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The Power of Possibility.

Deloitte Shared Services Conference 2024
Post-Conference Insights Paper

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Dorthe Harding Keilberg

Country Host – Partner, EMEA GBS and Outsourcing Advisory Lead

It was a pleasure to chair this years' Shared Services Conference in Amsterdam, marking the conference's first time in this hive of innovation. Amsterdam truly is the epicentre of European innovation, illustrating the resilience and strong mindset required to achieve the impossible. And what a place to host a conference centred around the Power of Possibility than a city whose existence both relies on and is centred on innovation.

*This report provides **key insights into the conference highlights** and how leading organisations are evolving their GBS models to achieve the impossible in the face of adversity. But for me the overarching takeaway is, capabilities and technologies come and go, but people are the beating heart of organisations. They not only define our trajectory, processes and culture, but fundamentally our organisations are defined by the people within them.*

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Facts and Figures of SSC24

~900
Delegates attended in person

1,300
Hybrid registrations

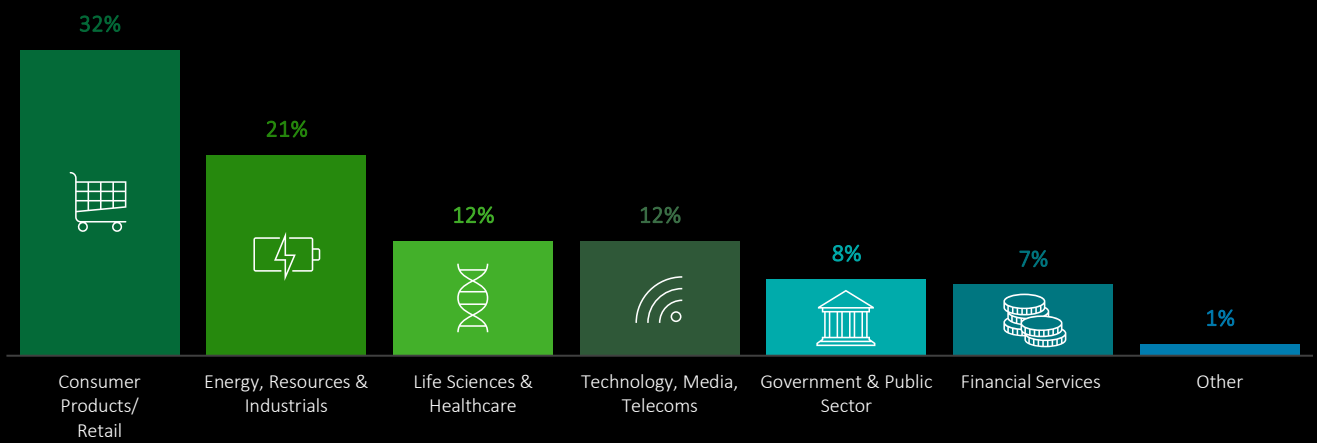
60+
Speakers, of which 48% were Female

30
Plenary, Breakout and Lab sessions

20
Sponsor organisations attended

~2,000
Connections made on the conference app

Attendee Industry Split





Key Takeaways from SSC24

THE STRATEGIC BACKBONE

Driving cross functional collaboration

GBS is the engine of our organisations, designed to drive simplicity and gold standard performance from chaos. Effectively managing competing stakeholder requirements and complexities of the matrix are essential to orchestrating strategy in a constantly evolving model.



NO ONE SIZE FITS ALL

Mandate for success, freedom to scale

Your Pace, Your Way. Be bold and go big, or start small and prove the value. The path to GBS success is not one-size-fits-all, but a top-down mandate is critical.



Finding value beyond standardisation

Evolving expectations are shifting the goal posts of standardisation towards a customer centric lens. Striking the right balance between standardisation and customisation is challenging, but a laser focus on value creation and customer experience is what truly transforms GBS.



ADAPTING GBS TO THE MODERN WORLD

Navigating uncertainty

GBS is the vehicle within organisations that drive resilience, adaptability and agility, enabling successful navigation of modern challenges and turbulent geopolitical landscapes.



GBS and GenAI: The future is here

GBS is uniquely positioned across functions to experiment with and scale Data Analytics and GenAI solutions Data. Initially perceived as a fleeting trend, GenAI is moving the dial, reshaping traditional GBS models and unlocking new opportunities for efficiency, innovation and value creation.



THE HUMAN FACTOR

Powered by People

At our core we are powered by people. Whilst tools enhance our capabilities, it's our diverse culture and unwavering commitment to conquer challenges that truly unlock extraordinary possibilities.



Teamwork makes the Dream work

The conference golden thread highlighted wholehearted leadership as a key driver of gold standard performance, emphasising how a positive environment enables success. Much like sport, collaboration, perseverance, and a shared vision are essential components of a high-performing GBS.



The Strategic Backbone

CROSS FUNCTIONAL COLLABORATION

GBS is the engine of our organisations, designed to drive simplicity and gold standard performance. GBS has the power to transform chaos into serenity. By adapting quickly to crises and leveraging the power of collaboration and community, it offers the ability for organisations to navigate challenges effectively.



GBS serves multiple functions, therefore building strong relationships between GBS teams and business units is paramount to achieving shared goals. A collaborative problem-solving approach, where GBS acts as a strategic cornerstone allows organisations to turn vision into reality.

Effectively managing the GBS matrix is complex due to the abundance of customers it serves, with every element of the matrix requiring different solutions to drive value adding business outcomes. GBS is a model of many masters and navigating the matrix requires balancing and quantifying the demands of various stakeholders to enable adaptability, agility and the foundation for future success.

"We seek to release that enterprise performance at our front line, increasing operational productivity so they have more capacity to lean into that purpose of building a better world"

BHP

Key takeaways:

1. GBS serves as a foundation for organisational success**, driving excellence and resilience from disorder.** Sitting at the heart of organisations enables efficient adaption to crises by leveraging the power of collaboration.

2. Being positioned across multiple functions, creates a **diverse customer base with competing requirements.** Building **strong relationships across business units is paramount for success.**

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GBS is not a “One Size Fits All”

MANDATE FOR SUCCESS

Whether your GBS journey is full scale, “all in” transformation, or a slower paced, proving the value journey over time, one thing remains certain – there must be a mandate.

We heard from our speakers that success within GBS organisations is driven from top-down. **Visionary leadership is not a luxury, but an imperative.** A clearly articulated strategic vision acts as a North Star, providing clarity on the **"why"** behind the change will result in greater buy-in and smoother adoption.

Key takeaways:

1. A clear strategic vision is crucial. It acts as a guide, providing **clarity and purpose** for organisational change and **fostering a shared understanding** among employees.
2. **Transformation is not a one-time event.** Building trust through established feedback mechanisms allows for agile course correction, **increases alignment and buy-in to evolving organisations.**

BALANCING STANDARDISATION & EXPERIENCE

Transforming GBS requires a delicate balance between the power of standardisation and the agility of customisation. But, always with a laser focus on value creation.

This involves moving away from a purely efficiency-focused approach to one that prioritises identifying and realising value. We heard that in order to deliver more impactful results, you need to refocus your process organisations towards;

1. **Understanding strategic goals:** Align process improvements with overarching business objectives to demonstrate tangible impact.
2. **Identifying value drivers:** Analyse processes to pinpoint areas where improvements directly translate into increased revenue, reduced costs, or enhanced customer satisfaction.
3. **Prioritising value-adding initiatives:** Focus on process changes that deliver the most significant value, rather than solely pursuing standardisation for its own sake.
4. **Measuring and communicating value:** Establish clear metrics to track the impact of process improvements and communicate successes to stakeholders.



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Adapting GBS to the Modern World

NAVIGATING UNCERTAINTY

The overarching message was clear: **resilience, adaptability, and agility are no longer optional, but essential for survival and success** in the global business landscape.



Attendees and speakers alike emphasised the need to move beyond simply weathering storms to **proactively anticipating and adapting to change**. GBS organisations are uniquely positioned to lead this shift, moving from reactive service providers to strategic partners by proactively anticipating and adapting to change. This requires:

- **Embracing agility:** Flexible processes, rapid decision-making, and adaptability to evolving global dynamics are crucial.
- **Balancing cost efficiency with resilience and security:** A multi-faceted strategic approach to ensure efficiency and security in an ever-changing world
- **A strategic approach** is needed to ensure both efficiency and security in a changing world.
- **Prioritising employee well-being**: A supportive culture is fundamental for resilience and business continuity.

Real-world examples showcased how GBS can be a source of stability in challenging times by prioritising employee safety, implementing robust business continuity plans, and leveraging technology for operational adaptation.

"It was our common mission to persevere. We are using what we have learned to grow, be more resilient and to always be a reliable Business Partner, no matter what may come our way."

Metinvest Business Services

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Adapting GBS to the Modern World

GBS AND GENAI: THE FUTURE IS HERE



The convergence of GenAI, data, and analytics is **propelling GBS into a new era**, positioning it as a catalyst for enterprise-wide transformation. No longer just a back-office function, **GBS is now empowered to drive strategic value and innovation across the entire organisation.**

While some remain sceptical, viewing GenAI as just another "hype cycle", forward-thinking organisations are already **piloting the technology within GBS**, exploring its true potential to revolutionise operations and unlock new value.

Here's how we learnt through various breakout sessions that this exciting evolution is unfolding:

1. **GBS is uniquely positioned to drive GenAI adoption:** Its deep operational knowledge, service-oriented mindset, and collaborative approach make it an ideal candidate to lead this transformation.

2. **Building key capabilities is essential:** Robust data management, advanced analytics expertise, and a strong ethical framework are crucial for successful GenAI implementation.

3. **Building experience and competencies is essential for large-scale AI transformations:** Finding a sweet spot of AI measured adoption with targeted investments allows organisations to mitigate risk build foundations for future success.

Read more about how GBS is a catalyst for your GenAI ambition HERE.

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The Human Factor

POWERED BY PEOPLE

"When you put people together, problems are solved"
– Laurent Arundo, Sodexo

The future of work in GBS organisations hinges on a precarious balance between **leveraging cutting-edge technology** and **empowering people.** While GenAI, process mining, and other tools offer efficiency and valuable insights, **a thriving workforce remains the cornerstone of success.** Leadership need to instill a learning culture, removing barriers to innovation and collaboration so that their people can flourish.

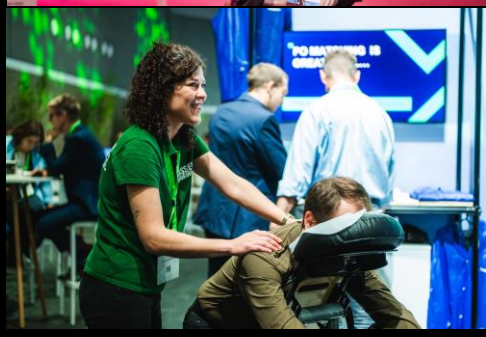
A thriving GBS organisation requires a workforce that is not only equipped with the necessary technical skills but is also adaptable, engaged, and driven by a strong sense of purpose. Today's employees are **driven by purpose** as much as by a pay cheque. They seek workplaces that **align with their values**, including a commitment to social and environmental responsibility.

Several plenary and breakout sessions emphasised the importance of embedding values into the core of GBS organisations, influencing every decision-making process. For instance, Daniel Campagna highlighted the key factors that drove Amgen to choose Lisbon for their Global Capability Centre, demonstrating how values played a crucial role in their selection process, including;

- *Education quality*
- *Cultural values*
- *Multicultural environment*
- *Political stability*







Success can hinge on **fostering a culture that that values diverse perspectives and encourages unlimited creativity.**

Key takeaways:

1. **Technology empowers, but people drive success.** Embrace technology as an enabler, not a replacement for a skilled and motivated workforce.

2. Building a truly socially responsible business requires leaders to acknowledge the importance of **employees' social concerns.**

3. Agile GBS organisations require more than just adopting agile methodologies. It demands **cultivating an adaptable and engaged workforce** that embraces change and values diverse perspectives.



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The Human Factor

GBS IS A TEAM SPORT

Our conference Chair, Dorthe Harding Keilberg, kicked off the event by highlighting the striking similarities between achieving **business success and excelling in sports**. We discovered that both require a clear vision, a strategic plan, and meticulous preparation, likening it to the rigorous training of an Olympic athlete.

Just like in sports, setbacks and failures are inevitable in business. However, it's the **ability to learn from these experiences, adapt, and bounce back stronger** that truly defines success. “Going live" or reaching a goal is not the end game, similar to the world of sports where records are meant to be broken, businesses need to embrace **continuous improvement** and push their boundaries to **stay ahead in today's dynamic landscape.**

Key takeaways:

1. Similar to the cyclical nature of sports, **transformation is an ongoing journey** that demands both unwavering determination and strong teamwork to achieve lasting success.
    - ***We dream***
    - ***We prepare***
    - ***We try***
    - ***We improve***
2. A **'one team' mentality** ensures challenges are viewed as shared opportunities, encouraging **collaborative problem-solving** and empowering open dialogue across the organisation.

High-performing GBS organisations, much like a championship sports team, **thrive on the synergy of their individual players.**

Each individual brings their **unique skills and expertise, fostering a collaborative environment** where ideas are shared, and solutions are co-created. Moreover, **a shared vision acts as the team’s North Star, aligning their efforts and creating a sense of collective purpose.**

See next page for takeaways on Teamwork from this year’s Guest Speaker, Sir Mark Cavendish.





GBS IS A TEAM SPORT

Guest Speaker: Sir Mark Cavendish



The final day of the 27th Shared Services Conference in Amsterdam opened with a truly special fireside chat with Sir Mark Cavendish KBE, a true icon of sporting excellence. Revered as the greatest sprinter in professional cycling history, Mark shared his insights on harnessing the power of possibility through planning, execution, and leadership.



KEY TAKEAWAYS:

1 Separate your wants and your needs.

When balancing short and long-term goals we must discern between our desires and necessities. While short-term achievements can serve as stepping stones, each step must be taken with careful consideration.

2 Stop focusing on the 3%. Focus on the six 1%'s.

At the 2012 Olympics in London, Mark learned the true power of marginal gains. He explained that each small adjustment, each incremental improvement might seem inconsequential in isolation, yet collectively, these marginal gains coalesce into a force of remarkable significance.

3 An engine doesn't work without a piston.

Mark has always been a strong believer that every contribution, no matter how big or small, deserves recognition and should be celebrated. Drawing a compelling analogy to a finely tuned car engine, he highlighted that just as it relies on the perfect synergy of all its parts, a successful team thrives on acknowledging the value each individual brings.

4 People don't follow leaders. They trust leaders.

Having been a member and leader of many teams, Mark shared that true leadership to him was about fostering an environment where individuals feel empowered and trusted, not micromanaged. He emphasised that when we build strong relationships and a shared sense of ownership, we can unlock a deeper level of commitment to ourselves and to each other.



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Pre-Conference Day Labs

Our pre-conference day was an opportunity for attendees to explore key themes and trends within the context of GBS through immersive lab sessions fostering learning and ideation.

Human Sustainability as a Catalyst for Organisational Success



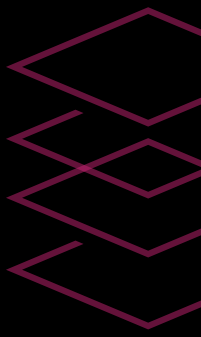
In today's rapidly evolving business landscape, a positive employee experience (EX) is no longer a luxury – it's a necessity for GBS organisations to thrive. This lab explored how GBS can fuel productivity and talent retention by integrating EX and fostering a culture of sustainable, positive human experiences.

GBS is **evolving beyond service delivery**, embedding employee experience considerations into all processes to shape a positive and **supportive workplace** culture.

Successful GBS organisations will **leverage data to measure productivity** and **gain deeper insights** into employee sentiment to proactively understand and enhance EX.

Embracing the Evolution of GBS to the Centre Office Model

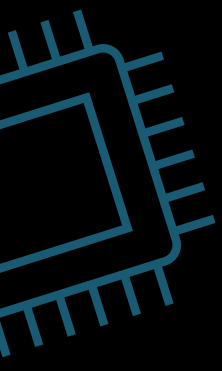
The Centre Office Model is becoming increasingly vital for GBS organisations seeking enhanced efficiency and agility. This lab delved into the core pillars of this model as attendees shared insights on overcoming industry challenges, collaboratively developed action plans and discussed key enablers for successful Centre Office implementation.



The Centre Office Model is a **journey, not a destination**. It requires a **steadfast focus on enhancing customer experiences** through end-to-end process ownership and continuous improvement.

Success hinges on building trust through transparent governance, strong leadership and the development of innovative Capabilities-as-a-Service that **solidify GBS as a valued business partner.**

Potential of AI-Powered Shared Services with ServiceNow



ServiceNow is rapidly becoming a cornerstone technology in Shared Services organisations for unlocking new levels of efficiency and optimising service delivery. This lab explored the art of the possible with ServiceNow, examining ways in which ServiceNow can empower Shared Services transformation by providing practical insights into its capabilities, especially by leveraging the power of AI.

Successfully harnessing the power of ServiceNow demands a **tailored approach**, personalising the platform and integration strategy to ensure it **seamlessly aligns with organisational goals.**

Implementing ServiceNow requires prioritising people alongside technology. Proactive change management and ongoing support are crucial for smooth adoption and **empowering employees to embrace the platform's benefits**

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Unlocking the Power of GenAI

GenAI is no longer a concept of the future; it's actively reshaping the landscape of Shared Services today. This lab explored where GenAI is revolutionising businesses and the intersection between these capabilities and GBS functions to identify the key business challenges that GenAI can address, and the tools best suited for each task.

Organisations must prioritise a **human-in-the-loop approach** with **robust oversight** of AI outcomes and **implementation of ethical guardrails** to ensure responsible use of AI.

GenAI has the potential to **revolutionise productivity and customer/employee experiences**. Organisations that embrace advancements while navigating ethical considerations to gain a **significant competitive edge**

AI is fueling the Public Sector Productivity Revolution

Shared Services in the Public Sector are at a pivotal juncture, poised for transformation and modernisation. This lab explored how Public Sector organisations can leapfrog their Shared Services capabilities by capitalising on the momentum of Cloud infrastructure investments and AI enhancements.

Successful transformation of Shared Services in the Public Sector requires a **dual focus**: **strengthening foundational elements** while simultaneously **embracing innovation**

Transforming Shared Services is **a strategic lever** for organisation-wide change, **moving beyond cost reduction and efficiency** to prioritize customer experience and interconnected, customer-centric solutions.





Shared Services Awards



The Shared Services Awards celebrates and recognises leaders, organisations and achievements across the GBS industry. The winners of the awards were announced Day 1 of the conference, with shortlisted nominees also being showcased for each category.

Nominations for the **Innovation through Emerging Technologies, Outstanding D&I Leader, Resilience in Shared Services** and **Environmental, Social & Governance (ESG) Impact Awards** were opened six months ahead of the conference with an abundance of nominations from all corners of the industry, before being shortlisted to a set of 3 finalists for each category. All nominations were anonymised for the shortlisting process, which was followed by a final round of deliberations where our independent judging panel conducted an in-depth and impartial review of the candidates to unanimously select the winner for each category.

Congratulations to all that were shortlisted and to the winners of this year's Shared Services Awards!

INNOVATION THROUGH EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES WINNER



_VOIS

The EDGE Team

RESILIENCE IN SHARED SERVICES WINNER



METINVEST BUSINESS SERVICES

ENVIRONMENTAL, SOCIAL & GOVERNANCE (ESG) IMPACT WINNER



BAT GLOBAL BUSINESS SERVICES

Costa Rica ESG Team

OUTSTANDING DIVERSITY & INCLUSION LEADER IN SHARED SERVICES



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