Xentrall
Shared Services
Delivering Excellence for All

Geography
UK

Industry
Local Government
Public Sector

Focus
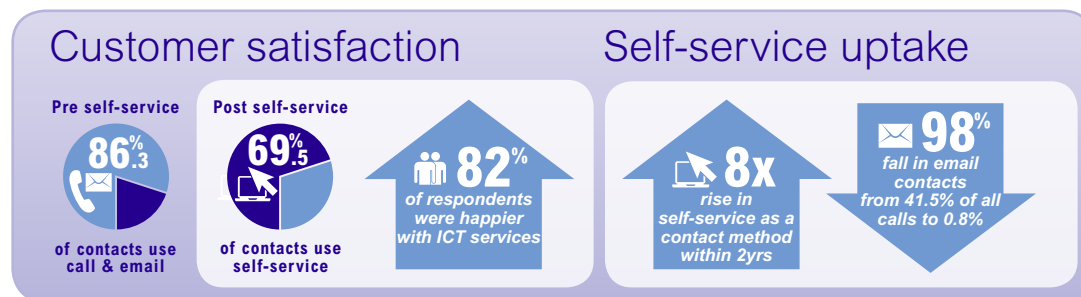*assyst* **self-service portal**

Axios assyst® Case study

Xentrall Shared Services increase customer satisfaction and shift practically all electronic requests from email to self-service within a year with the *assyst* self-service portal

Customer satisfaction

Pre self-service
86.3%
of contacts use call & email

Post self-service
69.5%
of contacts use self-service

82% of respondents were happier with ICT services

Self-service uptake

8x rise in self-service as a contact method within 2yrs

98% fall in email contacts from 41.5% of all calls to 0.8%

Xentrall Shared Services was established in May 2008 and is a successful Public-Public Partnership between Darlington and Stockton Councils. The partnership was established in order to provide efficiencies at both Councils by sharing services which include ICT, Design and Print, Transactional Finance and Human Resources. Capability and resilience improvements were also intended within this new service delivery model. Xentrall deliver services to over 5,000 business users and have 59 ICT staff.

Challenge

- Reduced ICT budgets
- Higher demand for IT services
- The need to improve efficiencies

Solution

- *assyst*NET self-service portal rolled out to all business users
- Portal icon placed on all desktops
- Links to self-service in all ICT communications to encourage uptake

Benefits

- Reduced calls and emails to the service desk
- End users can request status updates and monitor progress themselves
- Increased end user productivity
- Significant improvement in customer satisfaction

1. Analysis from the Society of Information Technology Management (SOCITM) Insight: Cost to Serve average 2011.

The Challenge

Local authority services across the UK continue to be the focus of the public spending cutbacks. The Coalition Government has demanded significant cuts in public expenditure, and this had major implications for both Stockton and Darlington Councils, who are supported by the public partnership Xentrall Shared Services. To deliver challenging change programmes, achieve the required savings and maintain their excellent status, it was paramount that both Councils maximize the use of their resources. Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is a key resource and needed to be considered as an essential enabler for transforming service provision.

Each Council now has transformation programmes in place and radical changes are being implemented to both save money with better provision of services, and to make improvements to service delivery where possible.

As budgets are squeezed ever tighter, customers of internal ICT services are becoming more demanding requiring rapid and effective resolutions to ICT issues and instant, real time access to communication and information on ICT related matters. Therefore, at the same time that ICT budgets have been significantly reduced, the demand for IT services has been rising as people turn to ICT for solutions to cut costs and improve efficiency.

The Solution: Self-Service

Self-service technologies have become ubiquitous in the last decade, with ATM cash machines, self-checkout machines in supermarkets, ticket vending machines at railway stations and telephone banking services. All have had a dramatic impact on the way service industries interact with customers.

Web transaction 32p
Phone transaction £2.90
Face-to-face transaction £7.40
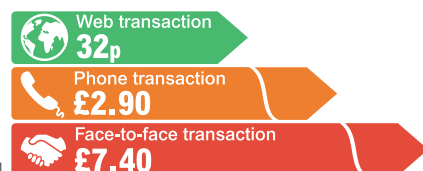
ICT log approximately 5,000 events pcm across all contact channel methods. The opportunity is to transfer from high cost service options towards self-service or web options. Based on cost analysis this could translate to major savings.

In an attempt to increase efficiency and reduce transaction costs, self-service enables customers to log incident details themselves, without the assistance of a service desk. The provision of a web-based self-service portal enables customers to access ICT services and information directly from any device connected to the network.

Axios SYSTEMS™

ITIL & ITSM Excellence 1988 2014

Xentrall Shared Services ICT has used Axios Systems' IT Service Management (ITSM) solution, *assyst*, since 2009 for all ICT Service Management. Originally, the main method of access to the ICT service was through telephone or email contact with the central service desk. Faced with these new challenges, Xentrall evaluated the self-service functionality available in the product and went live with the *assyst*NET self-service portal in June 2012. This was rolled out to more than 5,000 business users throughout the Councils. In order to encourage uptake, a portal icon was placed on all desktops, proving invaluable in terms of awareness and access. In addition, all ICT Service Desk email footers now have a link to self-service and all ICT communications advise using the portal for info, updates and logging.

Results

After a highly successful launch, Xentrall very quickly saw the benefits of the *assyst* self-service portal. Practically all electronic requests shifted from email to self-service within a year. Now, the ICT team only accepts incidents and guidance by phone. Service requests, changes, updates and projects are all done by self-service. Key Benefits include:

- Reduced calls to the Service Desk due to self-service logging: Service users are now able to find info and solve issues themselves. Business customers can log, monitor and update their own incidents and service requests. Customers can log incidents based on assets or services, or can be prompted by a set of simple, non-technical questions to ensure the right information is captured to enable the most efficient resolution route and even possibly resolve the incident without assistance from the service desk. Within 2 years of launch from June 2012 to June 2014, the use of self-service as a contact method rose from 5.2 % to 47.1%. During the same period, the amount of monthly contacts by email fell an impressive 98% (from 41.5% of all calls to just 0.8%).

- Users can request status updates and monitor progress themselves. Real-time updates are available on issues currently logged.

- Increased end user productivity due to timely resolution and communications.

- Identification of frequently used solutions and elimination of root cause, reducing repeat incidents.

- Knowledge Management: Customers can search a broad set of non-technical resolution procedures to solve issues without reliance on the ICT service desk, through access to FAQ's and guidance documentation.

- Password integration: Customer's passwords are integrated with Active Directory logon, reducing the need to log on separately or reset another password, reducing the number of calls to the service desk and maximizing productivity.

- Message Center: The site includes a real time message center to support the business customer services. Information pertaining to IT services can be targeted to relevant customer groups, for example the status of specific services, changes to the service delivered and outages due to planned maintenance.
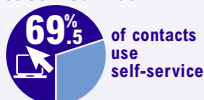
The net effect of improving the service functionality is evident in the effect on satisfaction. In order to assess any effect on customer satisfaction, good or bad, Xentrall launched an online questionnaire. The results of the survey show a significant improvement in customer satisfaction in those that responded post go-live of the ICT self-service portal.

Customer satisfaction

Pre self-service

86%.3 of contacts use call & email

Post self-service

69%.5 of contacts use self-service

91%.4 found the ICT portal easy to use

82% of respondents were happier with ICT services

> *Like many organizations, Xentrall Shared Services were under increasing pressure to cut operational IT costs whilst at the same time improving the quality of support they offered. We quickly recognized that assystNET could help us do this.*
>
> **Oliver Plumpton,**
> **Assistant Head of ICT Transitions and Operations, Xentrall Shared Services**

> *Increased customer satisfaction and a shift of practically all electronic requests from email to self-service within a year. With results like these, how could we afford not to implement self-service?*
>
> **Oliver Plumpton, Assistant Head of ICT Transitions and Operations, Xentrall Shared Services**

> *In our current work environment, with ever increasing workloads, the self-service provides for a streamlined and efficient process.*
>
> **Jackie Barnes, Technical Administration Manager, Stockton-On-Tees Borough Council**

Axios Systems plc

For over 25 years, Axios Systems has been committed to delivering innovative IT Service Management (ITSM) solutions that help customers improve not only their infrastructure operations but also to enhance service delivery across business functions including HR, Facilities Management and Finance. Axios is recognized as a world leader by leading analysts and their global client base, with a 100% focus on service management technologies.

Axios's enterprise ITSM software, *assyst*, is purpose-built to transform IT departments into profitable business-focused customer service teams. *assyst* adds tangible value to each client's organization by building on the ITIL® framework to help solve their business challenges across the organization. In 2014, *assyst* was accredited for all fifteen PinkVERIFY™ ITIL® processes, and was the first technology vendor to do so within a single solution.

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