



INTERACTIVE INTELLIGENCE

Deliberately Innovative

Case Study

Contact Center Automation

- Multimedia Recording & Quality Monitoring
- Customer Feedback Management
- Outbound/Blended Dialing & Campaign Management
- Network-based Pre/Post-Call Routing
- Web Self-Service & Knowledge Management
- Workforce Management

Enterprise IP Telephony

Enterprise Messaging

Summary

Customer: Kiama Council

Headquarters: Kiama, NSW, Aust

Industry: Government

Challenge: To implement a centralized contact centre to provide better customer service and efficiency gains.

Solution: *Customer Interaction Center*[®] (CIC) is an all-in-one communications software suite that provides multi-channel contact centre automation and enterprise IP telephony functionality for mid-size to large customer-focused and interaction-intensive organizations.

Benefits:

- Presence feature is saving time and improving overall customer service efficiency
- Easy to manage and configure system.
- Reports and statistics provide management with a better understanding of customers needs.

Kiama Council Connects With Its Constituents



About Company Name

Ninety minutes south of Sydney, the Municipality of Kiama stretches across 259 square kilometres of stunning coastline, pretty rural scenery and a hinterland that edges along the foot of a spectacular escarpment. Over 20,000 people live in the area, which has a rich heritage of dairy farming and quarrying. Today's economy has a strong rural element but it is also benefiting from a burgeoning tourism industry, driven largely by Sydneysiders seeking an easily accessible weekend respite from their workday responsibilities.

The Challenge

Like any council, Kiama Council faces strong customer service demands across its entire range of services - from development, waste management and roads through to arts, libraries and recreational facilities. Until recently, all incoming calls were all channelled through the Council's switchboard before being directed to the Council officer responsible for the area or service. It made for a busy switchboard and, unfortunately, frequently resulted in calls being forwarded from one staff person to the next as the appropriate officer was tracked down.

To remedy the problem, the Council proposed establishing a contact centre that would receive and manage incoming calls; a centre that would be equipped with dedicated staff who held enough knowledge to provide at least an initial response to any queries. Although the Council's needs were not huge, management realised that a small, centralised contact centre held the promise of better customer service and that by freeing up Council officers from the majority of ad hoc queries, it could deliver staff efficiency gains.

Initial investigation showed that the Council's eight-year old analogue PABX was unable to deliver the functionality required for a contact centre, so the search for an alternative began.

The Solution

Kiama Council engaged telecommunications consultancy firm PABX Advisory Services, to conduct an expenditure analysis, and to advise on the most appropriate technologies and vendor. The recommendation was for the Voice over IP (VoIP), all-in-one software based solution *Customer Interaction Centre* (CIC)[®] from Interactive Intelligence. CIC provides a fully featured VoIP PBX, IVR, Unified Communications and multi-media contact centre solution in the one software package built from the ground up. The Council's LAN switches and cabling infrastructure were also upgraded to provide a total solution from the one vendor.

Scott Butler, IT Manager at Kiama Council explains, "We were introduced to VoIP at the ideal time. Over the past two years it has become much more stable and we saw it as a safe area to jump into. Then, when we looked at Interactive Intelligence and the contact centre software, we realised the company had a large user base with some very big customers. They had a lot of configuration options and we felt confident that we'd be able to do anything we ever wanted with the technology."

The prospect of unified messaging whereby faxes, voicemail and email would be channelled through the one system was another attraction for Butler. "We could see that delivering all messages via a single interface would be a nice feature. After all, everyone looks at email every day."

" Ultimately the contact centre solution has helped us to focus on our customers' needs and if we are giving a better service to the outside, it's all worthwhile," Scott Butler, IT Manager, Kiama Council.

While the technology offered everything Kiama Council required, the questions of cost remained important. The Council prides itself on being a responsible budget manager and

the contact centre project had limited funding. Butler continues, "Through the consultancy we participated in a group council tender and this brought some economies of scale. Part of the strategy also involved reviewing our telecommunications suppliers so that we could obtain better deals and cheaper call costs."

By the time negotiations for all the constituent parts of the project had been completed, Kiama Council had a solution that would become cost neutral over the term of the software contract.

Work on the new VoIP network and deployment of the CIC solution from Interactive Intelligence began. In all, 120 handsets were provided across four Council sites; seven staff were deployed in the new contact centre; and unified messaging was introduced to improve both employee communication and customer care.

The biggest challenges of the project related to infrastructure. Butler says, "The very first requirements were to ready the network for VoIP. This meant new switches and cabling. Remote sites had to replace their tie lines and connect to the network, and we had to put a wireless radio link into one site."

The Benefits

In September 2007, the contact centre went live. Although the centralisation of incoming calls was a big change for staff there was little or no resistance. Council management had made a point of committing to the contact centre, ensuring it received the resources it needed, confident that it would soon be repaid through productivity gains of Council officers at the back end.

Calls still on occasions have to be forwarded, or a Council officer may have to get back to a caller with a more detailed response, but Butler is convinced that over time, such situations are occurring less frequently. "We have the structure in place and what we are doing now is building up the intelligence in our contact centre," he says. "Our intention was to take the pressure off back office staff and to have a group of people who were focused on delivering service. We've more than achieved that."

Presence, or the ability to glance at a computer screen and identify if someone is at their desk or busy on a phone call, is saving time and improving overall customer service efficiency. This is particularly so amongst customer service staff who no longer have to chase around the building to locate a particular Council officer while the caller waits on the line.

Another benefit is that the system is now much easier to configure. New users are added or names changed without fuss. Call flows continue to be tracked so that faster, more efficient ways of handling certain queries can be developed. Reports and statistics provide management with a better understanding of what customers want and the data is helping some departments to better manage workloads and predict demand.

"Ultimately, the contact centre solution has helped us to focus on our customers' needs and if we are giving a better service to the outside, it's all worthwhile. After all, that's what the Council is all about," Butler concludes.

INTERACTIVE INTELLIGENCE™

Interactive Intelligence Inc. (Nasdaq: ININ) is a global provider of unified business communications solutions for contact center automation, enterprise IP telephony, and enterprise messaging. The company's innovative standards-based, all-in-one communications software suite was designed to eliminate the cost and complexity introduced by multi-point vendors. Founded in 1994 and backed by more than 3,000 customers worldwide, Interactive Intelligence is an experienced leader delivering maximum customer value through its comprehensive solution-set comprised of premise-based and hosted offerings, including software, hardware, consulting, support, education and implementation.

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