



ABN AMRO >>

ABN AMRO PARTNERS WITH ATOS ORIGIN CONSULTING SERVICES TO MITIGATE GLOBAL COMPLIANCE RISKS

ABN AMRO turned to Atos Origin for risk management consulting, for support on the assessment and implementation phase of their Wholesale Banking IT Sarbanes-Oxley ('SOX') programme, covering Europe, Middle East and Asia Pacific regions. The compliance project in Asia Pacific is worth over Euro 2 million, for a period of 18 months covering Australia, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Singapore and Taiwan. This consulting project has helped ABN AMRO achieve international compliance standards and controls.

“ABN AMRO CHOSE TO WORK WITH ATOS ORIGIN DUE TO ITS GLOBAL REACH AND STRENGTH IN PROVIDING RISK AND COMPLIANCE CONSULTANCY SERVICES. AFTER THE INITIAL SUCCESS OF THE PROJECT, WE ARE NOW EXPLORING FURTHER COLLABORATION OPPORTUNITIES ON OTHER KEY PROJECTS WITH ATOS ORIGIN”

Business Challenges

Following the aftermath of high profile accounting scandals like Enron and WorldCom, there is a need to restore shareholder and investor confidence in the management of global banking assets. The Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002 requires all companies including US-based companies with securities registration, to file reports under the Securities Exchange Act of 1934. ABN AMRO with a listing in the US had to comply with Section 404 of the Sarbanes-Oxley Act that requires management to assess the effectiveness of the company's internal control over financial reporting. This had to be fulfilled before 31st December 2006.

In addition, within ABN AMRO, there is a worldwide requirement to be compliant across all SBUs (Small Business Units) inclusive of operations, Information Technology, Human Resource, Risk and Finance. This would be an attestation by way of physical confirmation that there is no loss of material control, inherent weaknesses in the system and ensure complete documentation whilst determining that all the bank's controls have been tested.

Solution

Atos Origin Singapore played the central role of developing and deploying the risk management consulting services to ABN AMRO offices in Asia Pacific.

Atos Origin's solution included the following:

- > Measuring the impact of both the financial and disclosure risks to the operations of the bank, its subsidiaries and branches.
- > Determining the business cycles to be documented and tested.
- > Creation of minimal control templates and detailing control activities that should be in place in order to cover the risks. For example, documentation of existing control processes to match against minimal control templates. This would avoid costly overruns and repetition in documenting control processes.
- > Identifying gaps in the early design of existing control processes and to suggest remedial solutions when required.
- > Testing control activities based on quality benchmark controls.
- > Identifying gaps in the operation of control activities and in providing speedy remedial solutions instead of delaying the rollout.
- > Preparing assertion reports that are compliant with international standards.
- > It would now be possible for early identification of high threat levels for missing controls or controls designed inadequately, or even controls that were not operating effectively. This early detection of its control mechanism is seen as a cost savings for the operations of ABN AMRO and its branches in the long run.
- > While complying with international standards and controls, ABN AMRO also realised the intangible benefits of the compliance exercise. ABN AMRO was able to reinforce its brand positioning as one of the premier banking institutions globally. It was able to measure up to its international reputation as a forward-looking bank while serving its global customers and stakeholders.

Benefits

Atos Origin together with the various SBUs and departments in ABN AMRO, have been able to resolve some of the control gaps collectively. More importantly, ABN AMRO has had a better understanding of the extent of its divergent issues, their impact and how these issues can be resolved effectively using Atos Origin's compliance methodology as a benchmark. The compliance exercise has benefited ABN AMRO in the following ways:

- > Creation of a higher management control process where key managers would be able to evaluate the effectiveness of its internal control mechanism across both its Asian and global platform.
- > ABN AMRO is now able to provide an independent quality assurance of its current controls and documentation.

For more enquiries, please email enquire@atosorigin.com

About ABN AMRO



ABN AMRO Bank is an international bank with European roots. It has a

broad global network with assets in excess of US\$600 billion and found in almost 60 countries around the world. It has a focus on supporting consumer, commercial clients in local markets, multinational corporations, and financial institutions as well as private clients.

By combining its deep sector expertise and broad product offering, ABN AMRO provides tailor-made solutions that give it a competitive edge in chosen markets and client segments.