

## **GLOUCESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL PUTS CUSTOMERS' NEEDS FIRST WITH DAMOVO**

Gloucestershire County Council has created its first purpose built call centre thanks to a partnership with Damovo.

Following a recommendation from an independent consultant, the County Council worked in partnership with Damovo, which supports and maintains its Ericsson MD110 voice platform, implementing the Ericsson Solidus eCare call centre system and delivering a higher quality of service to citizens calling the Council. IP telephony has been installed in the call centre, reducing the cost of calls and giving the Council greater flexibility – for example, operators can hot desk and, in the future, might have the option of working from home.

Damovo continues to maintain a close working relationship with Gloucestershire County Council and is currently involved in plans to migrate other sites to IP in the coming months.

### **Delivering Service with a Smile**

Today's service-savvy consumers expect a high standard of customer service from the organisations they deal with. Nowhere is this need felt more acutely than in the public sector, which serves millions of citizens every day.

Gloucestershire County Council provides a wide range of services to a population of approximately 570,000 living in the county. These include schools, highways, transport, social care, fire service, trading standards and libraries. District councils in the area deal with other services, such as rubbish collection, pest control and local planning.

Spurred on by the e-Government targets laid down by central Government to improve people's access to council services, and its own ambitions to serve the public better and achieve internal efficiencies, Gloucestershire County Council sought

## ...A PURPOSE-BUILT CALL CENTRE STAFFED BY UP TO 100 CALL CENTRE OPERATORS

recommendations from an independent consultancy about ways of communicating more effectively with its citizens.

### Creating a Call Centre for the Future

The consultant's advice was to implement a professional call centre led by a call centre manager. Until now, staff located at different offices would act as call centre operators to deal with specific services. Gloucestershire County Council's aim was a purpose-built call centre environment staffed by up to 100 call centre operators, which could be contacted by one easy-to-remember phone number.

"Geographically the aim was to bring call centre groups into one area, so they could hot desk, and also give residents a consistent service at the front-end," explains Mike Ursell, Technology Officer at Gloucestershire County Council. As such, a whole floor of the Council's head office in Gloucester, has been converted into a fully functioning call centre. With the building work completed, the Council then set out to find a communications provider to equip the centre with the necessary software.

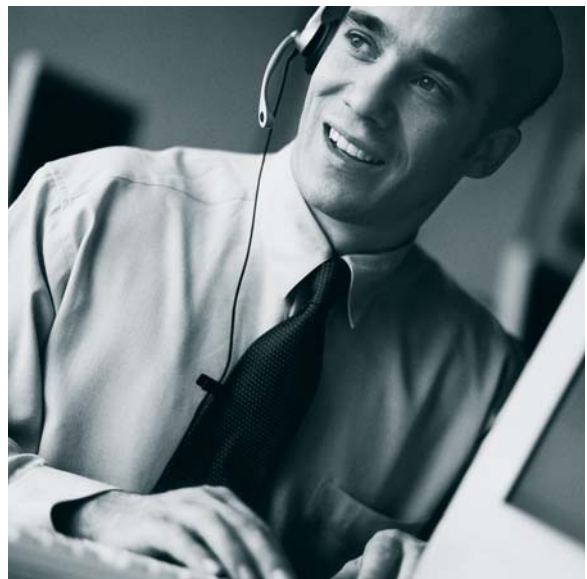
Damovo, a leading business communications provider, installed the Council's voice system, an Ericsson MD110, in 1991. Since then, it has repeatedly won the tender to provide maintenance for the voice network and "Damovo has done a pretty good job in supporting us," says Ursell.

Based on its track record, Damovo was asked to pitch for the three-year contract to install and support an Ericsson Solidus eCare call centre at the Council. It won the tender – and has since also upgraded the Council's voice platform to offer IP telephony to the call centre. "We were hoping to achieve greater flexibility and integration by introducing IP telephony," explains Ursell. "We also needed extra capacity, which the Ericsson MX-ONE provided, so it gave us IP telephony and extra voice capabilities."

The consultant who made the initial recommendations for the call centre also proposed IP telephony. However, the Council in partnership with Damovo has made some slight modifications to the original proposals. "Initially the consultant didn't want us to install any traditional telephony as back-up," recalls Ursell. "But we installed 60 TDM lines, as we realised that if the network ever went down, we would fail in our commitment to deliver services to the public."

Quality of service was also an important consideration for the Damovo solution. "Obviously this is a very important concern with IP telephony," says Ursell. "So we raised it as one of the major issues from day one and Damovo designed the architecture to meet that requirement."

**"...hoping to achieve greater flexibility and integration by introducing IP telephony...we also needed extra voice capabilities"**





## QUERIES DEALT WITH MORE EFFECTIVELY

As part of the Ericsson Solidus eCare implementation, Damovo installed softphones to enable operators in the call centre to use IP telephony. The Council also shares phone extensions in its call centre with Gloucester City Council.

Under the terms of its MD110 support contract, Damovo advises the Council on new technologies and makes recommendations accordingly. As such, the Council is preparing to embark on a trial of a OneBox Unified Messaging solution from Ericsson. "The reason we are moving to this platform is because the analogue voicemail system we have does not support our new IP sites," explains Ursell. "Also, we recognise that Unified Messaging is quite a proven technology now, which makes it more attractive to us." Phase One of the implementation will involve the migration of the current 600 mailboxes and at the same time a pilot of 20 users will trial Unified Messaging, the results of which will determine future requirements and the likely take-up of the system for Phase Two.

In addition, the Council has purchased the fax facility within Ericsson OneBox through Damovo, but will not be introducing this until 2007. Essentially, this is a centralised fax service, which converts any incoming faxes into email format and delivers it as an email message to the recipient's inbox.

### Improving Council Services and Internal Efficiencies

Gloucestershire County Council's intention is to build up support for different services within the call centre and gradually reduce the number of telephone numbers currently in use. In doing so, it hopes to improve the quality of its customer service and derive internal efficiencies through new working practices, such as hot desking (and potentially homeworking in the future), while minimising duplication across departments.



There are clear advantages to integrating the Ericsson Solidus eCare call centre platform with the Council's CRM system. "We can be more efficient," explains Ursell. "With our systems integrated, we can provide a better service to citizens that call us because we have everything to hand in one place and they will be put through to the person that can deal with their query most effectively." Sharing information also makes it easier for operators to recommend other Council services to callers; so that they receive all the services they are entitled to.

IP telephony is only used within the call centre, but convergence is a long-term goal for the Council and the subsequent cost benefits that arise from running voice and data on the same network. In an indication of its gradual migration towards IP telephony, the Council has awarded Damovo a contract to design and provide support for an IP solution in two of its city sites.

"I think our relationship with Damovo is very good," concludes Ursell. "I've got a good working relationship with my account manager and also the technical guys who do the hands-on work. We have a review meeting every two months to go through problems and our account manager always gives us updates about technologies being developed and what might work for us."

**"...a good working relationship with my account manager and the technical guys"**

**Damovo UK Ltd**  
**Broadlands Business Park**  
**Langhurstwood Road, Horsham**  
**West Sussex RH12 4QP**  
**Tel: +44 (0) 870 420 6000**  
**Fax: +44 (0) 870 420 6660**  
**Email: [talktous@damovo.com](mailto:talktous@damovo.com)**  
**[www.damovo.co.uk](http://www.damovo.co.uk)**

**D A M O V O**