



STER KINEKOR: RED CARPET FOR BEST PRACTICES

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Ster-Kinekor Theatres has embarked on a nationwide training and upliftment programme for more than 1000 part-time and temporary workers that staff its catering and ticket counters at its 48 cinema complexes throughout South Africa.

According to John Campbell, Ster-Kinekor's IT executive, the programme is geared towards establishing an enterprise architecture model that will standardise business best practices across all Ster-Kinekor outlets, while supporting the organisation's corporate governance objectives.

He says Ster-Kinekor has turned to a best practices solution developed by Quintica SA, the IT Infrastructure Library (ITIL) software services supplier, to achieve its goals.

Based on Marval software, an ITIL-based service management solution was designed to meet the specific needs of Ster-Kinekor. These include the consolidation of more than 60 separate, independently written business manuals and "how-to" advisories for temporary staff.

The brief was to provide each staff member with a comprehensive manual that addressed each task in granular detail – such as the steps necessary to clean a popcorn machine.

"It is also aimed at providing common answers for all the 'what-if' questions that arise in the course of a day's work – such as what to do in the event of a cash till failure or a ticketing machine error," says Campbell.

"Using ITIL best practices as a basis for the task we not only obviated the ambiguities in previous training documents, but set about establishing the norms and conventions for measuring service excellence on an on-going basis."

Campbell says the project promoted the establishment of an integrated, business-focused mindset within Ster-Kinekor that, in turn, exposed the need for broad-based change management within the organisation.

"We ended up designing an 'end-to-end' management system which provides high levels of feed-back to enable us to hold individuals accountable for the satisfactory execution of tasks to which they are assigned - and to reward excellence when it is delivered."

He says the initial reaction to the ITIL best practices application was that it would be too complex to manage effectively – but fears have proved to be groundless and it is already delivering significant business value to the company.



"One of the realisations was that the ITIL solution – the Marval tool set - was not limited to 'information technology' but was applicable at all levels throughout the organisation where 'best practices' are required to be implemented, monitored and supported.

"As such, we intend using it to support the maintenance and repair of everything from blown light bulbs to sound projection equipment – and from popcorn machines to complex computer ticketing systems," he says.

According to Campbell, the key to ITIL's success as a common language and platform is effective communication – while the important benefits are to be found in the training and education of staff.

"Today everyone at Ster-Kinekor is aware of what an 'incident' is and how its management impacts on the efficiency, customer service rating and – ultimately – the profitability of each department."

He says the implementation of the Marval framework has been a catalyst for change and improvement – so much so that Ster-Kinekor has selected Quintica as its long-term partner to assist in the ITIL "drive" into all aspects of the Ster-Kinekor organisation.

"Quintica has also been selected to supply and manage the Marval solution on our behalf," says Campbell.

"This will help Ster-Kinekor benchmark work related tasks and activities against common operational objectives - and identify individuals' strengths and weaknesses in their efforts to achieve their individual goals.

"We expect other spin-off benefits to include the creation of a high degree of transparency within the workplace that will result in the reassignment of personnel who are under-achievers, and better support for those who are over-assigned or experiencing work-induced stress," he adds.

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