture using Oracle Sales Cloud

Developing the business architecture

Consulting and professional services organizations transforming to digital must first define the business operations and processes around their core business model. They must also define their market and customer base. The key steps here are to identify business process inefficiencies and areas for improvement. This involves identifying missing data entities, building the transformed core business data model, and breaking silos across

the business functions. In doing so, the Infosys solution helps create a new business architecture that focuses on value streams and process steps.

Assessing risk against opportunity

Consulting and professional services organizations should look for opportunities to increase their market share and revenue while de-risking the business. Ideally, they aim for diversification and create new avenues to stay ahead of their competitors.

The Infosys solution helps identify and manage these risks against opportunities so organizations can develop better risk mitigation plans. In this stage, questionnaire responses are captured and collated to determine risk. Once identified, risk mitigation plans are developed and reviewed with the owners of each business line. The review helps uncover new risks. It also empowers the organization to make better decisions when choosing whether to respond to the risk or abandon the opportunities when the risks outweigh the rewards.

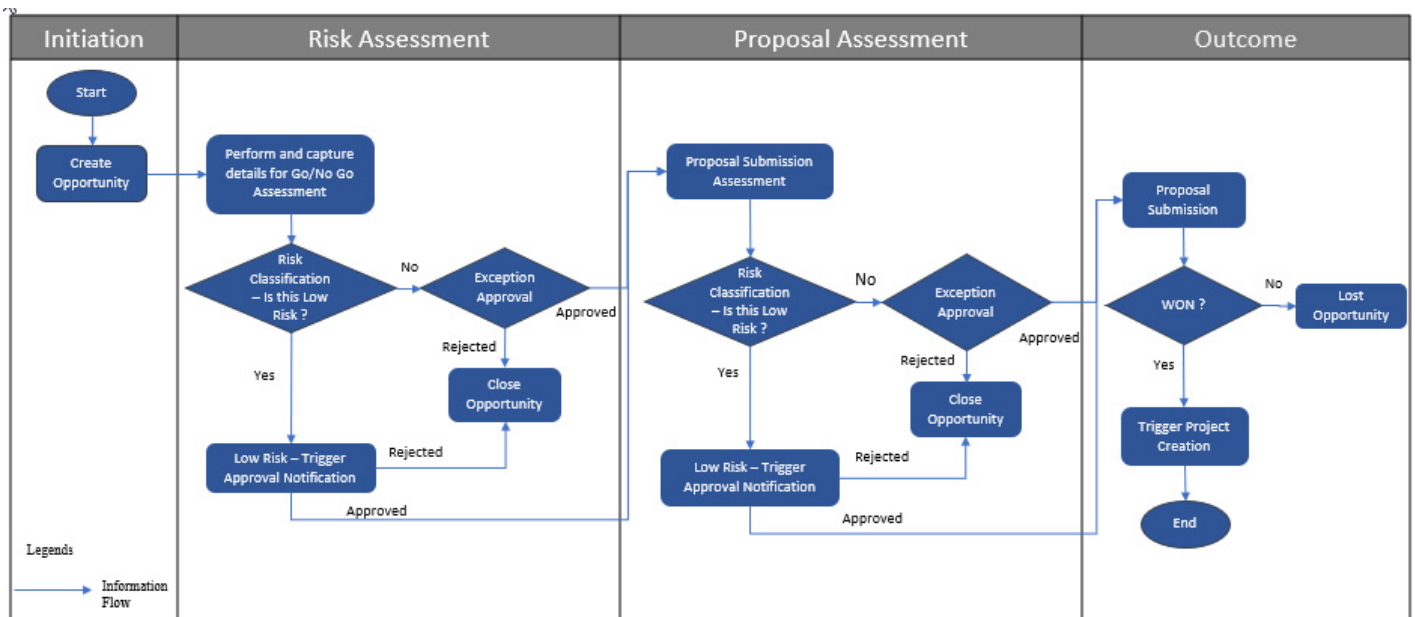


Figure 2 – Workflow to assess risk during proposal assessment

2. Client project portfolio management

Consulting and professional services organizations have to manage their capabilities, build skills for emerging markets, and include different types of clients in their portfolio to improve

profitability. With the Infosys solutions, client portfolios can be determined by comparing costs and customer budgets for different kinds of projects. The costs include direct cost such as billable hours and

actual expenses as well as indirect expenses such as client acquisition cost, relationship management, and retention cost. Indirect costs contribute substantially to the overall cost structure and can vary across customers.

3. Project performance KPIs

The Infosys Industry Solution uses many predefined performance measures available with Oracle PPM Cloud such as:

- The estimate at completion (EAC) budget costs, calculated as the burdened cost from the current baseline approved budget
- The inception-to-date (ITD) forecast revenue variance, calculated as the ITD

current baseline budget revenue minus the ITD current approved forecast revenue

- Prior period margin percentage variance, calculated as the prior period current baseline budget margin percentage minus the prior period actual margin percentage

The performance measures are associated with time dimensions and can be expressed as a currency amount, as a percentage, or in time units. The thresholds are defined against each KPI and are further associated with performance status indicators to indicate the status of a project, i.e., whether it is critical, at risk, or on track.

4. Harmonizing flow across Oracle Sales, HCM, PPM, and financial Cloud

Delegation of authority

Oracle Business Process Management (BPM) Cloud provides a framework that covers various Oracle Cloud pillars. It is configured based on requirements of different business functions regarding authorizations and approvals. Delegation of authority is based on internal policies and rules to ensure that financial controls, accountability, and risk management are effectively followed within the organization.

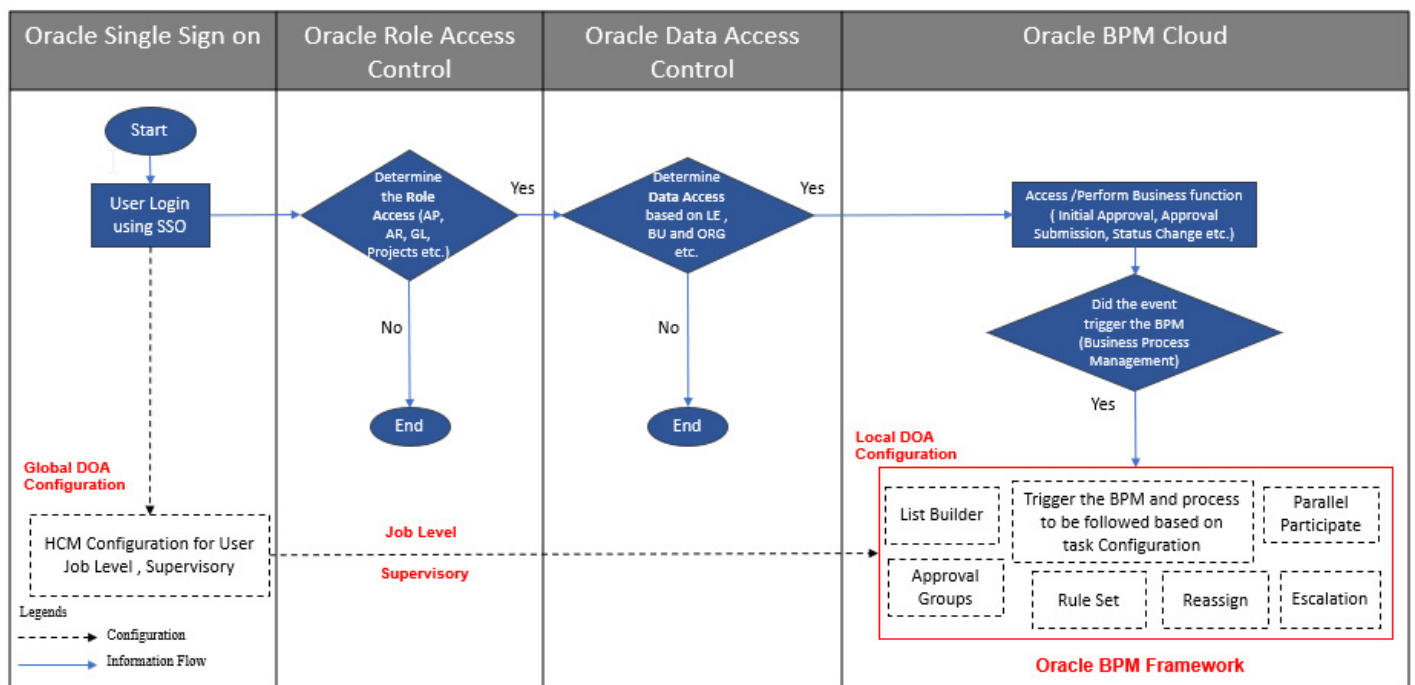


Figure 3 – Workflow for delegation of authority using Oracle controls

Harmonization of cost center hierarchy

Organizations must harmonize the cost centers across the Oracle Cloud pillars to simplify and automate information flow, streamline organization hierarchy maintenance, and improve reporting in both Oracle PPM and HCM Cloud.

Oracle Pillar	Data Group	Mapped Data Entities	Naming Rule
Finance	Chart of Accounts	Cost Center	Cost Center Code – Based on Organization needs (A)
		Cost Center Description	Based on Organization needs (B)
Sales	Product	Flex field – Product Name	Same as Cost Center Description (B)
		Flex field – Product Number	Same as Cost Center Code (A)
		Flex field – Project Naming Organization	Concatenation of (A) and (B)
HCM	Department	Department Name	Concatenation of (A) and (B)
Projects	Project Organization	Project Organization	Concatenation of (A) and (B)

Table 1 – Streamlining Cost Center across Oracle Pillars



Conclusion

The Infosys Industry Solution on Oracle Cloud, part of Infosys Cobalt, helps consulting and professional services firms enhance collaboration and business interactions through automation and adoption of best practices. It smoothens business processes and facilitates agility in information generation and exchange. The solution and its pillars allow organizations to tightly align with their customers. By addressing the main challenges of data security, access controls, business architecture, and portfolio management, the solution helps organizations focus on developing the right skills and expertise to diversify and strengthen their market share. Oracle Cloud pillars such as Sales, HCM, Projects, and Financials help consulting and professional services organizations remove functional silos and harmonize data standardization across all the business functions.



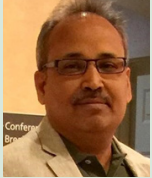
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Chandrashekar has 20 years of IT experience in consulting, project management and pre-sales in the Services, Distribution, Manufacturing, Hi-Tech and Healthcare industries. As a technology transformation leader with Oracle Cloud and Oracle E-business suite, he has helped the clients in their digital journey across multiple client locations in India, Japan, UK and US with Infosys. Chandra is the solution architect with Oracle practice, Infosys and has worked on multiple proposals and contributed to the industry solution with Oracle ERP Cloud."



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Chakravarthi, aka Chakri, is a Senior Deliver Manager with Infosys. He is currently responsible for Global delivery of Oracle ecosystem products for Services vertical. He has 30 years of IT experience in Strategic Planning, managing global project teams, managing delivery management - from RFP creation to contract award to seamless execution and managing stakeholder (Internal and External) expectations. He closely works with project teams in formulating best practices and implementing process improvements. He is responsible for creating motivated teams that consistently deliver results, right talent acquisition & mentoring, people change management and conflict & risk management.

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Infosys Cobalt is a set of services, solutions and platforms for enterprises to accelerate their cloud journey. It offers over 35,000 cloud assets, over 300 industry cloud solution blueprints and a thriving community of cloud business and technology practitioners to drive increased business value. With Infosys Cobalt, regulatory and security compliance, along with technical and financial governance comes baked into every solution delivered.

For more information, contact askus@infosys.com

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