



Swintons – Using intelligent communications to provide a local service to all customers.



“The primary goal of the new solution was to answer more calls, more efficiently. Thanks to Amillan, we have already increased revenue from insurance policy sales, reduced abandoned calls by 25 percent and improved customer service.”

Adrian Hazeldine
IT director at Swinton Group.

Swinton Insurance is the largest UK high street insurance broker. It was founded in the 1950's in Swinton, Greater Manchester and it now has over 450 branches and 3,000 employees providing a one stop insurance service for over two million customers. The combination of high street branches and online business provides Swinton with a “clicks and bricks” approach to insurance, something very rare in the financial services industry.

The Challenges

One of the key drivers at Swinton is to provide a high quality local service where clients can either walk into a branch or make a telephone enquiry to a local branch.

The first challenge this presented was to answer calls quickly and deal with enquiries efficiently. When Swinton approached Amillan, it was taking up to 60 seconds to answer calls, resulting in many lost sales calls leading to potential loss of revenue.

The second challenge was to reduce the cost of communications between the head office in Manchester, the call centre in Halifax and all the branches.

The third challenge was to find a communications partner to support the business as it continues to grow.

The Solution

Swinton deployed an IP Telephony solution at the headquarters, call centres and across over 450 branch offices. Based on an Alcatel-Lucent platform, the solution provides intelligent voice networking capability for all 3,000 users. The Alcatel-Lucent OmniPCX Enterprise platform, OmniTouch Contact Centre software and OmniVista 4760 network management platform were chosen for their superior scalability, as well as their statistical reporting features which Swinton uses to improve overall performance.





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The sophisticated routing capabilities of the solution, automatically routes each call first to the caller’s local branch, or alternatively to a cluster of up to ten other area branches. The clusters have been defined based on geography and staff numbers to ensure that clients have the best chance of speaking to someone locally, before the call is routed to the overspill call centre. As a result of this set-up, transfers to the overspill call centre have been reduced by approximately 60 percent.

Each branch advisor has been provided with a new handset which displays whether the call is coming from a local number, a promotional freephone number or a call from the cluster. This gives each advisor more intelligence on the call type, allowing them to handle the call in the most appropriate way.

The solution was implemented over a seven month period with no disruption to the overall business and with less than 30 minutes downtime at each branch.

The Benefits

Swinton has already achieved a high return on investment with a saving of £100,000 a year on internal calls, a 25 percent reduction in abandoned calls leading to an increase in revenue from insurance policy sales. These benefits have come about less than six months after the project was completed, giving a clear indication that the Amillan solution has transformed Swinton’s business processes to allow them to make dramatic improvements to business operations.

The benefits have extended beyond cost savings:

Reduced customer queue times

Calls are answered quicker by the first available agent in a cluster of branches, keeping the vision of providing local personalised service.

Increased revenue

Intelligent call routing has reduced the number of lost calls by 25% leading to an increase in insurance policy sales.

Higher output - same resource

Efficient call handling allows staff to be more productive, providing extra capacity in the business at no extra cost.

Improved internal communications

Desk to desk dialling from a central online directory eliminates the need to use the general branch number. This has reduced call costs by £100,000 a year and increased the capacity for answering client calls at branch level.

Timely management information

Performance data is used for strategic and tactical planning across many areas - branch efficiency, peak time and seasonal variations and marketing campaign effectiveness.

Simplified management

All branch communications are centrally managed and every call is captured centrally giving greater visibility of types of calls received and made. With a standard configuration for telephones and no telephone systems on site at branches, remote support provides an efficient and cost-effective solution to most problems.

The Future

A new 150 seat contact centre, unified communications and collaborative working are just some of the projects planned at Swinton. Licences for Alcatel-Lucent OmniTouch unified communications have already been purchased and the business is ready to explore the opportunities that this presents. Keeping the vision of providing high quality personalised local service remains the focus for every future project. This will keep Swinton at the forefront of it’s industry.

