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Our experienced team at GSOT has proven the answer is a resounding YES. Whatever the future may hold, our framework for OMS delivery has changed forever.

By successfully delivering rapid Order Management at a global brand during the pandemic, we have shown that with good teaming and planning there are significant benefits to a 100% remote working environment using a distributed global team.

Environmental footprint, efficiency, and cost are just some of the areas in which a totally remote working model can provide significant improvements.

Having tested this delivery model during the pandemic, we can now show that a shift in focus towards offshore delivery can produce superior results over more traditional onsite deployment. Is there ever an instance where remote working isn't the best option? Read on and find out.



Traditional OMS Projects

We all know the typical traditional delivery model for OMS projects: full-time expensive office-based resources at the customer site, with remote working resources to keep the overall service rate costs down.

But there are some major downsides:

- **Time** (sometimes days) lost travelling on aircraft and on the road
- **Expense** of more expensive onsite resource, travel and working expenses
- **Impact** on the planet and on family life for individuals travelling every week



So what changed with the Covid pandemic?

Like the rest of society, we were no longer able to meet "face to face" with our clients and needed to embrace a new 100% remote way of working.

The client, the delivery team, and other software partners such as ecommerce, ERP, logistics, and warehouse system suppliers all needed to meet virtually and get into a rhythm of working that no longer included physical workshops, whiteboard sessions, and chats around the coffee machine.

The challenges were how to:

- Build relationships
- Avoid conflict
- Be efficient in delivery





How did we meet these challenges?



Tools like Microsoft Teams and Slack help with collaboration. But competing priorities and busy work lives often tempt attendees to multi-task and not concentrate on the subject of the meeting. To be effective, you need focus from the people attending virtual meetings, to get the best outcomes and avoid the need to repeat meetings later.

Therefore, all virtual workshops must be documented, and these details shared with attendees so that there is an audit trail around decision-making.

In addition, for maximum effectiveness when coordinating multiple parties on virtual meetings, someone must take control and make it happen. The coordinator can be from the client organisation or indeed one of the partners like GSOT. But whoever is chosen, they must be empowered by the management in each organisation, to ensure that the project is given the priority it needs by each of the parties on the call, who must be willing to contribute.

When working remotely, it may become harder to understand other competing projects and the political situation within the client organisation. Although this is not an issue we have experienced ourselves, we can imagine that sometimes understanding the context of the organisation could help the project team navigate any unforeseen difficulties.



Additional benefits of a 100% virtual working project

Covid changed client expectations. With so much of their own workforce working from home, a full-time onsite delivery team presence was no longer expected.

Moving forward, this change in mindset benefits the client, as it means the best person for the job can be used wherever they are physically located in the world—there is no necessity to assign a specialist consultant on the grounds that they are able to be on site for a designated 6-week period. Often this means the best person for the job can be allocated to the project as they no longer need to travel.

The success of remote working has major implications for the environment too. One estimate suggested Covid may have instigated a 36% long-term fall in business travel¹, and records in London showed a 58% reduction in CO2 emissions from 8am to 8pm during the first lockdown².



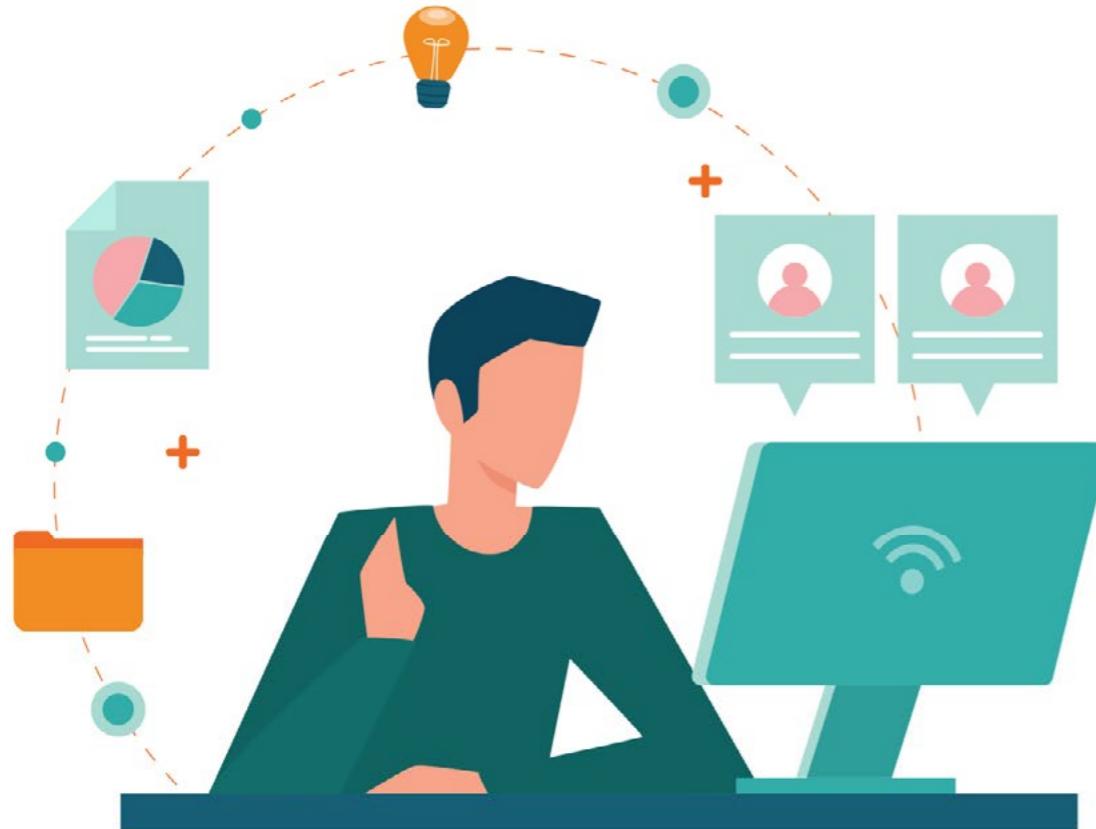


So, can you run a successful OMS project without ever meeting face to face?

Definitely! However, there is just one caveat.

Kicking off the project at the client location remains highly desirable, wherever possible.

The GSOT view is that it is best if the initial workshops straight after kickoff, where discovery, solutioning, scope setting, governance, and decision-making criteria are agreed, happen “face to face” at the client location. While this is not absolutely essential, these face-to-face workshops enable strong relationships between the project stakeholders to be built. And these provide the client and the delivery team with solid foundations for a successful and well-executed project.



CASE STUDY:

A premium footwear manufacturer and retailer

In Q1 of 2020, when the Covid pandemic hit the world, the GSOT delivery team was kicking off a global IBM Sterling OMS project with a new client.

This premium footwear retailer is an iconic German footwear manufacturer that wanted a flexible, fast, and cost-effective solution for their global omnichannel needs. After looking at several vendors, they selected IBM Sterling Order Management SaaS as the core solution and GSOT as the experienced delivery partner for the project.

The project was run across multiple time zones with a team spread across the US, Europe and India. This distributed team contributed to the

speed and success of the project, with efficient handoffs across the different time zones.

A regular weekly cadence meeting was scheduled to go through the most urgent issues, plus daily virtual meetings with key system representatives during the development and test phases. These latter meetings were helpful in aligning the main touchpoints across the system landscape and were hosted by the client, to ensure that defect resolution went smoothly across all parties.

The project goal was to deliver a rapid

omnichannel programme including real-time inventory visibility across the supply chain, DC Fulfilment for online orders, call centres, order modification, and returns/exchanges. Phase 1 was focussed on Canada, within a target timeframe of 16 weeks from start to finish. GSOT delivered this project successfully on time and on budget completely remotely. This was rapidly followed by Phase 2, a roll-out across the United States, which was delivered successfully over a further 12-week period.

Other than the initial kickoff workshops for Phase

1, this entire omnichannel OMS project took place remotely using virtual working practices. Convenient, cost-effective, environmentally friendly, and Covid safe.

We believe highly successful order management projects can be delivered quicker and at lower cost through these new remote working practices.

[Click here](#) for more details on how GSOT can help set up an omnichannel OMS that works for you and your customers.

References

¹McCartney, Scott (2020). The Covid Pandemic Could Cut Business Travel by 36%—Permanently. The Wall Street Journal, 01 December 2020.

<https://www.wsj.com/articles/the-covid-pandemic-could-cut-business-travel-by-36permanently-11606830490>

²Williams, Simon (2020). London's CO2 emissions cut by almost 60% during lockdown. UK Centre for Ecology & Hydrology, 19 May 2020.

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