



Reimagining the *UK's trade* statistics service

Capgemini supports the transformation of HMRC's trade statistics service with an innovative Model Office collaboration environment

With HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC)'s Trade Statistics system and its underlying infrastructure approaching end-of-life, maintenance was becoming progressively difficult, with the necessary technical support skills in increasingly short supply. In response, the department engaged Capgemini to apply its Model Office approach and migrate its trade statistics generation to Microsoft Azure.

Client: HMRC

Region: United Kingdom

Industry: Public sector

Client challenge:

HMRC needed to replace an aging, legacy mainframe system that underpins UK trade statistics.

Solution:

Capgemini supported a complete reimagining of trade statistics generation by leveraging modern technologies and implementing an innovative Model Office capability to drive the collaborative co-creation of a modernized service.

Benefits:

- Faster and informed decision making
- Flexibility to continuously improve system features and functionality
- Increased operational efficiencies and cost savings
- Replicable model for future legacy transformation initiatives

Taking a bold step into the future

HMRC is responsible for the measurement and reporting of UK trade flow, which forms the backbone of tax calculations, customs duties, and the nation's balance of payments. This is critical data that illustrates the UK's economic relationship with other countries and the bilateral trade on key exports and imports for goods and services.

These vital insights are shared within UK government departments and by the Office of National Statistics (ONS) to inform national policy and decision-making, and with international partners, including the EU.

When HMRC wanted to refresh the service that quality assures and helps to publish over £1 trillion worth of UK import and export trade data every year, the department asked Capgemini to explore potential solutions for modernization.

Designing for today's – and tomorrow's – needs

Rather than recreating an outdated legacy mainframe system, Capgemini proposed using the opportunity to reimagine the service using modern platform technologies. This would not only address HMRC's needs today but also offer the flexibility and skills to adapt to changes in the future, taking advantage of advancements in analytical and AI capabilities.

Building on its own deep understanding of HMRC's technical and service environment, Capgemini's solution design team conducted an accelerated discovery process with a broad cross section of the department's business and IT stakeholders. A key objective of these sessions was to capture the precise user needs and outcomes required to enable the creation of a working prototype.

Primarily using Microsoft Power Platform, Capgemini was able to demonstrate how its low-code/no-code tools would enable HMRC's data holders to quickly take control of the environment and continue to iterate it themselves in the future.

Building user confidence and momentum

The prototype was rapidly co-created with HMRC IT and business experts within two weeks and further developed using Capgemini's Model Office continuous improvement methodology.

This innovative approach was closely integrated with IT delivery, allowing users hands-on access to the service during development and enabling real-time feedback. By doing so, Capgemini accelerated both development and adoption of the transformed service.

Active user involvement from the earliest development stages was critical to the success in ensuring the new system was designed with a focus on end user needs. Change champions from HMRC's business units used the Model Office environment to co-design, develop,

test, and refine the features and functionality through each iteration.

During this phase, Capgemini and HMRC developed a "train the trainer" program. This equipped internal teams to lead progress presentations and promote the solution, supported by co-created playbooks, guides, forums, and digital resources. Early engagement and continuous training enabled users to adopt the platform quickly, so they were proficient before go-live.

Regular and transparent communication with business stakeholders helped to maintain confidence throughout, particularly during the final stages of delivery. In addition, regular testing and direct comparison between live data in the legacy and new systems guaranteed accuracy and system reliability. Meanwhile, robust hypercare ensured any issues were identified and managed quickly and effectively.

A blueprint for complex, transformational projects

This large, multi-faceted migration was delivered over 18 months, with the new, secure, Microsoft Azure cloud-based solutions seamlessly launched in two stages. And while the beta was delivered in 12 weeks, business users were ready to accept the service in just eight weeks due to the power of the Model Office. This collaboration has demonstrated that thorough preparation and user engagement can dramatically reduce launch risks for highly complex legacy modernization programs.

HMRC now benefits from complete visibility and control of these vital data sources. The department can respond swiftly to changes in policy or reporting requirements thanks to new in-house skills and the agility offered by low-code/no-code technology.

Key outcomes included rapidly upskilling the teams in the Microsoft Power Platform, high user satisfaction, and a scalable model that empowers over 75 users. The adoption of innovative platform technologies has improved the user experience for HMRC's teams, while also driving efficiency and process improvements as well as unlocking cost savings by replacing systems that were expensive and difficult to maintain. In addition, cloud hosting opens opportunities to leverage data analytics and AI, driving further service improvements.

Enhanced reporting and dashboard capabilities now enable HMRC to carry out the validation of trade information quickly and more effectively. Looking ahead, this speed and agility have the potential to support the development and rapid interception of trade policy change.

Finally, the Model Office approach has provided a proven template for delivering complex and innovative, transformational projects. It has developed a replicable model for future legacy system modernization and transformation initiatives.

About Capgemini

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