Empowering Digital Transformation
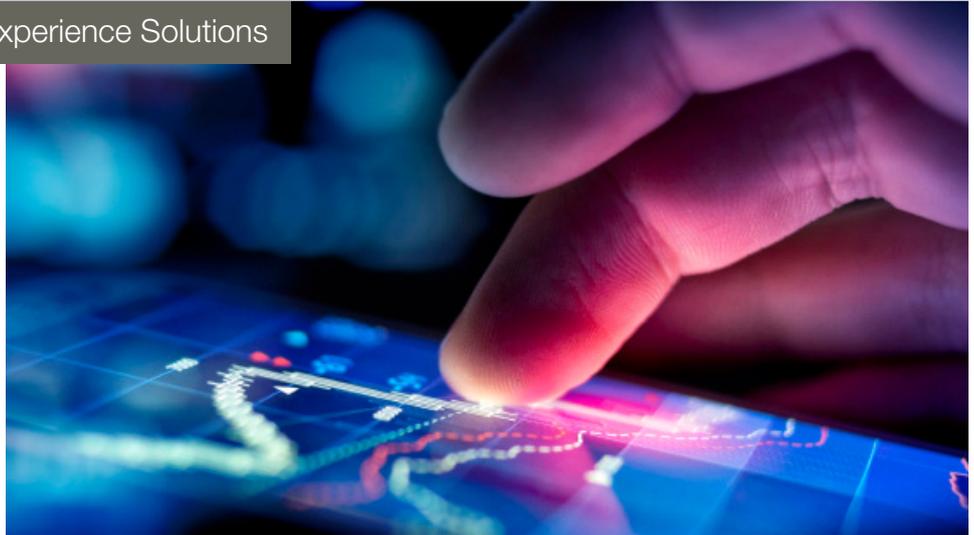
Customer Experience Solutions

CHALLENGE

- ✓ Modernise and increase channel choice and access to services
- ✓ Improve customer contact experience
- ✓ Reduce costs in response to budget constraints

SOLUTION

Modernised customer access portal that facilitates and manages consistent customer interaction, improves customer experience and delivers internal efficiencies.

OUTCOMES

- ✓ Increased first time enquiry resolution
- ✓ Shift to 24/7 online access to all services
- ✓ Modernised user-friendly customer contact portal
- ✓ Reduced delivery costs

> " To deliver the necessary change; we need to transform the way we work and the way our systems interact with one another. By integrating front and back office systems we created a culture of first time and on time enquiry resolution."
>
> – Sophie Ellis, Assistant Director of Business Improvement, Merton Council

Merton Council adapts its customer contact strategy to the modern digital environment

Challenge: Keeping up with the Digital Environment

The way we engage with and access services today is advancing with the ever-evolving digital environment we live in. Purchasing products and accessing services online, via mobile devices or through an App and communicating through social media platforms has become routine. In line with this trend, citizens increasingly expect the same variety and flexibility when accessing public services. This was emphasised in Merton Council's Annual Resident Survey 2012 highlighting the need to deliver public services in line with service users' growing preference for a choice of multiple self-service online access channels.

In parallel, a difficult financial climate required the Council to deliver efficient yet cost-effective services, especially at the point of customer contact. First time resolution to enquiries and requests coupled with efficient, self-service access to online services were set as a priority to help reduce overall service costs and the financial burden on the Council.

Solution: Upgrading Services through a Modernised Platform

With the aim of improving service access and reducing costs, the Council's customer contact strategy included hosting focus groups to understand the needs of service users who look for faster enquiry resolution and the ability to manage transactions themselves via self-service channels. To deliver the Council's objectives, General Dynamics Information Technology developed an enterprise Electronic Service Delivery Platform. Core foundations of the solution include an eService delivery platform which incorporates website redesign, contact and content management via the Microsoft Dynamics Customer Relationship Management (CRM) tool and an Electronic Document and Records Management System (EDRMS). The design of the eService delivery platform with full integration to other line of business solutions enables the Council to deliver end-to-end services which are conveniently accessed by customers, increasing first time resolution, customer satisfaction and cost efficiencies.

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Merton Council underwent a low risk transition from existing services to the new solution, benefitting from shared-best-practices and experience with other local authorities. Solution flexibility is ensured by easily configurable technology and appropriate training which allows the Council to make quick and immediate changes based on user feedback. To support continuous improvement, the solution's security model is scalable to support added requirements should the Council wish to manage sensitive data in the future.

Results: Delivering to the Future

A refreshed and user-friendly website design encourages customers to use the most effective and preferred contact channel. This, coupled with the development of a range of assisted digital services, provides access for customers with specific requirements. Customers and residents can conveniently access all services, how and when they choose, and depend less on direct engagement with the Council via traditional channels. More customer queries are resolved by providing 24/7 online access to generic services, avoiding unnecessary contact and cost to the Council.

Full integration of the CRM and EDRMS tools enables a complete view of each resident and service provider which increases efficiencies and first time enquiry resolution. This contributes to costs savings and impacts positively on user experience.

The implementation of Merton Council's new flexible solution is able to deliver current and future benefits to its customers and residents, including the following:

Customer Enquiry Resolution Improvement

- **Increased first time enquiry resolution** ensured by a holistic view of the customer
- **Proactive reports** on customer enquiry status

Cost Savings

- **Reduced cost** through appropriate self-service customer access portals
- **Improved overall cost performance** by avoiding unnecessary contact

Progression to Channel Shift

- **24/7 online access** to services
- **Intuitive, efficient and user-friendly** channels replace traditional contact methods

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