

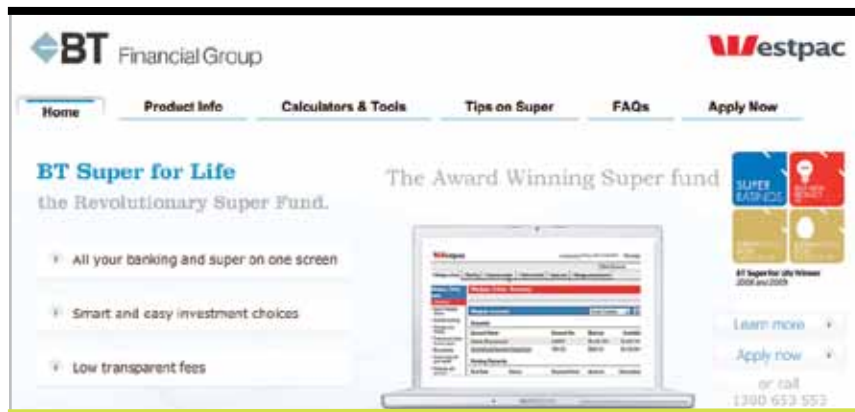
BT Super for Life

CIO100 WINNER

BT Financial Group

Westpac
Australia's First Bank

BT Financial Group partnered with ThoughtWorks to create their award-winning Super for Life application. The system offers customers online access to and control of their pension fund investments, completely integrated with their regular banking products – a revolutionary change in the market. BT Financial Group is the wealth management arm of Westpac bank, Australia's largest bank.



Australia has one of the most advanced retirement savings programs in the world, known as superannuation or “super”. Employer participation is mandatory, with contributions currently set at nine percent of wages. As a result, Australia's funds management industry has become the fourth-largest in the world based on dollars managed – a startling and impressive fact given the country's population of just over 20 million.

In spite of having this world-leading savings program, until the last couple of years, Australians had little control over their superannuation accounts and little incentive to contribute their own funds to these savings.

Employees had no choice as to who would manage their funds; employers selected the management company. Nor, with few exceptions, did employees have online access to track fund performance or alter their asset allocations. Without any ability to choose or easily manage their own accounts, employees typically paid little attention to them. Often investments weren't moved as employment changed, and it became nightmarish to keep track of six, seven or perhaps more accounts managed by different firms, not to mention the expense of having multiple funds.

Highlights

- BT Super for Life offered the first feature-rich combination of online banking, retirement savings and insurance to Australians.
- The project delivered first-in-the market features for consumers nine months after starting development.
- Over \$460M new funds under management and 120,000 new customers for BT since launch.
- Integrating over 70 internal and third party systems in the nine month timeframe brought BT Westpac a true competitive advantage.
- The product has garnered BT numerous awards and recognition for being consumer friendly with a low-cost, easy-to-use online product.
- Test Driven Development and Continuous Integration kept the quality of the code high despite the complexity of the underlying integrations.

Technology

Java, web services, Tibco.

BT Super for Life

Legislative changes open the market

The situation changed dramatically beginning in 2006. New legislation gave consumers the right to choose which company would hold and invest their superannuation; no longer were they stuck with their employer's choice. Following closely on this change, further tax incentives were granted to encourage consumers to contribute from their own pockets on top of the mandated 9% employer contribution. With these changes, the retirement funds industry was about to become much more competitive and driven to innovation.

The huge amount of funds already under management now up for grabs meant that whoever offered the super product with the best service, management and price stood to gain market share over rivals. In addition, retail for-profit funds (as compared with union-initiated non-profit "industry" funds) were under pressure over the widespread practice of paying "trailing commissions" to their financial planners, which an increasing number of industry observers alleged caused bias in product recommendations.

Faced with these challenges and opportunities, BT Financial Group decided that half steps to compete just wouldn't do. They set up the BT Super for Life initiative.

"We saw strong consumer demand for increased transparency and better online services, and we were determined to be the first provider to deliver these to customers," said Catherine Galton, Head of Product for BT Super for Life.

If they could introduce a product designed from the consumer's point of view that offered easy online access, low administration fees and no hidden trailing commissions, BT knew they would gain retirement accounts from rivals. Better yet, if they could build a system that was integrated with Westpac bank accounts and products such as credit cards and insurance, BT and Westpac knew they could make this a huge competitive advantage for the entire firm.



Over 70 systems to connect

BT spent the next six months putting details to their vision for the new product. In addition to online funds management and allocation, customers would be able to obtain life insurance products, access their Westpac bank and credit card accounts, convert loyalty points into super dollar contributions, specify external accounts to be consolidated into BT Super for Life, and much more. Nobody had a feature set close to this – yet. But BT knew others weren't standing still either.

It was going to be a massive project. Customer-centric design was required to ensure an intuitive user interface. But the biggest part of the job was going to be integration: linking with over 70 Westpac and third party systems, including mainframe core banking, unit registry and pricing systems, bank customer information and customer relationship management systems. Many of these systems had never been integrated before; some still included manual processing steps. A Service Oriented Architecture would be required, using web services to allow loosely-coupled yet rich integration of these systems.

About this time, ThoughtWorks completed a project for another group at BT and word was spreading about the high quality of work completed in a short time span. BT's Super for Life team began to work with ThoughtWorks to see how they might adopt some key Agile processes, such as Test Driven Development and Continuous Integration, to better ensure code quality.

Winning on quality, delivering on innovation

Increasingly impressed with ThoughtWorks' expertise and processes, the BT Super for Life team asked for a bid on the entire project. ThoughtWorks responded with a proposal that took advantage of its offshore Agile development organisation in India, and got the job. The joint team began work immediately, with the business team working hand-in-hand with the technical team onsite and creating the requirements for the entire project. The offshore team ramped up and grew to over 25 ThoughtWorkers. Members of the Sydney and Bangalore teams traded site visits to increase communication and information flows.

The Super for Life team was particularly impressed with the transparency to progress that Agile gave them, even when everything wasn't smooth-sailing. Part-way through the first release, it became clear that there was too much scope to be delivered by the desired launch date and that cuts would have to be made to meet time-to-market drivers. Even then, the visibility and granularity of the requirements, gathered in discrete "user stories", made it easier for business sponsors to identify what functionality could be deferred to future releases or simply cut.

“Our team, which was spread between Sydney and Bangalore, employed Agile development techniques, demonstrating working software to our client every two weeks. Continuous feedback and collaboration allowed us – and BT – to evolve our ideas and innovate throughout the development phase.”

Keith Dodds, ThoughtWorks,
Director of Sales and Marketing.

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“Super for Life was a massive undertaking for us” said BT's Catherine Galton, “but it set the new standard for superannuation products, and particularly the customer's online experience. ThoughtWorks was indispensable to our ability to launch such a complex system so fast.”

Catherine Galton, Head of Product
BT Super for Life

Award-winning simplicity

Nine months later, the BT Super for Life project was launched to consumers with first-in-the-market features. Within two weeks it garnered significant industry recognition by winning the SuperRatings Fund of the Year award for Best New Product. “In a move to inspire copycats, Westpac has become the first major bank to put its weight behind a simple and inexpensive super product connected to an online bank account,” reported Melbourne daily newspaper The Age. Westpac Bank's CEO hailed the high-profile project: “We have a first class product (indeed a 'best in class' product) in BT Super for Life”.

In Year One after launch, the BT Super for Life product attracted more than 80,000 new customers and \$283M in funds under management. BT's Catherine Galton said, “The agility of ThoughtWorks and their focus on delivery was fundamental to BT being able to create this revolutionary super product. We are passionate about making it easier for Australians to own and manage their life savings, and with the advantage of our ThoughtWorks partner, we've been able to make the vision a reality with BT Super for Life”.

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The screenshot displays the Westpac Online Summary page. At the top, it shows the Westpac logo, the date and time (1 October 2007 12:34 AEST), and navigation links for Messages, Administration, and Help. Below this, there are tabs for Westpac online, Banking, Superannuation, Balance sheet, Apply now, and Manage your accounts. The main content area is titled 'Westpac Online - Summary' and includes a 'Westpac Accounts' section with a table of accounts. A 'Pending Payments' table is also visible, along with a 'Superannuation' section. A search bar is located on the left side of the page.

Account Name	Account No.	Balance	Available
Classic Flex Account	334987	\$5,432.70+	\$5,432.10+
Bank / Global Rewards MasterCard	789123	\$895.12+	\$4,109.88+

Due Date	Status	Payment From	Amount	Description
15 Oct 2007	Submitted Awaiting Due Date	234567	\$49.36+	Telstra
15 Oct 2007	Submitted Awaiting Due Date	234567	\$123.45+	AGL

Account Name	Account No.	Balance
BT Super for Life - Superannuation	123456789	\$125,860.23+

BT Super for Life has gone on to win Australia's iAward 2008 for technology innovation and best in financial services, the 2008 Rainmaker award for "best superannuation website" and a global CIO 100 Award, which honours 100 companies globally for excellence and achievement in IT.

BT Super for Life is soon to be launched through St George and Bank SA internet banking, using the same underlying product. BT/Westpac and ThoughtWorks continue to work in partnership on new products.