

Wokingham Borough Council Improves In-bound and Out-bound Communications

Wokingham Borough Council is responsible for providing services to nearly 160,000 citizens and businesses in Wokingham Borough, which is located in Berkshire, South East England. The Council established Wokingham Direct, as its front line customer management team, tasked with responding to a wide variety of enquiries. These include diverse issues such as abandoned vehicles, rubbish collection and recycling, through to school enrolment and support services for the elderly. Wokingham's diverse customer base of young people, old people, students and business owners, meant that the council needed to be able to communicate in real-time, using cost-effective channels such as SMS, email, web-chat and efax.

Wokingham Borough Council implemented Datasquirt's hosted CONTACT™ communications solution in January 2009. Since then, it has become the central platform for managing all in-bound and out-bound non-voice customer communications. Customers are able to engage with Wokingham Direct by email, web-chat or SMS to ask questions or report problems. Citizens can subscribe on the council's website to receive notifications via SMS or email about upcoming events or information regarding issues of interest to them or one-off public safety alerts.

In fact, Wokingham Borough Council is now recognised nationally as a leading example of how to serve the public. Wokingham Direct earned two top ten places at the 2009 Top 50 Call Centre awards.

Challenges

Prior to implementation of CONTACT™, Wokingham Borough Council faced three main challenges:

Ineffective legacy system – The council relied on Outlook as its main non-voice communications platform. Emails were sent to individual people, there was no audit trail or accountability and customers experienced a frustrating ten working day turnaround time for email enquiries. Emails would often slip through the cracks, unanswered, resulting in dissatisfaction and frustration for all.

Diverse audience with increasing demands – The customer base was varied and demanded communications in a timely manner using both a mix of new and traditional access channels.

Growing base of services – The scope of services that the Council had to deal with was growing and different services required different types of messages. Email was not the answer for everything.

Datasquirt Solution

Datasquirt's business analysts worked with Wokingham Direct to develop and implement a scalable, future proof solution that would enable the Council to handle in-bound and out-bound communications using the customer's preferred contact method.

Wokingham Direct chose and implemented Datasquirt's hosted CONTACT™ solution activating the SMS, Email, efax, web-chat and e-forms modules. The extensive database behind CONTACT™ means that every communication with a customer, no matter what channel, is logged and recorded against that customer and call centre agent, allowing for full audit and recall of information as and when required.

Full integration with the Council's website means that customers can self-subscribe for SMS or email alerts about upcoming events or issues. If they have a question or want to report something, they can send an SMS or an email, or complete an e-form online. If an immediate response is required, they can start a web-chat session right from the website.

For the public, communication with Wokingham Borough Council has never been easier.

Benefits

Wokingham Borough Council and its citizens have experienced a number of key benefits from CONTACT™. Some of these are:

- Increased response times & customer satisfaction
- Reduced administration and cost savings
- Detailed logging of all communications
- All customer history & information at agents' fingertips
- Fully automated processes
- Easy to use templates for more rapid responses
- Integrated multi-channel support (SMS, email, web-chat, e-forms and e-fax)
- Detailed real-time reporting and analysis
- Improved database integrity and accuracy

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

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Case Study

Customer

Wokingham Borough Council

Industry

Government/Local Authority

Datasquirt Solution

CONTACT Email, SMS, & web-chat

ROI

- » Increased efficiency & automation
- » Cost savings
- » Accurate reporting, searching & analysis

"Datasquirt's CONTACT has revolutionised the way the Council handles customer enquiries. Our response times are now much quicker and, as a result, customer satisfaction is up. We are able to be proactive and respond to our customers using the latest technology. Customers love this as it is convenient, particularly accessible and represents good value for money - particularly important during such tough economic times

Susan Law, Chief Executive, Wokingham Borough Council