

About energywatch

energywatch is the independent gas and electricity consumer watchdog, which was set up by the Utilities Act (2000) to be an advocate for consumers in the gas and electricity markets.

They are focused on all consumer and business consumer issues regarding the gas and electricity industry. They can help you if you need information and advice about gas and electricity at home or in your business, or if you have a complaint about an energy company. They also campaign to help you get value for money and a better standard of service from energy companies.

The Challenge

Against a backdrop of convergence of the Gas Consumer Council and Electricity Consumers Committees, two separate organisations with two legacy complaints handling systems existed. From the outset they faced challenges of defining the process of how to deliver mission objectives. They faced setting up the regional offices, recruiting and training staff, and also the regional infrastructure.

Fundamental to the workings of energywatch was the 'One Stop Services' project. As a watchdog for the gas and electric industry, the Complaints handling was a key process to define and translate into business system requirements.

energywatch spent a substantial time on administration as they accessed and stored manual case files for each complaint. The vision was for a 'paperless office' and this required not only technological change, but a cultural change where they needed to identify and action the IT and Customer Service skills gap.

The Solution

In Dec 2001 energywatch awarded a contract to Blue Flag Technologies for their Contact Management and Complaints solution –SERVICEMAIL. Their top 3 criteria were –

- Cost -Value for money**, as energywatch are DTI funded they were looking for best value for public money.
- Functionality** – energywatch were clear on requirements that were developed internally. Not every supplier could deliver against them. Key to this was the 'Ease of use' of the system.
- Delivery Confidence** – From award of contract to implementation was a period of 2 months. (Mar 2002). They needed to Develop –Test –Train –Implement in this period. As well as the new system they were implementing a new Contact Centre with IVR functionality.

They quickly piloted SERVICEMAIL at one office and rolled out across all regions fairly quickly. Ultimately they found a 40% increase in calls and complaints because of the new system, call centre and increased access hours. The system had proved itself and was coping.

It is often the case that the focus is to reduce complaints, but the more complaints received only serves to increase valuable consumer/customer feedback.

SERVICEMAIL





The Benefits

energywatch now have a 'single view' of the consumer and the complaint or request they have raised, a cradle to grave view. SERVICemail provides an at a glance view of all interactions, KPIs, assignments, updates, actions and resolution details, as well as a full audit trail. Other key features are:-

Gathering and logging of information quickly by use of 'quick log' templates and integration to post code software.

Workflow routing functionality – by selecting a category, a KPI, assignment to a team or individual, all actions needed to resolve the complaint are generated, along with necessary notifications.

Attaching all scanned and outbound correspondence is automatically attached to the contact record and instantly available to agents throughout the contact cycle. SERVICemail has full support for mail merging both through Microsoft Word and through email, allowing common document templates and paragraphs to be used as desired.

SERVICemail reporting and monitoring functionality allows business performance to be measured against KPIs. Drill-down and trends analysis further enhances operation and management reporting, in addition to a real time view on service activity. Any area of SERVICemail can be reported against allowing detailed trend analysis to feed into business improvement.

Business Benefits

To their consumers –

Saving time – In logging and obtaining relevant updates of complaints or requests.

A better deal for consumers – Ultimately this is one of the core mission objectives for energywatch. The system helps identify problem areas and problem suppliers quickly, so action can be taken.

Better information – Through the information gathered within the system and fulfilment handling, energywatch can play a role in consumer education and build a campaign focus.

Better Service – energywatch work within KPIs and any contacts with consumers are always handled effectively and courteously.

To energywatch –

Reducing Costs – Costs of manually handling complaints, e.g. previous practice of storing all written and case correspondence in filing cabinets.

Increasing efficiency – Benchmarking study showed 50% increase in calls handled, annually its about 1 million calls and 120,000 complaint cases handled.

Build relationships - with consumers, suppliers and government bodies, its not just about keeping suppliers in check but about developing best practice.

Adapt to changing business patterns and consumer behaviour – Convergence of utility suppliers (gas, electric, telephony). Consumers are more demanding and price aware.

The system is FUTURE PROOF and allows them to meet their next demands.

Blue Flag Technologies have partnered with leading public and commercial organizations. We have over 12 years implementation expertise, our solutions have helped our customers take advantage of numerous business benefits in the areas of

- Operational cost savings
- Operational revenue gains
- Business Improvement
- Improved Customer Service and Marketing.

