

## Tidal improvements

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agent-based outbound campaigns, requiring no additional hardware or telephony, no capital upfront investment, and without the need for additional headcount.

Despite having another customer contact product in place on the debt collections side of the business, Anglian Water was impressed by the quality and affordability of the new technology, and the strength of the team at Aspect.

When a situation such as a burst water main occurs, a field technician assesses the situation, and calls in the details to the operational contact centre for analysis, in order to determine what customers will be impacted. This information can then be fed into the purpose-built Aspect PES programme that automatically notifies the relevant customers in the defined affected catchment area. This notification is delivered in the form of a pre-recorded message to customer landlines (or mobile if one is not provided), with insert sections for relevant towns, street names or areas. As technicians manage to narrow the affected area, notifications can be localised in line with this with secondary alerts sent to those customers for whom the problem is resolved. This personalisation feature was developed by Aspect and Anglian Water to specifically tailor the product to its business needs.

Blackburn surmised: "We have had an excellent experience with Aspect and the prod-



uct from initial implementation through to today. The technology is simple to use, efficient, reliable, cost effective, and the support team is always on hand to provide assistance, training, as well as make improvements or adjustments where necessary."

### The results

The positive impact of Aspect PES has far exceeded the breadth of its proactive outreach, sending more than 200,000 proactive messages per year. By notifying customers the moment an issue has – or will – occur, it has removed the necessity for customers to call Anglian Water for initial information on the matter. The reduction of inbound calls has had a huge indirect benefit, in the form of large fiscal savings that Anglian Water estimates at £100,000 annually.

"We have been delighted with the results over the past two years. Aspect PES was incredibly easy to implement, and integrate into our existing business processes," said Blackburn. "It has allowed us to consolidate multiple channels

of communication into one cost-effective, unified platform, with minimal involvement on our part. Customers do have the option to opt out of this proactive notification service, but the fact that very few do demonstrates the added value they believe it adds to their customer experience, and in turn the added value it brings to Anglian Water as a business. Several customers have already taken the time to give positive feedback, so we are delighted with the way Aspect PES has been received. Obviously from a business perspective, the fiscal benefits have been a huge bonus."

Due to the impressive results and positive customer feedback Anglian Water has received, possible further applications for the technology in other areas of the business are being considered. One such area is a roll out to the billing call centres, with the aim to remove manual effort when keeping customers informed, specifically for work streams that are unresolved at the first point of contact.

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## Anglian Water turns to the cloud for major innovation drive

Anglian Water has launched a new social media platform to generate innovative ideas from its 4,000 employees this month, as part of an open innovation drive.

Using Wazoku's Idea Spotlight SaaS, which enables organisations to create internal or external communities for ideas, innovation, feedback and insight, Anglian Water intends to eventually extend the platform – called Think Space – to include customers and supply chain partners.

Steve Kaye, Head of Innovation, Anglian Water explains: "Open innovation is a concept that we are committed to and believe our staff to be a great, untapped source of innovation. The Think Space platform provides a platform for colleagues to post challenges and ideas, post feedback and create communities across the company."

"Over the next year we are aiming for at least four key outcomes to have originated from Think Space and hope staff will embrace the new platform, with at least 10 per cent of colleagues contributing ideas. If we meet those targets then we will take Think Space to our customers too, as I am sure they will also be a rich source of ideas."

The early results from Think Space have been highly



encouraging, with 30 ideas submitted in the first month following the soft launch. The platform is open to Anglian Water employees with challenges set each month aimed at addressing a specific issue. The first centres on achieving zero waste, and has been sent to selected 'champions' within the business who are then asked to spread the word amongst colleagues.

The success of Think Space will be measured by return on investment, levels of engagement, benefits to the reputation of Anglian Water and other non-financial benefits, such as serviceability.

"There is a mass of talent within our organisation and to unlock that potential we need

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to develop a true culture of innovation across the business," continued Steve Kaye. "Idea Spotlight has everything we need to do that and will help make Anglian Water not only a workplace where people are engaged and want to stay, but also one that will attract the best talent from across the globe. People will know their input and contributions are valued and we can all grow our skills and knowledge from open innovation."

Idea Spotlight is a flexible platform that lets any organisation to engage a community to help solve a variety of complex challenges and issues. Ideas are submitted into Idea Spotlight, and people are able to discuss, develop and vote on the best ideas. A cloud-based system, Idea Spotlight is fully scalable and will allow Anglian Water to expand whenever it requires.

"Organisations are becoming increasingly receptive to the idea of open innovation and Anglian Water is blazing a trail with Think Space," said Simon Hill, CEO, Wazoku. "Crowdsourcing ideas from employees is not only a great source of innovation for a business, but is also inclusive and engaging for staff."



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