

BearingPoint®



Handelsbanken

Handelsbanken achieves a significant strategic milestone by completing the sale of its Finnish operations

Handelsbanken

Handelsbanken engaged BearingPoint experts in key roles to ensure a smooth divestiture process, minimizing risks, and avoiding business disruption. This transaction marked a pivotal step in the bank's strategy to leave the Finnish market and position strongly on its core areas.

Handelsbanken is a Swedish bank offering banking services such as corporate transactions, investment banking, trading, and consumer banking including insurance. Handelsbanken operates as one of the major banks in Sweden with branches across the country, as well as in the Netherlands, Norway and the United Kingdom.

Handelsbanken's operations in Finland sold to three locally operating parties

In order to align with its strategic objective of concentrating on core markets, Handelsbanken has opted to divest its Finnish operations. This involved dividing the business into four parts and distributing them among three purchasers, while retaining the fourth portion of its operations. On May 31, 2023, it was announced that the private customer, asset management, and investment services operations were sold to S-Bank; small and medium-sized enterprise operations to Oma Savings Bank; and life insurance operations to Fennia Life.

Handelsbanken sought assistance to implement this complex divestiture strategy effectively while maintaining business continuity and mitigating potential risks. Handelsbanken needed support to put into effect the transaction scope, manage the separation activities, and carry out the roadmap of the required integrations.

Driving a comprehensive program to address the complexity of the divestiture implementation

In summer 2023, Handelsbanken began the divestiture implementation, hiring BearingPoint experts in key roles, including program and project managers, operations, non-financial risk management, data management, and IT integrations. As their reliable partners since the divestiture sales and due diligence process, Handelsbanken entrusted these experts with the management of the implementation. The program established a comprehensive program and organized the project team, which included various roles from Handelsbanken, buyers, and different subcontractors. The team allocation was structured in a matrix and adjusted dynamically across all subprojects. This approach enabled the team to address multiple tasks simultaneously across all areas of transition, prioritizing tasks as required.

Managing the agreed perimeters split between buyer parties while ensuring business continuity was crucial to minimize disruptions for customers. It required dividing assets among different buyers along with the underlying data and agreements for each asset, while transactions remained within the defined perimeter. To address compliance and risk, BearingPoint's experts developed data strategies in collaboration with key subject matter experts from all involved parties. They aligned these strategies with various regulatory criteria, resulting in guidelines for the entire migration process, that delineated which data could be transferred and their boundaries during migration to mitigate risks.

Furthermore, the program manager led the entire sell side-data ecosystem, coordinating between various IT subcontractors of both Handelsbanken and buyers for a seamless transfer of data. Another key task was restructuring the organization, processes, and workflows for both transferred employees and those remaining in the fourth operation at Handelsbanken. The BearingPoint experts assisted Handelsbanken and its stakeholders by coordinating the processes of redefining roles, transferring knowledge, identifying competency gaps, and ensuring clear communication with personnel to help them navigate the change. Finally, all branches were thoroughly assessed to determine which ones should be transferred, closed, or reorganized.

” *The divestment of part of Handelsbanken Finland’s operations represents the most complex cross-border banking transaction in Finland to date, both legally and in terms of execution. Its successful completion required exceptional effort, expertise, and strong collaboration within the Handelsbanken team, as well as among all parties involved in the process. BearingPoint’s experts demonstrated exemplary project management skills, in-depth knowledge of the banking and insurance sectors, and solid technical expertise. Their ability to drive progress and collaborate effectively within the seller-buyer consortium was invaluable. Throughout the process, BearingPoint’s team maintained a solution-oriented approach and a positive mindset, which were pivotal to the project’s success.*

Sirpa Pensas, Senior Vice President / Projects at Handelsbanken

Efficiently completing the divestiture of its Finnish operations without disrupting business

Handelsbanken has successfully finalized the divestiture of its operations in Finland, valued at approximately 1.3 billion euros, according to its original plan, schedule, and scope. This transaction marked a significant milestone in the bank’s strategic move to exit the Finnish market and concentrate on its core markets.

The three Finnish operations of Handelsbanken have been transferred entirely to S-Bank Abp, Fennia Life Insurance, and Oma Savings Bank Abp, and the fourth remaining part of its business reorganized to ensure optimal compliance and functionality. The efficient implementation of this strategy led to high customer retention across all divested assets, smooth migration of the bank’s personnel, and minimal risks associated with data transfer.

Contacts

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