

Envue proves a class act in school project

Every principle upon which the success of Envue is founded was applied in a textbook project delivery exercise completed on behalf of the International School of Aberdeen.

Envue was awarded the contract to manage the entire IT transition process as the school moved from its previous location into a new multi-million pound complex at Pitfodols in the west end of the city.



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The challenges involved in the process were complex but Envue ultimately brought the project in significantly below the set budget while meeting every client objective.

The key elements that saw the process completed successfully, and on time, were essentially two-fold: Envue's procurement and risk mitigation strategies.

Managing Director Stephen Lancaster explains: "We were appointed to manage the transition of all elements of the IT infrastructure – telephone, network and email systems, as well as business applications, data and all network hardware.

"Our first priority was to agree and deliver a procurement strategy designed to yield the best possible solutions for the school in the most cost-effective way. The centrepiece of that was the formation of tender documents carefully framed to generate the optimal solutions from bidders.

"In essence those documents weren't specific in practical terms. They didn't, for example, stipulate particular telephone systems. Instead they set out, very clearly and unambiguously, what each element of the project was required to do. That gave tenderers the leeway to be creative and innovative, and come back with solutions that would precisely meet requirements.

"Further, the evaluation criteria for the tenders were based on both cost and technical quality, meaning we had the scope to identify and apply the best solutions to meet project objectives within the set budget.

"These are tendering principles we consistently apply on similar projects and they're very much a core part of our independent approach to project execution."

The next strategic phase in the delivery of the project focused upon the formation of a 'staging area' to help minimise risk when it came to implementation.



International
School of Aberdeen

OVERVIEW

The International School of Aberdeen (ISA) was founded in 1972 and specialises in offering an internationally recognised co-educational pre-kindergarten through secondary school education for students of all nationalities.

ISA's programme of studies has been developed to meet the needs of its student body by utilising the best examples of UK, US, and international curricular models.

The International School of Aberdeen is jointly accredited by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools and the Council of International Schools.

CHALLENGE

In 2006, it was announced that the Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route (AWPR) would be routed through the school's Fairgirth campus. As a direct result, ISA had no choice but to relocate to a new campus during the summer holiday in 2010.

OBJECTIVES

The ISA Board of Trustees published a strategy for the relocation in May 2008, focusing on four key points:

1. The continuity of education for the students of ISA not be interrupted.
2. The process be managed so that the health and safety of the entire community is not compromised by the AWPR.
3. The move be managed so that ISA and its vision is not compromised financially or in any other respect.
4. It was never the school's desire to move; however, given the situation with which they are faced, the Board of Trustees should look for opportunities in line with their vision while the school transitions to its new campus.

● Case Study: The International School of Aberdeen

“Envue did a fantastic job on our behalf. Without its contribution the project simply would not have been completed in the same successful way.

“For staff and students the first week back at school after the summer break was very similar to previous years – and when you consider that we were moving into a brand new building for the first time, that suggests the transition has been incredibly successful.”

Stan Richards
IT Co-ordinator and School Board Faculty Representative

“Having Envue manage the process on our behalf took an enormous weight off our shoulders. Its understanding of what needed to be done and when, in order to achieve our objectives, was of immense benefit.

“The independent approach to sourcing suppliers and contractors helped us meet the need to achieve the best possible value for taxpayers’ money, and the project came in under budget despite the challenging timeframe.

“Further, the deployment of the staging area proved crucial as our implementation timescales became tighter and tighter.

“Envue was scrupulous and totally professional in its approach to the project.”

Matthew Johnstone
IT Administrator

All systems and equipment were delivered by contractors to the area – located at the previous school site – where it could be tested and pre-configured.

“In effect we set up all the systems at the remote location in advance, an exercise that gave everyone involved the confidence and assurance that everything was in place and ready to go once the overall construction project was ready to accept us on site,” says Stephen.

“It was a central feature of an extremely effective front-end planning exercise that saw us work closely with all contractors well in advance and prepare to the last detail.”

Once the implementation phase began, Envue oversaw the completion of the entire IT transition process in less than three weeks, playing a pivotal role as the new school opened on schedule to its 350 students at the end of August 2010.

“The viable and effective operation of all school services and functions rely on the IT infrastructure so it was essential to deliver our elements of the relocation in line with the overall development,” adds Stephen.

“Our strong, sustained relationship with the client – and with the many other stakeholders – was a vital part of the project’s success. The school’s overall objective from the start was to create the best possible learning environment for its students and we were committed to supporting that goal throughout.

“We were thrilled to be involved in such a prestigious project and to have supported such an important development in the city.”

ABOUT ENVUE

Envue provides professional project consultancy services for clients in a range of industry and business sectors, including oil & gas, engineering and public bodies.

Its service portfolio includes project and programme management, project management office, business analysis and contract management. It also focuses upon IT-specific services: IT strategy and IT consulting.

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