

CASE STUDY:

eMoney Transforms
Product Management
with Actuation Consulting









About eMoney Advisor

eMoney Advisor (eMoney) was founded in 2000 to provide advisors with a wealth management solution that would not only strengthen the advisor/client relationship, but also enable financial advisors to lead the lifestyle—and leave the legacy—they envision. The founder's dogged commitment to meeting his clients' spoken and unspoken needs drove the company forward in the early years, and this same passion continues to drive progress today.

Today more than 46,000 financial professionals use eMoney and its services. The company that employs 475+ skilled professionals holds \$2.5 trillion in assets under management. In 2015, eMoney was acquired by Fidelity Investments, Conshohocken, Pennsylvania. However, despite acquisition eMoney continues to operate as a successful independent company providing exceptional software advisory services to its clients.

The Challenge

Throughout the years, eMoney's founder was the sole driver of product strategy. He had a strong vision of the products he wanted to develop and a clear idea of the course he wanted to follow to get there. When he had an idea he would pull in the teams that would be handling a project, give them their orders and then start thinking about his next big idea. There really wasn't a product team per se. He was sales driven and had a start-up mentality.

Difficulties first arose about a year after eMoney was sold — when the founder left the company. At that point in time, eMoney's management needed to install a complete product management team and product management discipline across the whole company to accelerate growth. In addition to building a product management structure, the company wanted to shift to an Agile development methodology more suited to the mid-sized company eMoney was quickly becoming. Employees needed to have a clearer idea of what they should be working on and also what they should relinquish to others. eMoney needed to develop a product strategy, product roadmap, and product pricing aligned to overall company goals. They also needed tools to help them make key decisions about which features and products to build and which would bring the company the greatest return. The entire operation needed to be scalable to support accelerated topline growth in sales and revenue.

Actuation Consulting's Work With eMoney

A Personalized Approach

eMoney's previous experience with larger consulting firms made employees cautious about beginning a new relationship with Actuation Consulting. In the past, others had proposed a templated "one-size-fits-all" approach to eMoney's challenges. Actuation took a much different, more personal, and hands-on approach throughout the engagement. The solutions put forth by Actuation Consulting were highly tailored to eMoney's specific needs and requirements. Nothing presented was an "off the shelf" solution. There was a significant amount of education required, explaining the essence of product management and the product management discipline and then gaining buy-in across the company. A goal was to create a product management group that makes well-reasoned decisions based on market data, facts, and an understanding of customer segments. To facilitate this undertaking, Actuation Consulting's president, Greg Geracie spent an average of three to four days a week on site at eMoney for a significant portion of the consultancy.

Company-wide Impact

One of the initial needs that Actuation Consulting addressed was helping eMoney define roles and responsibilities and then assist in the recruitment and hiring process to fill key product team positions. The process was so successful in the product team that eMoney engaged Actuation Consulting to develop roles and responsibilities for the majority of departments in the company.

Proven Processes and Tools

Another goal was to put in place key tools such as business cases, a product decision matrix, product road map, and a multi-year plan the company could follow going forward. These tools help the product management team evaluate and prioritize functionality and compare initiatives against each other.

The success of Actuation Consulting's engagement was rooted in the consultant's ability to take a big picture approach to challenges across eMoney. Actuation Consulting was also able to work with stakeholders in a nonthreatening manner and establish a solid rapport grounded in mutual respect and trust.

"I realized that this wasn't just a consultant for the sake of a consultant. Actuation Consulting clearly understood why we were doing this and what we were lacking."

NICK DILISI, CIO

"Actuation Consulting helped us develop and implement our product management processes and the word "shocked" at the speed of the transformation is not overstating it!"

STEVE LEVIS, SVP, CLIENT ENGAGEMENT

"Our Actuation Consulting representative had a real knack for interpersonal skills, almost with a psychological element to it. He could speak to someone and read them, understanding their skills, weaknesses and personality."



Outcomes

90% and Above Satisfaction Rating

eMoney management held high expectations for their work with Actuation Consulting and all who were interviewed for this case study rated the outcome at 90% or above. While it is premature to realize the full value of the work done by Actuation Consulting, all interviewees expressed high satisfaction with the effort both qualitatively and quantitatively and expect the impact of the engagement to **show a benefit worth many times the investment in the project.**

Clearer Priorities and More Transparency

The positive outcomes credited to the work of Actuation Consulting are many. Actuation Consulting worked closely with eMoney stakeholders across the company and performed a complete assessment of how the company functioned. Based on what was learned, the consulting firm was able to help eMoney develop clear priorities and gain transparency in its decision-making process. For the first time, everyone is aligned and rowing in the same direction.

Better Defined Roles and Responsibilities

Another area where Actuation Consulting was able to create a positive impact was in helping define roles and responsibilities for the product management organization. Today, there's a clear description of where employees in each position should direct their attention and what part of the goals and priorities they own. Just training staff in this vital area is making a huge difference in how smoothly and efficiently eMoney operates.

Once roles were well defined, Actuation Consulting helped eMoney find top candidates, interview them, and insert them in the company role that best suited their qualifications, work style, and personality.

Improved Efficiency and Accelerated Growth

Achieving a strong synergy between product management and the development teams has set the stage for improved efficiency and ultimately accelerated topline growth and sales. This was accompanied by in-depth training in the discipline of product management which has energized the team and created a positive outlook for the future.

Breaking from the past, eMoney now has a decentralized structure guiding product management that is no longer fully dependent on the initiatives instigated by one lead person. In addition, the organization has a solid platform to support ongoing growth and change in the company. During 2016, eMoney experienced their largest growth rate to date – an increase of 31%.

"Working with Actuation Consulting to interview and hire key employees was 30-50% more efficient than trying to do this on our own."

KEVIN BADER, TECHNICAL RECRUITER

ANTICIPATED BENEFITS

- Accelerated topline revenue growth/sales
- Improved client/subscriber retention
- Enhanced resource efficiency
- Greater responsiveness to subscriber feedback
- More robust product offering
- Alignment of individual and business goals with plan



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Want to Improve the Performance of Your Product Management Team?

Actuation Consulting is the world's leading product management consulting and training organization. We provide product management consulting, training and advisory services to many of the world's most well-known organizations. Find out more about our solutions at actuation consulting.com.

Contact us today at 312-775-2373 or info@ActuationConsulting.com.

