

**Q1. Pick a tool or technology from your CV and describe how it helped drive business value.**

During my role at Vanquis Bank I became a champion of the **Microsoft Flows** product.

After only a short time in the position I became aware that the backlogs were full of what could be considered “minor projects” to improve process, auditability, efficiency and cost, however these projects – seen as “BackOffice” or “Administration” improvements – were frequently overlooked in favour of projects that were more customer focused and revenue generating.

Educating the product owners and management about the product, I was able to show:

- The available enterprise connectors would allow users to connect to services using existing RBAC controls
- The requesting users were often better versed in the business process, the sources and eventual targets for any data
- Solutions created by one person or team could be shared and template reducing time and effort for similar requirements
- The users, if educated and enthused about the connectors and functionality of the product, would be able to provision minor requirements themselves, freeing up development time, infrastructure engineers and repeated Security reviews
- No additional cost was required as the product was licenced within our current agreement

After agreeing the merits of the suggestion, I was able to identify a number of SMEs that could participate in an education drive around the product, it’s capabilities and the implementation simple solutions.

Over a number of education sessions, working with requests that were sitting in the backlog queue, and with the identified business users, I hosted a number of workshops that produced a core set of users that would previously have requested custom solutions that would evangelise the concept of self-provided solutions through Microsoft Flows.

Positive Impact

- Leverage existing licenced products to create solutions (Flows)
- Reduce inbound work and planning for “trivial” requirements
- Reduce delay in internal solutions hitting the ground
- Work within existing controls and security policies to connect previously disparate technologies
- Create and grow communities of practice that improves capability in the business but also specifically within teams
- Apply knowledge directly to solutions without having to re-iterate years of experience to architects/infra/developers to get a bespoke solution
- Improved productivity as solutions can be prioritised internally and delivered without delays

Negative Impact

- Expert time will be needed to validate reference materials and ensure that connectors and what can be done appropriate
- External Audit and Compliance for the solutions would need to be agreed so that accountability can be maintained
- Loss of time from experts or technical engineers to upskill process experts
- Loss of time to ensure suitable and timely reviews are carried out to ensure that solutions are understood, compliant and secure

Quantification of successful implementation of a new technical solution over a previous solution can often be measured simply and mathematically, however changes in the business that not only use technology more effectively and cheaply but that also drive cultural changes can be more difficult to gauge the value in the short term – and do not come without cost.

In this technologist’s experience, with appropriate controls and used where appropriate, business experts working with approved tools, with pre-defined, secured components far outstrip the original expectations of what they can achieve.