Objectivity

Optimising Royal London's agile delivery process to improve efficiency and transparency

Business Need

Royal London's insurance, pension and investment services are based on years of experience and building trust among their customers. The company's successful business operations lead to its growth in various aspects.

Thanks to new acquisitions, Royal London was inheriting a lot of customer data and platforms, which needed to be consolidated. Moreover, they were working in a complex environment consisting of many delivery teams who used different approaches to project management. The company was already in the process of agile transformation and wanted to further accelerate their progress to see the full benefit of the agile delivery approach.

Royal London decided to find ways to boost the efficiency of their delivery process and improve the transparency and predictability of their projects. This would also entail aligning data collection tools and metrics to ensure greater visibility.

The company asked Objectivity to help address the challenges they already observed and potentially identify new ones. Their goal was to find some quick wins that would bring instant value to them and their customers, but also to choose the right strategy and direction for the overall process improvement that they would carry out in the long run.

Project Details

Objectivity began the cooperation with Royal London by analysing their process, the quality of the artefacts they were producing, and the tools they were using. The team examined the configuration, the product backlog, issue log, retrospective lists, definitions of ready, definitions of done, and other aspects of the agile process. In addition, Objectivity interviewed key project stakeholders, such as Scrum Masters, Product Owners, technical experts, and management teams as well as PMOs and Project Managers.

The Objectivity team was working side by side with Royal London's teams to understand how they operate on a daily basis and how well the assigned roles and responsibilities fit within the project work. The team also assessed the technical aspects of the process: code review, the pipeline, resource allocation, integration, continuous deployment, and automated tests.

Once the validation was complete, Objectivity suggested a number of small improvements and quick wins that could be implemented immediately.

For the long-term perspective, Royal London was presented with best practices for metrics and data collection. It was imperative to realise what type of data illustrates the

company's progress and how it can be gathered from all projects. Royal London's teams were equipped with data visualisation and analysis methods as well as tools that would allow them to efficiently share the most important information with their stakeholders.

Objectivity also prepared recommendations for a crucial part of every project — the definition of requirements. The suggested changes would enable Royal London's teams to better prioritise work and make accurate estimations for improved planning and predictability. The estimations would now also include the size and complexity of user stories, not just their number. Other metrics were suggested to analyse the capacity distribution. The Objectivity team prepared a template to be used by all project teams to ensure transparency and a shared understanding of expectations and results.

Both short- and long-term process improvements were tailored to Royal London's business needs and aimed at enhancing their agile transformation.

Business Benefits

The Objectivity team conducted a thorough evaluation of Royal London's project work and, as a result, provided recommendations that would support the company in its pursuit of operational excellence.

One of the key outcomes of this cooperation was finding a compromise between the waterfall and agile development approaches. Thanks to introducing the right agile elements to their process and a clear outline of key roles within the agile framework, the teams could improve their efficiency and deliver more frequently.

At the same time, setting up proper metrics resulted in greater visibility and understanding of the gathered data, which, in turn, improved long-term planning. Better reporting also meant a single source of truth for everybody in the organisation, providing clarity of costs and a faster delivery time. Royal London acknowledged the importance of transparency and received a set of tools and practices that would allow them to make informed decisions and to keep all stakeholders up to date.

Royal London was able to find balance in meeting varied expectations by applying different project methodologies where needed. Creating a tailored project approach rather than selecting a pre-defined one improved efficiency at the team level and visibility at the management level. Implementing the improvement suggestions as part of the long-term optimisation strategy will enable Royal London to drive successful projects in support of their business demands and continue to deliver the best quality to their customers.

Royal London, established in 1861, is the UK's largest mutual life, pensions, and investment company with assets under management of approximately £140 billion. The company consists of a number of specialist businesses that form the Royal London Group.

www.royallondon.com

Contact us to learn more

Please get in touch if you would like to discuss this, or other digital strategies, in more detail.

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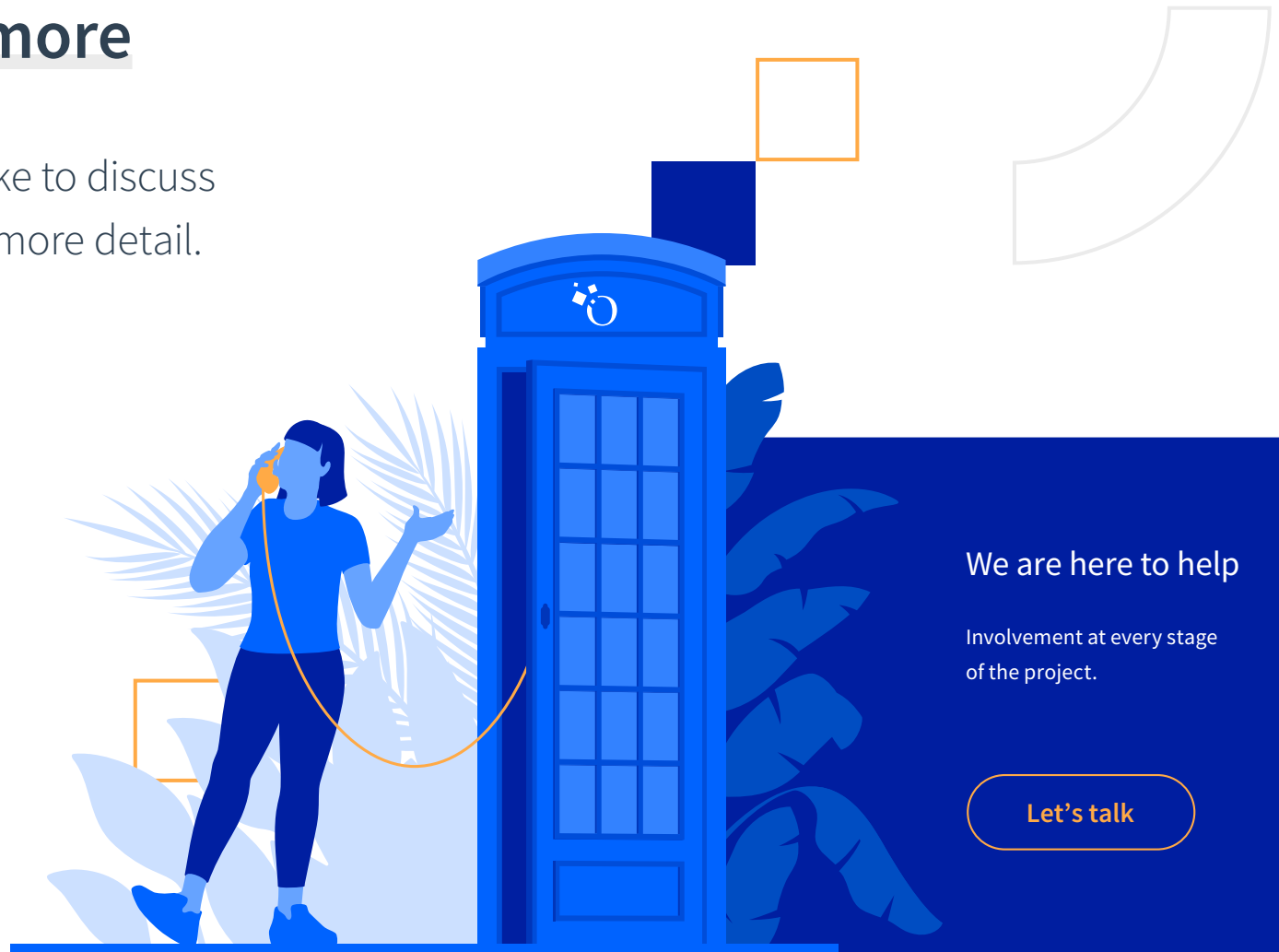Coventry, CV4 8HS
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We are here to help

Involvement at every stage
of the project.

Let's talk