

# Customer Experience

→ Ashford Borough Council

## Leading the way in Customer Service at Ashford Borough Council with Mitel IP Telephony, Contact Center and Teleworker Solutions

### CUSTOMER NEEDS

- A centralized call center to handle incoming calls from the public, support remote workers and to support multi-media interactions
- A solution adaptable to future requirements
- Ability for the voice system to integrate with Customer Relationship Management software
- Satisfy 80 percent of a customer's inquiries at first point on contact

### SOLUTION COMPONENTS

- Mitel 3300 Integrated Communications Network (ICP)
- Mitel 6100 Contact Center Solutions
  - Mitel 6110 Contact Center Management
  - Mitel 6115 Interactive Contact Center
  - Mitel 6150 Multimedia Contact Center
  - Mitel 6160 Intelligent Queue
- Mitel Teleworker Solution (6010)
- Mitel IP Phones

### RESULTS

- Improved public satisfaction rates
- Call Center is dealing with over 80 percent of inquiries at first point of contact
- Improved customer service through better call management and through enabling remote agents to support the call center
- More personalized contact with callers through integration between front and back office systems and the call center
- Providing a better work life for disabled employees by enabling them to work from home in adapted and familiar surroundings
- Improved public reporting on call center performance through enhanced reporting mechanisms
- Lower infrastructure management costs
- Improved responsiveness due to improved demand forecasting



### Communications are the Foundation of Good Customer Service

Ashford Borough Council recognized that good communications are the foundation of good customer service and is at the heart of its five-year Corporate Plan. A critical measure of success is the organization's ability to "communicate openly and effectively with the public and be fully accessible through the Customer Contact Center and the Customer Call Center."

### Public Access

In December 2002, the Council opened the Walk-in Contact Center for the people of the Ashford borough. The Center has been a huge success, over 90 percent of customer inquiries are resolved without the need to refer to the back office and 92 percent of visitors are seen within 15 minutes – a significant improvement over the hour-long wait times that were common under the legacy system.

A new call center followed in September 2003, whereby a wide range of services was transferred to the call center, freeing back-office staff to concentrate on service delivery.

The new call center was made possible by a new IP-based telephony system that included the Mitel® 3300 Integrated Communications Platform (ICP), which was implemented to support the Mitel 6100 Contact Center Solutions.

The unique feature which attracted Ashford to the 6100 Contact Center Solutions is its management and reporting capabilities; for example, it has 250 report categories, it has the ability to report over any date and time horizon, and it allows users to schedule their own reports and automatically print and email reports.

Such enhanced reporting mechanisms mean that Ashford Borough Council is able to provide detailed information on the performance of the call center at a moment's notice.



it's about **YOU**

# ➔ Ashford Borough Council

## ABOUT ASHFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL

- Ashford Borough Council in Kent employs 600 staff and has an annual budget of over £50 million. Ashford is a key London commuter town. The Ashford International train station is also on the Eurostar route from London to mainland Europe.

*“We were attracted to IP Telephony because we were upgrading our communications network and needed a solution that would provide us flexibility in deployment. We needed a system that would enable us to affordably extend the opening hours of the call center. We chose the Mitel 3300 Integrated Communications Platform because it provides this flexibility, enabling call center agents to work from home and remote agents to work in other areas of the council. Moreover, we were especially taken with the Mitel 6100 Contact Center Solutions because of the ease of management and reporting it provides.”*

– Rob Neil,  
Head of ICT Services,  
Ashford Borough Council

## Flexibility of Deployment

The use of IP Telephony means that remote offices have been easily connected to the network and are now managed at a lower cost than under a legacy telephony system.

The IP infrastructure has given the Council greater flexibility to extend its opening hours. Rather than keeping a building open through the evening and weekends, IP Telephony allows call center staff to work from home, accessing the same IT and telephony systems over a broadband connection.

Similarly, the Council’s Walk-in Contact Center and the sub-office in Tenterden are connected over the network, using IP telephones. This means that during quiet periods, staff in the Tenterden office or in the Walk-in Contact Center can act as remote agents – giving the team extra capacity during peaks in call traffic.

## Third-party Compatibility

One of the key reasons for selecting a Networked Solution from Mitel is that it is capable of integrating with Aspire from Lynx CT, the CRM application used by Contact Center and Call Center staff. Such integration enables the Call Line ID to be captured, and information associated with that number is popped onto the agent’s screen. This enables the agent to provide more personalized attention to the caller.

Ashford is in the process of implementing multi-media functionality, including email and web callback. This is possible through the modular nature of the 6100 Contact Center Solutions, and has allowed Ashford to start with a simple call center and grow into a fully integrated multi-media contact center.

When evaluating the success of the project to date, the results speak for themselves. The Council has seen visitor numbers increase by a massive 150 percent, while telephone inquiries are up over 60 percent.

## Meeting a Need

“We were attracted to IP Telephony because we were upgrading our communications network and needed a solution that would provide us flexibility in deployment,” explained Rob Neil, Head of ICT Services, Ashford Borough Council. “We needed a system that would enable us to affordably extend the opening hours of the call center. We chose the Mitel 3300 Integrated Communications Platform because it provides this flexibility, enabling call center agents to work from home and remote agents to work in other areas of the council. Moreover, we were especially taken with the Mitel 6100 Contact Center Solutions because of the ease of management and reporting it provides.”

The citizens of Ashford and the rest of the Borough now receive excellent customer care from the Council. Ashford Borough Council has fulfilled its objective of being able to communicate openly and effectively with the public and is fully accessible through the Customer Contact Center and the Call Center. This has visibly resulted in improving the quality of customer service in all the Council’s dealings with its customers.

**North America**  
(613) 592 2122  
1 800 648 3579

**Europe, Middle-East  
& Africa**  
Sales: 0870 9093030  
Int: +44 (0) 1291 430 000

**Latin America**  
(613) 592 2122  
1 800 648 3579

**Asia-Pacific**  
Tel: +852 2508 9780  
Fax: +852 2508 9232

[www.mitel.com](http://www.mitel.com)



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