



Customer Success Story:

Mid Devon District Council

Overview

Mid Devon District Council serves a community in one of the UK's most beautiful and sought-after regions, with its 75,000 inhabitants scattered in small towns and villages between Dartmoor, Exmoor and the Blackdown Hills.

Challenge

Mid Devon District Council sought to better serve citizens through improved customer service and increased efficiency. Specific challenges included:

- Getting it right the first time – enabling service staff to deal with the majority of questions and issues at the first point of contact;
- Lack of ability to manage performance and visibility of current service levels;
- Need for consistent processes to manage all customer contacts, whether by telephone, in person, or e-mail; and
- Enabling support staff access to share responsibility for all issues that apply to them, eliminating reliance on a single person.

Mid Devon recognized that these challenges could be met to some degree with a Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system, but sought a solution that would offer more flexibility than packaged CRM and applicability to other areas of Council operations. “Professionals in our departments, from Housing and Planning to Benefits and Leisure, were quite rightly concerned about the impact on service quality that too much reliance on a CRM system might bring about. What we know is too complicated for non-specialists to deal with,” stated Christina Cross, Head of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) for the Council.

Highlights

Government

Processes Enabled:

- Performance Management
- Customer Service
- Human Resources
- Corporate Complaints

Customer Benefits & Results:

- Ability to answer customer inquiries immediately and accurately
- Greater visibility into financial performance and customer service metrics
- Consistent service processes across all channels, including telephone, service center, and online
- Team-based approach to customer care results in better service, knowledge sharing, and increased sense of ownership

Solution

To address these challenges the Council invested in e-Service Desk from ICCM. The ICCM e-Service Desk is built on top of Metastorm BPM®, a business process management (BPM) suite that the Council had already purchased for a previous project and wanted to expand usage of. “We had already invested successfully in Metastorm BPM, and we recognized the value in introducing the ICCM solution to sit on top of it as an effective means of maximizing that investment,” stated Cross.

Because the e-Service Desk was built on top of the existing Metastorm BPM solution, the District ICT department was able to implement a solution with minimal disruption to both staff and customers. Metastorm's robust integration features enabled rapid connectivity between e-Service Desk and other enterprise applications. Since Metastorm BPM processes are easily adaptable, the Mid Devon e-Service Desk processes were quickly tailored to meet the very specific requirements identified by the Council. The ability to customize to this degree reassured both employees and citizens that high quality would be maintained, even as processes became faster and more automated. “By placing customer communications in a specialist area, we were effectively giving them more scope to concentrate on their jobs,” said Cross.

Results

Benefits are many and varied, but Cross is able to sum them up succinctly: “The key has been to get everyone working together across the organization, improving the quality of information they receive and enabling more effective use. Now, because we can be sure that information is reliable and can be shared, it’s a real asset that can be used to inform critical business decisions.” E-Service Desk is driving tangible performance gains in many of the service areas where it’s being used, from waste management and housing repairs to job applications and corporate complaints. The improved collaboration brought about by the ICCM/Metastorm solution helped the Council address their specific challenges:

- Service staff has greatly improved visibility into operations and is able to answer a much higher percentage of citizen questions the first time out. For example, “we can now see immediately when our Estates department last cut the grass and when it’s due to do so again,” said Cross. “That’s just the sort of simple information customers want to have, straightforwardly and with no fuss.”
- Performance management has improved, particularly in departments that have delved into their own processes seeking improvement. For example, the waste management function has embraced the solution and now uses it for complete performance management. The department can now see important information like how many collections have been missed and why and how much income is being generated from bulky waste disposal. Complex collections are easier to quote and arrange. The Council’s Officer responsible for Trade Waste can now concentrate on his core tasks, since the services center has processes in place to handle all customer contacts.
- Consistent service processes are now in place regardless of channel, enabling the Council to expand online service offerings. “Corporate complaints are already online,” said Cross. “We want to replicate that gain more widely as we progress.”
- Customer support personnel now share responsibility for tasks via a role-based approach rather than routing each task to an individual person. New tasks come in to a general queue, where they are visible to everyone and can be addressed in the order they are received. Increased staff involvement and process ownership have encouraged departments to work together, repeatable processes have been identified, and customer support cost savings have been

made.

Mid Devon County Council will continue to expand use of e-Service Desk and Metastorm BPM in the coming years, with an immediate focus on online service expansion. The Council intends to maintain its position as an eGovernment leader in the upper quartile for planning and best practices, thanks in part to Metastorm and ICCM.

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