

Brand Case Study

Yorkshire Water

Making Mobile Data a Reality



Yorkshire Water get their Mobile Workforce connected using Apollo from Brand

The utility market has significantly changed over the last sixteen years and utility companies now have found themselves operating in a new customer focused marketplace, with the emphasis on the 'customer experience'.

One challenge facing utilities today is to make the work of their mobile workforce as productive and cost effective as possible whilst keeping customer service a priority. Mobile data communications offers companies the opportunity to achieve that aim.

Yorkshire Water, is a UK award winning utility company serving approximately 4.5 million residential customers and 130,000 business customers. Yorkshire Water provides clean water services and waste water services to the Yorkshire region. Employing over 3,000 staff and operating 112 water treatment plants, Yorkshire Water have many mobile service teams out in the field.

Back in 1991, Yorkshire Water embarked on a change programme that would result in a more effective dynamic organisation capable of meeting new business goals. One of their biggest assets - and biggest costs - was the mobile workforce of 600+ engineers. One of the key elements of the change programme was to improve the way those engineers were scheduled and communicated with, and real-time data was seen as fundamental to that goal.

So Yorkshire Water selected Brand Communications to help improve productivity of its field workforces, enhance customer support and to cut the costs of its field operations. The adoption of the Brand 'Apollo' solution suited Yorkshire's connectivity needs perfectly and ensured that their field workforce had access to job critical applications in a reliable and secure and user friendly way.



The project started in 1991, with the implementation of Brand's resilient GSM connectivity solution. Connecting over a GSM network, engineers were able to connect to the main Yorkshire Water network for all job dispatch and other business critical applications.

The biggest benefits were for the mobile engineers themselves by improving their working practices. Yorkshire Water also achieved huge cost savings and the extension of MDSI software out into the field paid big dividends in terms of efficiency gains.

Another key advantage of Apollo was network independence. As Apollo could be used on any GSM network, Yorkshire Water were able to go out to open tender, and successfully moved from Vodafone to Orange.

Yorkshire Water were able to achieve their goal of operating a single access platform for all their remote workforce and isolated workers.



As the years have past, new technologies have reached the marketplace such as GPRS and 3G. These technologies offer customers faster speeds and lower transfer costs and have been proven to become viable alternatives to GSM over the past few years.

In 2005, Yorkshire Water decided that it was now the right time to upgrade their existing GSM system to the GPRS (General Packet Radio Service). The GPRS system offered them faster speeds with a fully connected service.

Brand's Apollo 'Anywhere' GPRS solution was selected to improve the usability and security of the connection. The solution is a innovative mobile data server / client solution, making mobile data a reality for business critical applications using seamless roaming. It is also to remove the uncertainty of using a wireless network to transfer vital information by transparently integrating GSM, GPRS, 3G and WLAN with enterprise LAN environments.

The Brand solution also enable Yorkshire's mobile users the ability to maintain as efficient connection as possible, through integrated compression and suppression of

network data. So only real data is transmitted, as well as ensuring a secure connection with authentication, encryption, firewall and VPN tunnelling. The solution is also application independent, as well as device independent - Yorkshire Water were not restricted in anyway.

By selecting the Brand solution, Yorkshire Water were able to retain the GSM connectivity servers and use them as part of the secure dynamic switching across public bearer networks. For example, the mobile engineer could be using a GPRS connection out in the field but loses coverage. The Brand client automatically roams onto the switched circuit network (GSM), using the GSM server in a secure and seamless way with no interruption to the applications or reconfiguration from the user.

The clear benefits for Yorkshire Water to use the Apollo solution were to have a resilient connectivity solution ensuring access to business critical applications anytime, anywhere.



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