

SCHUBERG PHILIS

In a world rife with opportunism and promising more than it can deliver, 100% is hard to believe. Because it is unconditional. Full commitment, without concessions or restrictions. 100% is binding. All the way. It has no shades of grey, not one millimetre of slack. 100% is absolute magnificence. And it is rare.

Origin

The story of Schuberg Philis began in 1999, when the economy was in full swing and the Internet bubble was at its crest. Customers were queuing up at countless Internet start-ups and large IT companies. Technology companies were achieving double-digit growth rates and couldn't recruit people fast enough.

Philip Dries, Gerwin Schuring and Pim Berger have been active in IT outsourcing for over thirty-six years. They share the same conviction: customers who outsource their IT can - and must - be provided with a better service level by their providers. No shirking of responsibilities, exotic cost structures or overheads. No politics. For them, this isn't possible at established IT outsourcing providers. There isn't any satisfaction, no matter how hard you work. It is rare that customers say "you did a fantastic job". Because the people who can actually make a difference, the engineers, remain hidden from the customer. They are far removed by bureaucracy. Anybody who has been involved in IT outsourcing will be familiar with the phenomenon of first-line, second-line and third-line support. Whenever there's a problem, you first work your way through two layers of agents who have insufficient skills and insufficient expertise. Only once the problem has

been escalated will the senior engineers be called in. But they often find themselves so far removed from the customer that they don't have enough background information. Enveloped by this system, it is virtually impossible to take actual responsibility.

Berger, Schuring and Dries were running into this problem over and over again. In some cases they were able to break through the system and provide customers with outstanding service by placing them directly with the best specialists. Thanks to their integral vision and joint expertise, they were able to solve the customer's problem in no time. They were always the same individuals - involved professionals with more than ten years of experience, broad expertise and a passion for their profession. They showed an interest beyond their sphere of excellence. They were accustomed to think from the customer's perspective: what am I really managing - a Unix system or a bank?

The three of them started evaluating how they could truly be of service to their customers. How they could give 100%. The answer was easy - the people who do the actual work, the experienced engineers, must be deployed in the frontline. Each customer must be assigned a dedicated team, a team that does the work from the very first day. A team that

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MISSION CRITICAL OUTSOURCING

comprises all relevant disciplines and specialities. It seems simple. But this model is impossible to implement within established outsourcing providers. The existing structures are ingrained too deeply, too many different interests are involved.

Schuring, Berger and Dries seize the opportunity to found their own company. To prove it is possible, with a completely different model and a drastically different mindset – even in the world of IT-outsourcing.

100%

A unique player in the IT outsourcing market, Schuberg Philis has been on the scene since 2000. It is an organisation that offers a distinct and exceptional promise: 100% uptime for mission critical applications. Well-established providers work on the basis of comprehensive service level agreements that detail exactly what they do, but more specifically what they do not do. They promise a world of ‘ifs and buts’ – a performance of almost 100%. Any change, any modification costs more. Schuberg Philis breaks with this tradition. They take full responsibility for their work and the risks. Schuberg Philis simply promises the full 100%. Not just in relation to the systems or the database, but also to the customer’s key concern: the availability of their mission critical applications. These applications form the basis of their organisation’s growth – they allow the organisation to do business and serve customers. This is why these systems should be available and transactions should be possible at all times. Period. Schuberg Philis promises 100%. At a fixed price that includes any changes or modifications. After all, in today’s world change is the only constant.

Unconditional

If we do not live up to our promise, we suffer financial penalties. No strings attached. But everyone involved needs to be engaged in the process. We build long-term relationships with our customers, partners and employees so that together we can build structurally sound solutions. To deploy people, technology and processes in such a way that 100% becomes and remains achievable.

We take full responsibility for the integrity and availability of our customers’ IT infrastructure. End to end, from the networks and systems to the databases and applications. We are the keepers of continuity, the technical conscience. This means that unauthorised visitors can’t touch the system. We start working together with the customer and the application vendor. We make sure that all the required changes and releases for the customer’s IT infrastructure are implemented after a proper validation cycle. We monitor the entire chain; ensuring it’s first-rate, right to the very core.

It will not be necessary to change things ‘on the fly’ anymore. Technology will no longer be the limiting factor. Rather, IT will enable the customer to modify strategic applications quickly, without making any concessions in the field of risk management. We offer customers flexibility and certainty. We meet all risk management and compliance requirements, and at the same time we can implement changes quickly and guarantee high availability. Fully auditable.

Expect complete commitment. We go all the way for our customers. However, this doesn’t mean that they can stop looking after their own affairs – we also demand the utmost from them. In general, however, our customers are just as demanding as

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we are. After all, the stakes are high. Their mission critical applications are truly mission critical. They are not prepared to risk these applications becoming unavailable. They know the price of an hour of downtime or the loss of data.

All the way

People make Schuberg Philis what it is. And for this reason, Schuberg Philis is in the hands of the people. Its full share capital is owned by management and staff. They make certain that we live up to the 100% promise. They work overtime when needed – evenings and nights if need be. They will do anything to achieve the seemingly impossible.

Outsiders are surprised by the attitude. How is it possible for a commercial promise to have such an impact internally? But the conviction that customers should be provided with a better service and that it is a feasible objective, was already inherent in our people before they had even heard of Schuberg Philis. Like the three founders, they had been working for years in a world in which the majority of people settled for a B-minus. They wanted to make a difference for their customers, but were caught up in politics, trying desperately to break through bureaucracy and mediocrity. When new employees join Schuberg Philis, they feel like they've come home. 'This is how I always wanted to do it, but I'd given up hope of it ever happening.'

Full commitment

For instance, we are acting as an extension of the proprietary IT department of Rabobank International Direct Banking. Rabobank selected Schuberg Philis to build and manage its 'direct banks'. The customers of these banks handle all their banking affairs online via the Internet. The systems that support these banks are mission critical.

Whilst 99.5% availability may seem attractive, it means that one day every year, customers are unable to use their banking services. They can't check their balance, wire, save or invest money, or take out a loan. This is not acceptable. Not for the customers and certainly not for the bank.

A month before the deadline, the first new bank for Ireland went live from our data centre located in Schiphol-Rijk. It was followed by online banks in Belgium, New Zealand and Australia as well as the online Dutch merchant bank Bizner. These banks have a total balance of many billions of euros. Already in year one, we achieved availability of 100%. And at the same time, we make certain Internet security is optimal and that these online banks meet the strictest requirements in terms of risk management and compliance.

Over the past few years, we have proved 100% is possible. With a drastically different model, a drastically different mindset and in close collaboration with everyone involved. Our customers are inspired. We work for companies in various industries. Organisations that demand high availability and professional risk management, that need to control new developments quickly and flexibly in their own environment. We think along with them on all levels, offer them new angles and deliver a real contribution to their quality improvement process.

Our model and our approach work and will continue to work, even as we grow. We will always keep putting our people in the frontline, in small independent units and with short communication lines. In dedicated teams that place a central focus on the customer. Complete commitment. No concessions, no restrictions. All the way. 100%.

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