



Crewe and Nantwich Borough Council discover a call centre experience with a difference

About Crewe and Nantwich Borough Council

Crewe and Nantwich Borough Council (CNBC) operate 27 wards, represented by a total of 56 Borough Councillors. The Council aims to identify and reflect the needs of all sections of the community in the provision of fair, effective and efficient services. Their policies are designed to ensure the Borough's continuing prosperity within a safe, stimulating and sustainable environment.

Challenge

CNBC needed to update their Internet solution. Their home workers and Council sites were using a combination of dial up and ISDN, which were proving ineffective in terms of speed and reliability. Main Council offices also needed to boost upload speeds, in order to connect to their firewall and manage the VPN (Virtual Private Network) tunnels for home workers.

CNBC's network also extended to over 40 Councillors based outside Council offices, each requiring e-mail access to remain in contact with their constituents. Furthermore, on-call officers required online access at home in order to monitor cameras and check weather forecasts for road gritters. To make matters worse, there were several remote Council sites with no access to the Council network.

As past experience of call centres had left the Council disappointed and frustrated, they were looking for a service provider who could offer customer service and technical support with a difference.

“Moving to ADSL is a large cost saving, whilst also increasing connection speeds for our end users. We have now expanded our Internet usage into new areas due to the reliability experienced.”

Martin Hodson, ICT Support Technician
Crewe and Nantwich Borough Council

Solution

We installed SDSL services with managed hardware in the main Council offices. All Council centres and each home worker were also provided with broadband services, which were later upgraded to ADSL Max technology to further improve speeds.

Project Overview

• Business Requirement

An efficient replacement to dial up and ISDN connections for council sites and remote workers.

• Solution

A combination of SDSL and ADSL broadband services, with managed hardware.

• Business Value

A cost effective Council network and home working system. Faster, reliable connections provided scope for innovative use of broadband technology.

• Industry Focus

Borough Council operating 27 wards represented by 56 Councillors.



Zen's technical support is second to none, with staff who are always professional and helpful.

The Benefits

Our solution enabled CNBC to create remote office environments and run an effective home worker system. As we provide static IP addresses as standard with all broadband accounts, CNBC were assured that VPN links to the Council network offered reliable, secure and consistent speeds. Sites previously unable to connect to the network now also had a reliable link, allowing the Council's leisure booking system to go online.

These improvements not only lowered costs, when compared with ISDN, but also enabled CNBC to benefit from faster, more reliable connections. Because of this, the Council began to use broadband in innovative ways, such as for CCTV in car parks. The key factor for this was our uncontended network, as consistent connection speeds ensure an efficient link for the remote access of CCTV images to the main control room.

Our broadband service was also installed for use in the main Council Chamber, to enable Web casting of Council and public meetings. A further connection was set up at a local

'Safer Communities' Police Centre, enabling staff to connect back to the Council network.

The improvements also presented the potential to use technologies such as VoIP (Voice over IP). This would enable home workers to make calls over their broadband connection, creating further cost savings. With employees now able to work from home efficiently, those returning from Maternity and Family leave also benefit, which ties in with the Council's flexible working policy.

CNBC found that we were not only technically strong but also customer focused, making the whole experience different from a normal call centre. We liaised with BT to handle converting the ISDN connections over to broadband, ensuring minimal downtime for the Council.

CNBC also found the advice and assistance of our sales consultant to be an invaluable part of the service, ensuring that they made the most out of their Internet connectivity.

Being a Zen customer, we can see why they regularly win awards for reliability and customer service. The personal touch from all involved at Zen is a big factor in our continuing use of their services.

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