

CASE STUDY

Lightspeed Broadband



Lightspeed Broadband – from funding to first customer in 7 months!

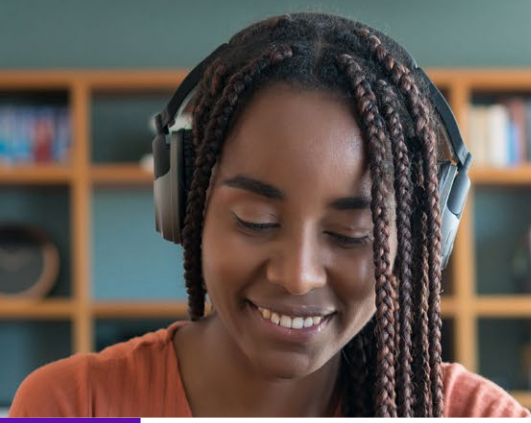


The Challenge

In March 2021, telecoms start-up Lightspeed Broadband received an initial £55million of private equity funding, with the ambitious goal of rolling out services to customers across the East of England within 7 months. Building the business in this timeframe required a new head office, a high-performing team and new networks, processes and systems to achieve the operational capability required to connect and manage customers.

Please note: Kerv Consult was recently rebranded from Monochrome Consultancy when it joined the Kerv Group. This project was delivered at a point when the team was known as Monochrome Consultancy.

Kerv Consult was asked to fill several leadership positions across the business to support these objectives, including Interim CIO, end-to-end programme management, and the development and delivery of IT systems.



Customer Overview

Lightspeed Broadband is start-up telecoms business, created by an experienced and very credible senior telecoms team, with the backing of Private Equity investors. They are passionate about bringing new technology to their customers, with their initial goal being to offer ultra-fast, full fibre broadband into over 1 million homes in the East of England.

Lightspeed's head office is situated in Spalding, right in the heart of their customers' community, meaning they are able to deliver excellent, local, personal service that their customers can rely on.



Background and Context

The UK fibre broadband market is extremely competitive with numerous 'alt-nets' (alternative network companies) spending huge amounts of money rolling out fibre broadband networks to compete in the increasingly crowded UK market.

Around 50 such companies, backed by funds promising billions of pounds, have burst on to the UK scene in recent years pledging to take the fight to Openreach, the networking division of incumbent BT, as well as Virgin Media's cable network. These alt-nets, who are addressing different sectors of the market in a number of ways, have forced Britain's broadband upgrade to progress faster than it might have otherwise.

Consumer demand for "gigabit" speed broadband — more than 10 times faster than the average today — is beginning to soar, with the assumption that prices will rise to match.

Lightspeed is setting itself up for success in this busy marketplace with its excellent customer service, high-quality network and local, focused approach helping to differentiate itself from its competitors. Unlike some of their competitors, they are planning for sustainable growth with industry-leading CSAT scores, rather than just focusing on short-term customer volumes.

Global supply chain challenges, particularly those impacting technology industries, have created further risks that need to be properly mitigated.

Lightspeed must continue to balance the need for swift growth and high quality with both customer and investor confidence in order to succeed.



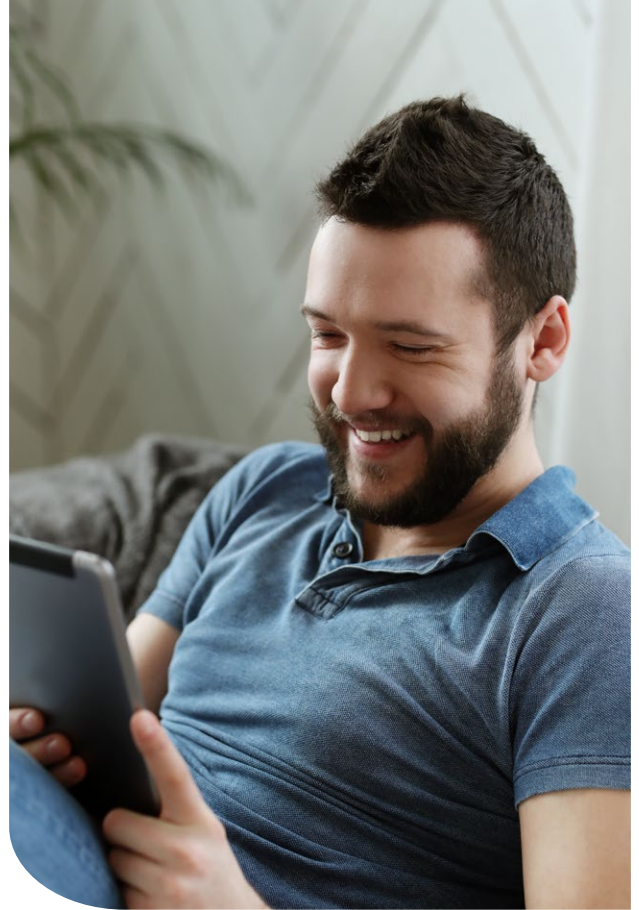
The Challenge

Kerv Consult was brought in early to provide structure to the overall Lightspeed programme, to drive the critical path activities, and to embed an agile mindset across the rapidly growing business. We immediately bought into **‘the Lightspeed way’** and, equally, ensured that everything was **‘delivered at light speed.’**

The usual gaps seen with a start-up regarding people and process meant that it was necessary for the Kerv Consult consultants to roll up their sleeves and do what was needed to ensure that critical activities were delivered and progress was made at pace. These activities were widespread and included the initial mobilisation of a head office refurbishment, operational readiness, the core network build, key recruitment, purchasing, scoping, and developing processes and systems from the ground up.

In the context of programme management, the initial requirement was for Kerv Consult to develop and drive the delivery plans for establishing and launching the Lightspeed business, with a particular focus on critical path activities and embedding agile practices across the team.

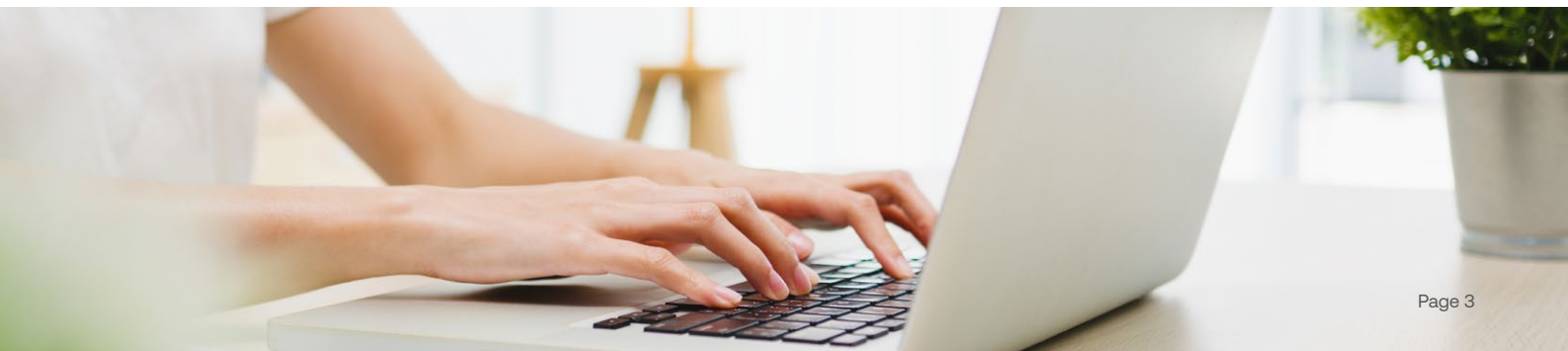
Over time, it became apparent that an increase in scope was required to ensure that all critical projects and workstreams had the necessary focus, leadership, and drive.



The Solution

Kerv Consult developed and drove a high-level programme plan, incorporating a number of workstreams such as:

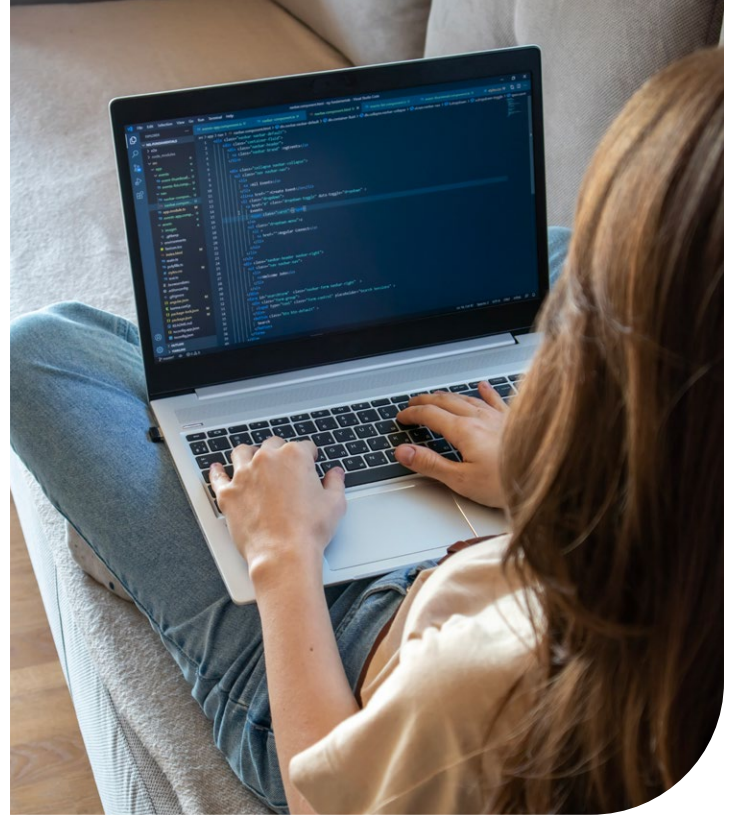
- **Governance and Business Management**
- **HR, Legal and Finance**
- **Procurement and Commercial**
- **Network Build and Network Operations**
- **Customer Support**
- **Sales and Marketing**
- **Digital Delivery**



In addition to this, it was crucial that we established, and subsequently ran, a number of projects and programmes within the business relating to areas including customer and operational systems development, exchange build, head office refurbishment and set-up, operational readiness, and the active management of the relationship with Nokia, Lightspeed's strategic technology partner.

Lightspeed's Senior Leadership Team included two experienced members from Kerv Consult who were asked to assist with direction-setting and decision-making, as well as coordinating the production of board reports and a number of significant, multi-million-pound investment cases.

Our healthy degree of pragmatism combined with a relentless focus on driving the critical path has helped ensure Lightspeed's outcomes continue to be achieved.



In addition to this, Kerv Consult has worked with Lightspeed to mobilise the second wave of network rollout which will add over 20 additional towns to the network in 2022, thus maintaining momentum and enabling future growth. Planning, investment cases and critical equipment orders for a third and fourth wave are also being progressed.

The development of the fantastic customer and operational systems has been led by Kerv Consult working with other partners to deliver against Lightspeed's innovative and customer-centric vision.

Kerv Consult brought its specific expertise into play when providing a framework for, and facilitating the development of, operational processes. Whilst these processes and the supporting systems continue to evolve, Kerv Consult helped ensure Lightspeed's operational scaling stayed safely ahead of the customer demand.

The quality of the network, systems and service levels, combined with a best-in-class customer, marketing and sales function, have resulted in an extremely high level of customer adoption, particularly when compared with industry norms.

Lightspeed now has a fantastic head office in the grade 2-listed Fulney Hall in Spalding. Whilst waiting for the Lightspeed team to grow and reach the stage at which they are able to manage this themselves, Kerv Consult led the mobilisation of this major refurbishment.

Kerv Consult's close work with Lightspeed has helped ensure that the plans, network, processes, systems, operations, and agile 'can-do' culture are now firmly in place to help the business continue to grow and thrive.



The Benefits

Without a doubt, the key result was that Lightspeed launched their service and achieved the 'First Customer Connected' milestone within 7 months of receiving funding. This was delivered at an exceptional pace and, moreover, the level of service has been consistently excellent since it was launched.

Kerv Consult's collaborative project management approach with Nokia helped drive an aggressive core network rollout plan which underpinned the rapid launch. The network deployment has continued and the service has been made available to almost ten thousand properties across Lincolnshire and Norfolk within the first quarter of the launch. This number continues to grow at pace with additional exchanges coming online and is on track to meet the ambitious targets set by its investors. By the end of its first full year of trading, Lightspeed is expecting to have enabled over 200k premises to take its service.



Collaboration

Kerv Consult both fully acknowledged and shared Lightspeed's ambition and approach, helping to not only introduce a hybrid 'Wagile' (a mix of waterfall and agile) way of working, but also to embed a positive, fast-paced, empowered culture. Collaborating with customers is one of Kerv Consult's great strengths and this was especially evident throughout our work with Lightspeed.

The ongoing collaboration with Kerv Consult has ensured that the ever-growing Lightspeed team has been able to focus on the key activities required to build a robust and scalable business.

Future

We have been extremely fortunate to work with a team as strong and forward-thinking as Lightspeed, and we look forward to continuing our successful relationship into 2022 and beyond.



Final Word

To see how we can help your Transformation, or to learn how you can benefit from our approach to ensure your projects are successful get in touch!

Get in touch with us

For general enquiries please contact
hello@kerv.com

Kerv Group, Unit 1B, 1 Finsbury Avenue, London EC2M 2PP