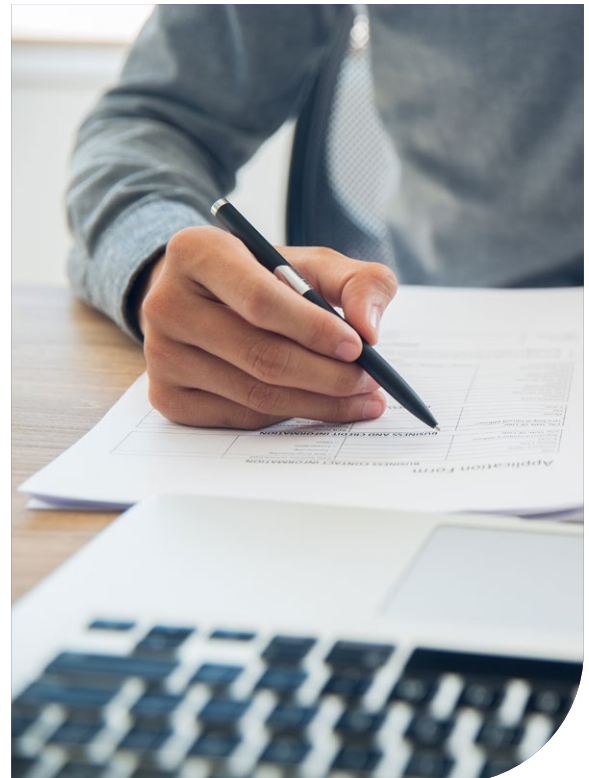# Digital transformation to ensure connection between community and BPL's facilities

Established in 1999, Barnsley Premier Leisure (BPL) is a not-for-profit, charitable trust managed by an independent board of trustees.

The business provides affordable, value-for-money, sport and leisure facilities for a region covering Barnsley, Bassetlaw, Mansfield and Pontefract.

Income from activities are reinvested back into the business to develop facilities that include multi-use leisure centres, public golf courses, school out-of-hours amenities, health and fitness facilities and the award-winning regional attraction, the Metrodome Leisure Complex.

The Challenge:

Communication with the diverse community served by BPL is critical. To support this, a programme of digital transformation has set out to ensure members of the community can connect simply with BPL and access facilities more easily. Past investment in communications technology was limited to maintaining the legacy systems, new investment prioritised replacement of these legacy telecommunications with a new unified communications system and modern contact centre capabilities.

The legacy system comprised an on-premise PBX at each site, converted from ISDN to SIP to route calls from head office to individual sites. PBX functionality was lacking, reliability was declining, failures were increasing and, with the aging systems out of warranty, maintenance and call-out costs were escalating.

Support was reliant on a single individual, with knowledge of the system, working for a third-party service provider. Lack of that person's availability on occasions meant that downtime was becoming more frequent, placing the call centre and customer experience at risk. With over 400 calls a day going through the contact centre, the risk of lost sales and cancellations was significant.

Quantifying the impact of downtime and other inefficiencies was difficult given the limitations in performance measurement and reporting capabilities of the system. Call metrics, such as duration and waiting time, were very basic and did little to provide insights on performance improvement.

The legacy system was running on data and voice network connections from a number of different providers, leading to operational inefficiency, uncompetitive pricing and disputes over technical issues.

Summary of Business Challenges

› Growing system maintenance costs and downtime.

› System downtime threatening sales and customer experience.

› Planning impaired by lack of performance measurement.

› Inefficiencies from multiple service providers.

› Customer options limited by inflexible call routing.

› Future capabilities limited by restrictive licencing.

Requirements:

A competitive tender highlighted the need to replace BPL's legacy phone and contact centre software. From a customer perspective, the system needed to be capable of maintaining the brand values of the business whilst meeting the needs of a diverse range of service users across the different sites. A more specific 'commissioning checklist' detailed specific features and requirements geared to business processes and administration.

This list continued to serve as a reference point for the design and functionality of the system throughout the implementation project.

In general, requirements of the system and service provider fell into three broad categories:

Technology

Technology and skills needed to capitalise on the efficiencies and reliability of cloud-based systems

System features

System features and architecture that would allow development of the system in line with future needs and changing market conditions

Provider

A provider that could provide BPL management with a single point of contact for all services concerning phone and contact centre systems, including network connectivity, technical support and billing

Following a rigorous procurement process, comparing the world's leading vendor solutions, Foehn's Voxivo cloud phone system and VoxivoCX cloud contact centre were recognised as the optimal solution for BPL's specific needs. Designed and developed by Foehn's in-house team, the Voxivo platform presented advantages in the quality of integrations, development of new solutions and provision of well-informed technical support. Furthermore, Foehn's professional services and 20 years' experience in system implementation were judged critical to the performance of the new systems from day one.

Business Outcomes:

More sales, fewer cancellations

The resilience, security and reliability of Voxivo's cloud-hosted architecture means that the risk of downtime has been reduced drastically. This threat to the integrity of the BPL brand has been eliminated and improvements in the rate of lost sales and cancellations has delivered commercial benefit and tangible return on investment.

Cost savings

Voxivo's cloud hosting has also cut the escalating cost of maintenance and call-out charges associated with BPL's on-premise legacy system. Foehn's transparent pricing simplifies budgeting whilst the expertise of a 24 x 7 technical support team ensures that any issues are resolved before impacting the business.

Simpler, lower cost administration

Centralisation of network services under the management of Foehn has given BPL significant financial and operational advantages. Voice and data networks were consolidated under the management of Foehn and, by replacing multiple service providers with a single point of contact, BPL has reduced the administration overhead significantly.

By consolidating services, Foehn now has the opportunity to capitalise on economies of scale and negotiate more competitive network pricing. Centralised billing means Foehn can make life easier for the BPL finance team by allocating network and call costs directly to cost centres across the organisation. In the event of technical issues, Foehn's single point of responsibility also avoids the disputes and transference of blame that can arise between competing providers.

Improved customer experience

VoxivoCX has transformed customer service levels in the contact centre. The limitations of the legacy system have been replaced with new, agile routing capabilities that can reduce waiting time and improve the quality of agent response with skills-based routing.

With the benefit of intelligent routing combined with effective IVR, callers can now be routed directly to individual sites rather than transferred by the head office receptionist. For example, calls received outside normal head office hours, such as the early-morning calls for golf course reservations, can be managed within operating hours set at local level.

Improved business continuity

Enhanced control of routing also means that, in the event of technical or operational problems at head office, failover routing can push inbound calls to the any of the eleven sites best suited to deal with the call. In the past, rerouting was limited to one site where agents would not be equipped to deal with the specific nature of the calls.

Reduced cost of handsets

Voxivo's mobility and softphone functionality allows easier access to calls on mobile handsets and computers used for remote working. This provides reductions in the cost and maintenance of desktop handset hardware.

Development capability

The restrictive licencing terms of BPL's legacy system limited the opportunity for development, integration and adaptation of communications to business conditions in the future. The open software architecture of Voxivo now presents the opportunity for planning development work to ensure BPL has communications that meet changing business needs over the lifetime of the system. For example, performance management and marketing campaigns planned for the future will benefit from customised reporting and data analysis.

Summary of Business Outcomes

> Improves sales performance and brand reputation.

> Reduced cost of maintenance.

> Reduced administration overhead.

> Improved customer experience and service levels.

> Reduced risk and improved business continuity.

> Reduced cost and maintenance of handsets.

> Opportunity for development of new communications capabilities.

Final Word

Dale Healey,
BPL IT & Systems Manager, summaries:

"Foehn's guidance and professional services have been invaluable to the implementation of the new systems. Their project management skills have helped deliver one of the best installations that I can remember."

From the outset, Foehn was active in the build of the system, dealing with the detail of things like adding DDIs and extensions. Practical advice and assistance was always available to ensure correct configuration of features, such as dial plan, IVR and routing, and this was all backed up with a project methodology that kept things on track and, in some instances, even brought deadlines forward. I'm confident that the Voxivo systems have been deployed on strong foundations and will deliver the improvements in reliability and business productivity that we've been looking for."

Get in touch with us

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