



Municipality of Chatham-Kent Case Study



Introduction

The Municipality of Chatham-Kent (the “Municipality”), in Southwestern Ontario, has nine customer service locations. Each location offered service in-person and via telephone, which required telephone systems for each local branch. The primary service centre was housed in the Chatham Civic Centre, and operated as both an independent call centre using the main phone number for the Municipality of Chatham-Kent.

The Municipality increasingly facing budget challenges, and wanted to address inefficiencies. The primary service center required excess staff to meet peak demand, while the outlying service centers were often under utilized. To meet these challenges, the Municipality’s aimed at decentralizing the Civic Centre call centre, and redistributing and balancing customer

service workloads across the other eight municipal service centres. This would increase staff coverage over the entire municipality, provide better and more consistent levels of service regardless of location and provide equalization of duties for customer service staff. The Municipality also wanted to provide Chatham-Kent’s citizens quick and easy access to frequently requested information without the need to speak with service representatives.

The Municipality wanted to leverage existing IT infrastructure, instead of maintaining both data networks and telecom networks separately. It also wanted to leverage previously invested assets SLAs to reduce costs and provide additional support and sustainment for these items moving forward.

Solution

The Municipality selected Microsoft Lync 2013 for an enterprise voice solution that leveraged existing Microsoft Enterprise Agreements as well its fibre-wide area network for connectivity. Microsoft Lync brought all of the Municipality’s customer’s service representatives together as one group, connected via one unified communications environment.

The Municipality also implemented Clarity Connect, which is native to Lync 2013, to provide call centre automation, tracking and recording. Clarity Connect enabled agents to log phone calls and attach important information regarding the services requested by citizens. All customer service representatives, regardless of the municipal service centre they were working in,

now could perform equal duties and balanced workloads – building team morale.

Clarity Connect also enable web chat on the Municipality’s website, giving citizens the option to chat with customer services representatives online. Clarity Connect’s IVR solution enabled self-service voice automation for FAQs such as hours of operations, garbage collection and tax due dates.

All local telephone numbers were merged into one central number for the Municipality of Chatham-Kent with all customer service representatives performing equal duties by leveraging a knowledge-base.



Results

With Lync 2013 and Clarity Connect centralized in one data centre, nine legacy phone systems were removed and \$50,000 was saved per year for copper phone lines.

The total savings was calculated to be nearly \$500,000 over four years, and a complete payback of the investment should be realized in just over three years. In addition, by spreading resources across all customer service staff, a reduction of four full-time employees was achieved through retirements.

The Municipality of Chatham-Kent achieved its objectives of reducing the overall operating budget and staff count within the customer services division. Additional benefits were achieved by leveraging existing network topology and information technology standards to reduce costs and address disaster recovery considerations. The project has provided consistent levels and hours of service regardless of location and prevented the closure of municipal service centres in outlying locations.

Additional benefits were realized within the customer services division with the deployment of dashboard metrics, call queue, call recording and whisper features. These features have enhanced the teamwork, collaboration, training and motivation within the customer services division as there are no longer pockets of isolated staff, the system provides features for live coaching and training, there are more staff available to pick up calls in the queue, and the reporting features provides hard data and metrics to make ongoing improvements. In addition, each customer service

representative can use their laptop to work from anywhere that has an internet connection and continue to provide service on behalf of the Municipal business units.

The call centre project far exceeded the objectives of improving the overall quality of customer service and ensuring the viability and sustainability of all nine customer service centres within the municipality. As a result, the Municipality was presented with the Excellence in Municipal Systems Award and the People's Choice Award during the 2016 annual conference of Municipal Information Systems Association of Ontario (MISA).

“Clarity Connect was instrumental in helping us improve customer service and reduce costs. This project far exceeded expectations and it even won an award for Excellence in Municipal Systems.”

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