

AZZURRI HELPS NEWCASTLE CITY COUNCIL FIND COST EFFICIENCIES.

Newcastle City Council aims to provide high quality services to the residents of Newcastle Upon Tyne. Whether they need information, assistance or advice on education, housing, careers, social care, health or many other services, the Council is there to help. They maintain over 9,000 staff across a number of locations throughout the city.

Challenge.

Following the findings of the Gershon efficiency directive and as part of their own ongoing strategy, Newcastle City Council was looking for ways to identify and realise efficiency savings throughout their organisation.

For Sean Murphy, Strategic Development Officer (Efficiency) for Newcastle City Council uncovering and delivering these savings was key:

“We were challenged with finding ways to drive cost efficiencies on public spending throughout the council. As part of a wider assessment of our overall IT and communications spend, we decided to first conduct a thorough review of our telecoms estate.”

“Azzurri didn’t just deliver a one off cost saving, they work with us to consolidate and continuously evaluate our telephony spend. We hope to continue our successful business relationship with Azzurri and to realise further cost efficiencies in the future.”

Sean Murphy, Strategic Development Officer (Efficiency), Newcastle City Council

Overview.

Name:
Newcastle City Council

Area of operations:
Public Sector

Headquarters:
Newcastle Upon Tyne

Customer since: 2008

Number of employees: 9,000

Founded: 1905

Key technology:
Telecoms audit identifying all areas of spend and available savings and to an ongoing evaluation of communications spend

Categories:
Consultancy, Call and Lines

Key benefits:

- Cost savings
- Managed services
- Online ordering and MAC’s portal

To remain competitive and to secure the best possible services, organisations need to understand their existing estate and then review all available options. However, analysing the intricacies and cost implications of a multi-branch voice system can be both complex and time consuming.

Murphy continues, “Newcastle City Council is a substantial organisation, covering every avenue of the city, so there was a significant challenge in gathering all of the billing data from across our estate, let alone analysing it. As an additional complication, our telecoms services were delivered by multiple suppliers.”

The Council decided the solution was to bring in an independent consultancy to audit its calls and lines estate, with the aim of identifying potential savings and eliminating redundant lines.

Solution.

Following a tender process, Newcastle City Council selected Azzurri Communications to audit their telecommunications estate. Azzurri’s Audit and Consultancy service resulted in them gaining access to the Council’s telephony architecture and billing.

Sean Murphy explains, “We had first encountered Azzurri when we attended their North East Centre of Excellence event and we were happy that they had the expertise we needed. They were so confident in their ability to help us find cost savings that their consultancy was charged on a finder’s fee style audit, where we would only pay them if they were able to identify and deliver savings out of our budget. It was a very attractive proposition, enabling us to engage with Azzurri on a no risk basis.”

Azzurri worked closely with the Council to gather the billing data from a variety of resources including all their locations throughout the city. This allowed Azzurri’s experts to conduct a detailed analysis of the Council’s entire telephony estate and in doing so, Azzurri was able to demonstrate how and where its telephony expertise could make a real difference to their communications spend.

Azzurri’s Audit and Consultancy service is able to advise upon maximising the efficiency of legacy telecom solutions, support the procurement of new services, and re-negotiate contracts with existing operators to improve rates.

Following the audit, Azzurri presented a report that identified a programme for improvement, which focused on disconnecting redundant lines and adopting a more cost effective pricing strategy.

Sean Murphy comments, “We were delighted with the scope of the cost savings identified and were happy to work with Azzurri to deliver a number of the measures. One of the potential cost savings saw us switch the management of our incumbent BT calls and lines estate to Azzurri. To date, Azzurri has identified and delivered us significant cost savings in the region of £100K.”

Benefits.

As a leading independent supplier and a BT wholesale partner, Azzurri was in a position to provide Newcastle City Council with significantly improved rates and call charges than they previously received from BT, creating a substantial saving on calls and line rentals.

Azzurri delivers monthly reports which give the Council the visibility to take action on any areas of telephony billing which could result in further savings. For example, they have been able to cancel all their zero billing lines and any telephony equipment which has been inactive for a certain amount of time.

Murphy observes, “Azzurri’s reporting enabled us to drill down to a finer level of detail, allowing us to ensure compliance and enforce our usage policies. For example, there was a directory enquiries number being called frequently by staff which was an unnecessary expense. Once we identified the problem, we were able to re-educate users to call either a free service or use the company intranet, rather than pay the inflated charges on the directory services.”

While the financial savings are fundamental, there have been a number of other benefits. The review has rationalised lines and streamlined services, while improving the manageability and visibility of the network resulting in ongoing efficiencies. Another example is that the Council’s telephony team now use Azzurri’s online portal used for ordering and tracking lines or reporting faults, which they have found to be a user friendly and a positive experience.

Murphy concludes, “Azzurri didn’t just deliver a one off cost saving, they work with us to consolidate and continuously evaluate our telephony spend. We hope to continue our successful business relationship with Azzurri and to realise further cost efficiencies in the future.”



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