

Bristol Water Case Study

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Bristol Water is a small water only company, we supply water to about a million people in and around Bristol, we're a monopoly supplier of water in this area. The very real point about being in a regulated industry like we are is that every day we are supposed to be trying to make ourselves more efficient.

The challenges that we've got are really about making sure that we use our network the right way to make sure we give our customers the 24/7 perfect service.

Prior to any sort of mobile technology, we ran pretty much paper based systems, and at busy times that created big backlogs.

We had to make a step change. The paper based system meant that we had inefficiencies in the terms of data entry on the systems.

The workforce management solution that we've got in place is GE's Field Force Automation, and its, in our eyes, an all in one package that delivers a mobile platform and an office based scheduling system. The best thing about it is its flexibility. It can change with us rather than the other way round, and its proven to be very successful because of that.

You want something that's going to work everyday, this system has got to be able to cope with that, and you've got to be able to change what was a back office type paperwork exercise into something which is mission critical and you need to know that there's someone behind that who has done it before, and secondly is going to be there to support you if and when things do change.

We wanted to work with a specialist in this field, and there weren't many of those that we could find, but the Vodafone team absolutely fitted the bill.

We were pleased that we would be dealing with the Vodafone applications group that's done this, has a track record of doing this, and just does this.

We were impressed when we talked about Change Management and the implementation process, and I think that differentiated them from other companies that we looked at, although that wasn't something that we thought we needed assistance with, it became clear that some elements of this process were going to be very difficult, and that a provider like Vodafone, with the experience that they've got, were going to help us greatly.

Vodafone really led the way from an IT perspective, and they worked closely with our other IT partners to make the solution really happen. They've been quite impressive in their overall responsibility. Often there were times where the things that needed to be resolved weren't their problem, but because they took the overall responsibility for the success of the project, they actually helped to make these things change, and it was having a similar attitude to solving problems that really made a difference.

People feel we've invested in them, this is their kit, this is their tool, this is improving their ability to deal with a customer. We are seeing surprising positivity amongst the staff about suddenly feeling much more joined in with the company, we're seeing massive jumps in productivity in terms of output and therefore sort of efficiency overall, which meets the overall customer objective we've got set by our regulator.

We would give out a package of work on a daily basis to people, and they would come back and give us the ones they hadn't done. Now we know exactly when they do those jobs, we know exactly how long they spend travelling between those jobs, and that gives us a whole wealth of information that we just didn't have before.

I'm delighted we chose Vodafone for the relationship has gone better through the project, and you know even now after the project has been fully implemented, we're enjoying the relationship we've got with them.