

# Delivering value within communications for Opus, an international consultancy

CLIENT:	Opus International Consultants
SECTOR:	Consultancy
COST CATEGORIES:	Communications, Photocopiers, Office and IT Consumables, Utilities

Opus International Consultants is a leading multi-disciplinary infrastructure consultancy with over 3,000 engineers, designers, planners, researchers and advisors working with more than 12,000 clients across Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the United States and the United Kingdom.

## THE CLIENT

In the UK, Opus operates from a network of 12 offices and employs over 400 staff, providing services on leading infrastructure and building projects for both the public and private sectors.

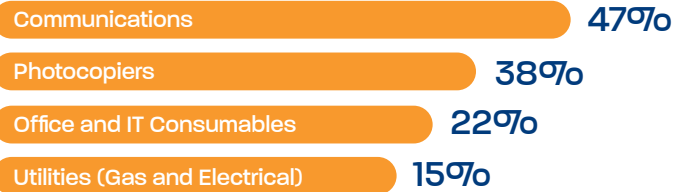
## THE CHALLENGE

“Opus’s network of offices presented us with opportunities to rationalise their supplier base and leverage economies of scale on their behalf,” remarks Robert Stearn, Business Development Manager at Expense Reduction Analysts. “In this way, our team of project specialists has been able to save the company significant amounts of money, simplifying their administration into the bargain.

“Nigel Rosehill worked on Communications; Brian Pinner analysed photocopiers; Steve Letley looked at utilities; and David Keating oversaw office and IT consumables, as well as expertly co-ordinating our overall activity, as Client Relationship Manager.”

Opus was a BT retail customer for their fixed lines and mobiles,” says Nigel Rosehill. “The contracts were complicated, with lots of different maturities. We could see that it would take years to exit this situation naturally, so we decided to move Opus to a supplier who could provide BT services on a wholesale basis. This delivered immediate savings for Opus, as well as a single, simplified contract.”

## SUMMARY OF SAVINGS



“The work performed by Expense Reduction Analysts has been of huge benefit to Opus. Their consultants have very deep knowledge of their respective industries and that is key to driving the best deals while at the same time ensuring that complex contracts are successfully exited (a potential minefield for the uninitiated). The overall level of savings delivered has been higher than originally envisaged.”

**DEREK GIBBY**  
UK FINANCIAL DIRECTOR,  
OPUS INTERNATIONAL CONSULTANTS

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## BEYOND SAVINGS: MAKING COMMUNICATIONS A TRUE BUSINESS ENABLER

But there were other important benefits too. Nigel Rosehill comments, “I always expect to be able to save my clients money. That’s almost a given. I normally simplify their administration too. However, the real added value can often lie elsewhere.

“With Opus, the changes we recommended also meant that they have access to more than one mobile network in case of need, with obvious advantages to their busy, distributed workforce. They also now receive greatly enhanced management information. Furthermore, in a world of burgeoning and sometimes unpredictable data needs, part of the negotiated improved structuring is around aggregated usage arrangements with the supplier, so that unforeseen demand by individual users does not result in ‘bill shock’ for the company.

“I aim to turn communications into a real business enabler for my clients, empowering companies like Opus with the flexible means to respond to their marketplace and its ever-changing demands.”

Brian Pinner takes up the story on photocopiers: “Each of Opus’s offices had previously sourced its own machines from its own suppliers with its own contracts. The picture was very fragmented, so there was obvious opportunity for consolidation. Following an extensive tender exercise that included each incumbent and a number of alternative suppliers, Opus selected a single national company to supply one brand of machines to all of their offices. We have gradually replaced the existing fleet of machines as they have reached the end of their contract periods, ensuring that there are no unnecessary termination charges.

“This has delivered significant savings from economies of scale, as well as a dramatically reduced administrative burden on Opus.”

## 14 CONSUMABLES SUPPLIERS TO ONE, PREFERENTIAL RATES ON CORE PRODUCTS

David Keating comments on the office and IT consumables category: “When we started the project, there were 14 suppliers across the various locations. We got this down to two, and then, through an additional tendering exercise, to one. We negotiated preferential rates with the successful provider on core products, and worked hard to ensure compliance across the offices

“In some cases, we found that an office was buying items locally, perhaps from a supermarket, so we added those products to the core list, in order to ensure that each office could order what they needed from the supplier.

“In parallel with this, we have constantly monitored orders and invoices, ensuring that any overcharges are compensated.

“Our initial work must have been pleasing to them, because Opus have signed up to an ongoing service for this category.”

Steve Letley is working on utilities, “The main aim with Utilities is to simplify the picture for Opus: they currently have numerous gas and electricity suppliers across their locations with different contract end dates. We are working towards bringing all these to one co-terminus end date, with just one supplier for each energy type.

“We anticipate savings of between 15 and 20% resulting from this fixed-fee exercise, however the real benefit for Opus will be in vastly simplified administration, and only having to carry out one tender exercise every year or so, instead of the many they currently have to manage.”

Derek Gibby sums up the benefit of the partnership, “Expense Reduction Analysts have become a key part of our commercial team. They have made the process of supplier consolidation transparent and much simpler than would otherwise be the case. They have demonstrated professionalism in their dealings with our suppliers by treating them very fairly - for example, any incumbents are usually given the chance to tender for the enhanced scope of services. While the cost savings are important so is the reputation of Opus as a fair customer. We will continue to work with Expense Reduction Analysts on future projects still to be mutually agreed.”

