



Industry: **IT and Business Consulting Services**

Headquarters Location: **Montreal, Canada**

Revenue: **\$12.1 billion CAD (2019)**

Employees: **77,500**

OVERVIEW

As one of the largest independent IT and business consulting services firms in the world, CGI delivers end-to-end capabilities, including application services, to help clients achieve their goal of becoming customer-centric digital enterprises. As part of its application services, CGI managed a disparate and customized landscape of tools and processes, which impacted efficiency, profitability and client satisfaction.

Through the CGI Application Services Optimization Program (CGI ASOP), CGI aimed to standardize work processes and tools across 400 locations and thousands of clients. CGI ASOP is a forward-looking, team-driven approach for transforming application management into actionable insights that help clients drive results and value. To enable a uniform approach to global delivery, CGI leveraged Tasktop Hub to support end-to-end efficiency and improve client satisfaction.

SOLUTION HIGHLIGHTS



Disparate tools and processes, which impacted project effectiveness and client delivery, were replaced by a standard tool and work process at CGI.



Tasktop Hub helps accelerate integration setup between CGI and client tools across the globe, reducing project ramp-up time by approximately six weeks and improving profitability.



Throughout the lifecycle of a project, Tasktop synchronizes data between CGI and its clients in near-real time, minimizing human errors, reducing potential SLA breaches and generating savings of many thousands of days annually in CGI and client staff capacity.



CGI leaders benefit from a centralized view of metrics and visualizations for projects in their domain, geography, or industry to help improve business outcomes.

CHALLENGE

CGI provides application development, maintenance and support services to thousands of clients worldwide, each with their own tools and workflows. CGI professionals regularly change their assignment, and each reassignment previously resulted in a time-consuming effort to learn new methods and tools.

Individual productivity was also impacted by the requirement to duplicate data in client systems and CGI systems due to lack of real-time synchronization, which caused communication delays and SLA breaches. Moreover, the decentralization of information made it difficult for managers to assess the full backlog of their teams and measure key performance indicators (KPIs) across multiple projects.

In cases where integration between CGI and the client systems was possible, CGI had to use its own resources to develop and maintain custom tool integrations, an expensive process that delayed ramp-up and customer delivery and impacted project margins.

SOLUTION OVERVIEW

CGI recognized the need for standardization to be able to deliver value to its clients globally. Its Application Services Optimization Program (ASOP) aimed to provide consistency to the methods and processes used by each delivery team and to standardize KPI reporting across projects and locations. ASOP would ensure faster project instantiation and support higher velocity and delivery in the crucial early weeks of a project and throughout its entire lifecycle.

The ASOP initiative was two-fold. First, CGI would reduce the number of tools used internally by standardizing on one tool for project delivery (Atlassian Jira). The tool would be embedded with standard templates and processes to reduce variability between projects, and ASOP coaches would be assigned to onboard and train project teams. Next, they would acquire a powerful integration platform that could synchronize CGI's Jira with client systems, essentially abstracting away each client's specific tool environment and work processes.

IDENTIFYING A SCALABLE INTEGRATION SOLUTION

CGI's experience in developing and maintaining custom integrations over the years made the business case for an off-the-shelf integration platform. CGI's Application Services Council was looking for a scalable solution.

CGI selected Tasktop Hub, a highly sophisticated integration platform dedicated to the enterprise software delivery domain. Tasktop Hub is uniquely designed around the concept of models, which allows for standardization and easy re-use each time a new client is onboarded.

Flow Fabric™, Tasktop's data transportation backbone, provides CGI with over 60 pre-built, no-code connectors to all the specialized tools born of the Agile and DevOps movements. Tasktop's proactive support of over 300 tool versions helps protect CGI from disruptions to the bi-directional flow of data.

“We compared Tasktop Hub with several other potential integration solutions, including generic middleware products, specialist ALM tool integrators and a continuation of our DIY approach. Tasktop had the best functional fit and featured a wide breadth of connectors that could support our highly varied client ecosystems. Throughout the evaluation period, Tasktop provided excellent advice and support and were very easy to work with.”

- Graham Duerden, Director, Application Development Tools, CGI

IMPROVING FLOW WITH 60 INTEGRATIONS

When ASOP launched in 2017, each country nominated a few projects for the pilot. Over time, the cohort grew to 12 individual CGI clients spanning seven countries and 49 integrations. Each client synchronized its work management tools with CGI's Jira, through their own secure Tasktop Hub connection.

“Tasktop is an easy tool to use. The intuitive design simply guides you through the integration configuration. No code, no scripts, no working with the API. It's been a real pleasure. Tasktop Hub's deployment package comes with several consultancy hours, which we used for support during our first integration setup. And ever since, we've had tremendous support from a very responsive Tasktop team.”

- Romain Velon, Agile Methods and Jira Solutions Consultant at CGI

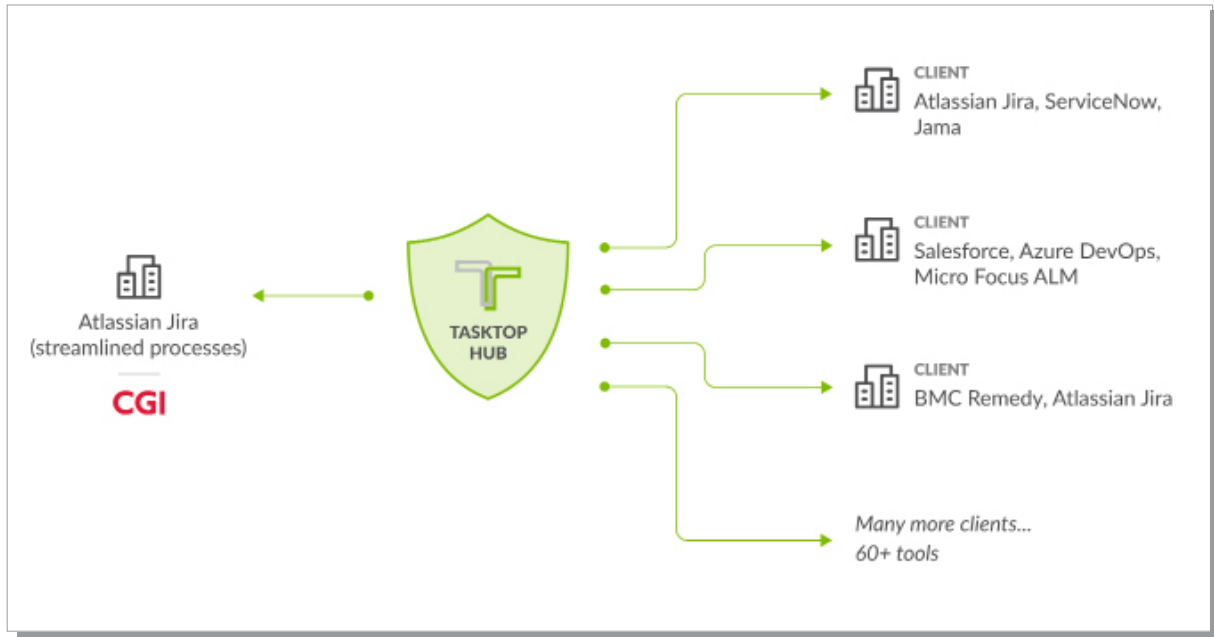


Illustration: Bi-directional real-time synchronization between CGI and its clients' tools and workflows using Tasktop Hub

Examples of integration use cases include bi-directional synchronization of:

- Features and stories from Jira and Azure DevOps
- Tickets and incidents from ServiceNow and Remedy
- Tests and defects from Micro Focus ALM
- Requirements from Jama

REAPING THE RESULTS IN COST SAVINGS AND CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

Through its Tasktop Hub implementation, CGI was able to achieve its profitability and productivity KPIs.

Three primary benefits result from this:

- A significant improvement in IT staff velocity has **unlocked capacity equivalent to over 7,500 days per year**. By removing tasks like duplicate data entry, CGI has delivered better customer value. Productivity, measured at CGI as actual time vs. estimated time, has improved as well, with updates flowing back and forth seamlessly between CGI and its clients, and teams making fewer mistakes.
- Real-time synchronization between tools has resulted in **elimination of common human errors**, for example, forgetting to update a client's system when an issue is resolved or neglecting to check a client's system for an update.
- **CGI is ramping up projects faster**, thus improving margins, with a net savings of 1-2 month's effort at the start of every project. Clients are reporting higher satisfaction levels in the area of tooling for projects running on ASOP.

WHAT'S NEXT FOR CGI, ASOP AND TASKTOP

With ASOP's huge success, CGI plans to integrate at least 20 new clients in 2021, utilizing the full portfolio of tool connections provided by Tasktop. CGI is bringing the practice of value stream management to the world of IT consultancy, continuously optimizing flow from customer request to customer delivery and removing waste through process improvement and automation.