

Empowering the public

Find out how we helped Energy Networks Association launch innovative customer platform 105



Power to the people

The UK benefits from one of the most resilient electricity networks in the world; powering our businesses, our homes, and our lives. Having such a consistent network means disruptions to the supply are rare, but bad weather and power cuts do happen and when we lose power, we want to know that we can get it back as soon as possible. But would you know who to call to find out when you'll be back up and running? Energy Networks Association (ENA) worked to create a memorable and free, three-digit number, for energy customers to call when they lost power. To provide such a valuable service to the public, ENA needed a partner it could depend on to provide a telecommunications platform as reliable as the electricity network.



The Challenge

Who to call

Every day, we use gas and electricity to power our lives, rarely thinking about where it comes from or how it gets to our homes, workplaces, schools, supermarkets and hospitals. Distribution Network Operators (DNO's) across the UK work behind the scenes all year round, to limit power cuts and minimise disruption for customers. DNO's are also committed to ensuring that if customers do lose power, they provide up to date information, advice and support. As the industry body for the DNO's, Energy Networks Association ensures energy is supplied to homes and business across the UK.

"The electricity network is just about the most reliable network in the world," says Tony Glover, Director of Policy, Energy Networks Association. "People don't experience power cuts often, so we work hard to make sure they are limited, and that when they do happen, we get people back on as soon as we can safely do so." As power cuts are so rare, research by

ENA found that 72% of people didn't know who to contact when they experienced a loss of power. Because of this, the company took up the responsibility to progress the creation of a free, three-digit number that customers could call if they lost power. With 105, customers simply dial the number and are transferred straight through to their local distribution network operator. With a nationwide service offering critical information about outages, it was crucial customers could get through quickly and be re-routed to the right DNO, no matter where they were calling from. "Our system is very reliable, so we needed a system that we could rely on to ensure that if there is a problem with the network, we are dealing with the customers' problems quickly, efficiently and getting information back to them," says Tony.

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We've got provable ratings of 85% as agreed by OFGEM, and that is to do with the 105 number being delivered by Vodafone. To hear that 105 is delivering for consumers, through the partnership with Vodafone, is a testament to how successful 105 has been.”

Tony Glover
Director of Policy
Energy Networks Association

The Solution

Record delivery

ENA worked with Vodafone to develop a sophisticated telecommunications platform, capable of matching the specific needs of the different DNO's, and meeting the high standards of customer service. "We devised a system that could work, and deliver," says Tony. "It critically ensures that although we have a national three-digit number, it's actually the local network operators that customers are put through to. So, when they pick up the phone and dial 105, whether they're in Land's End or John O'Groats, it identifies their postcode and directs them through to the right call centre."

Easy to remember and free to use, the innovative routing service from Vodafone, also takes into account that callers may be phoning from a different location to the power cut, or that the customer may be in an area on a border of two network operators' areas. "Using 105 takes just a little bit of the stress out of dealing with an obviously stressful situation," says Tony. 105 was also one of the first three-digit numbers delivered by the private sector in the UK, and working with Vodafone, ENA launched the service extremely quickly. "Vodafone has a track record of delivering three-digit non-emergency national numbers," explains Tony. "Vodafone have proven they can do it, and as we have seen, they can operate a system that is serving customers right across the UK and is increasing in use every day."

Why Vodafone

- The innovative platform from Vodafone automatically routes customers through to their local DNO, using their postcode or location.
- The service can even recognise when customers are calling from a different location to the power outage, or an area bordering two network operators.

The Benefit

Increasing customer satisfaction

Thanks to the hard work of ENA, the Distribution Network Operators and Vodafone, 105 has now been in contact with over one million customers across England, Wales and Scotland. "We have examples from recent serious weather events where people are choosing to use the 105 number," says Tony. "And up to 40% of calls are now being routed through via 105 provided by Vodafone. I think that shows not only the level of awareness, but also that people are preferring to use it." Easier to remember, free to use, and with a direct re-routing to the correct DNO, 105 has had a noticeable impact on customer satisfaction.

"We are ranking near the top in terms of customer service now," explains Tony. "We've got provable ratings of 85% as agreed by OFGEM, and that is to do with the 105 number being delivered by Vodafone. To get appreciation for how the Distribution Network Operators work, and to hear that 105 is delivering for consumers, through the partnership with Vodafone, is a testament to how successful 105 has been."

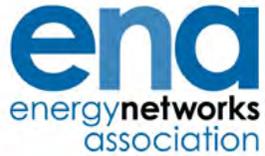
The platform has also had further benefits since its launch, working as an insight tool for the district network operators. "It is critically useful in terms of identifying where the problem is," says Tony. "Often that's early awareness of the power outage, which could mean we can deal with it remotely, or isolate that bit of the network, but ultimately people get their power restored quicker." With millions of users and increasing positive feedback, ENA are keen to grow the awareness and engagement of 105 even further, working with Vodafone to continue the operation of the platform. "Vodafone's system is delivering, and I expect the usage figures to go up," concludes Tony.



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We will eventually be looking at a situation where almost all calls from customers dealing with a power outage, will be going through the Vodafone network.”

Tony Glover
Director of Policy
Energy Networks Association



Energy Networks Association

The Energy Networks Association is the industry body funded by UK gas and electricity transmission and distribution licence holders.

www.energynetworks.org

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