

## CRM assures service quality for forward-looking council

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Emma Botfield, Head of Customer Services, Transform Sandwell

### BT integrates Avaya Aura® Contact Center with Verint Impact 360 and Siebel CRM to create a virtual solution for Transform Sandwell

#### Challenge

A thriving, sustainable, optimistic and forward-looking community – that’s where Sandwell Council aims to be in 2020. Powering that journey is one of the UK’s most exciting regeneration programmes, with well over £1 billion of inward investment. It’s a significant undertaking. Nearly 300,000 citizens give Sandwell the fourth highest population density of 34 districts in the West Midlands.

Against that backdrop, Transform Sandwell is a 15-year strategic partnership between BT and Sandwell Council. It seeks to revolutionise how Sandwell does business and delivers public services – with a remit that includes ICT, HR, project management, finance, procurement, and customer service. The Transform Sandwell partnership has delivered a £45 million investment in technology, a new regional business centre, and the creation of hundreds of new jobs.

Not only having to meet the needs of Sandwell and its citizens, Transform Sandwell also needs to fulfil government demands. One example of the latter is for councils to meet citizens’ needs as far as possible the first time they call, in pursuit of cost savings and better use of resources. Meanwhile the move from comprehensive performance assessment (CPA) to comprehensive area assessment (CAA) requires councils to gather more customer feedback on their performance.

In both cases, the contact centre holds the key. Emma Botfield, Head of Customer Services at Transform Sandwell, explains: “The key is to ensure that more of people’s needs are met in a single interaction, while making better use of self-service and electronic channels. Similarly, gathering customer feedback means making the most of day-to-day interactions rather than labour-intensively creating new ones.”

So Transform Sandwell saw leading edge CRM technology as crucial in enacting all elements of the Sandwell formula.

Paul Fitzsimmons, BT Account Manager for Transform Sandwell, takes up the story: “Transform Sandwell itself had to put in place a new contact centre platform, but spotting the opportunity to share that facility with other agencies was our lightbulb moment. Pooling funds between BT and Sandwell Homes offered significant economies of scale.” Responsible for provision and maintenance of social housing, Sandwell Homes has an arm’s length relationship with Sandwell Council.

#### Solution

Transform Sandwell chose a combination of the Avaya Aura® Contact Center teamed with Verint Impact 360 workforce optimisation software, both from the BT Onsite Contact portfolio. Voice recording, workforce management, and quality management are standard features of the Impact 360

package. These were supplemented with optional Verint modules including online learning and training, activity management for multimedia contact centre environments, and customer feedback management.

“Using this approach we were able to provide a menu of functionality for the individual entities to choose from,” explains Paul Fitzsimmons. “They would also have the option to buy in to different features at a later date if that suited them better.”

The necessary underpinnings were in place in the form of a converged IP-based infrastructure, provided by BT as part of its Transform Sandwell commitment. Using Quality of Service (QoS) enablement this was capable of supporting IP telephony by prioritising time sensitive traffic. “One of the main benefits of introducing the platform was the ability to offer seamless integration on to Transform Sandwell’s existing network infrastructure,” adds Andy Saunders, Team Manager, Networks ICT, at Transform Sandwell.

BT created a single virtual contact centre environment for the 170 agents across the three organisations. Fully partitioned it offers total separation and security between the different entities. Nevertheless, the facility exists for the BT system administrator to remove those barriers in the event, for example, of a major civil emergency where a central information point might be required.

## Case study

# Transform Sandwell

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The main installation is located in the Transform Sandwell HQ in Oldbury. It effectively offers hosted services across the network to individual sites. That architecture particularly suits Sandwell Homes, which has some 20 area offices and one-stop-shops scattered around the district. BT maintains, configures, and supports the system, while individual administrators have browser-based access to manage queues, adapt agents’ skill sets, and revise call routing arrangements.

All agencies use the Verint customer feedback functionality not only as an instant barometer of customer satisfaction, but also to meet government CAA requirements. Previously customer feedback was a labour-intensive outbound process. Emma Botfield says: “What’s particularly attractive about the Verint customer satisfaction module is that it gives us the flexibility to programme in bespoke questions to take account of changing needs.”

## Value

During the transition, Transform Sandwell acted as the lead agency, but all parties came together as one team to assure the success of the project.

As overall project manager, BT had to balance competing requirements. For example, Sandwell Homes was moving to new premises on a fixed date, while the contract for the legacy system supporting revenues and benefits was close to expiry. The new system had to be integrated with an existing Siebel CRM system in Transform Sandwell. Meanwhile, to help ensure citizen’s needs are met in a single interaction, all parties were anxious to take advantage of multimedia communication and the ability to seamlessly transfer calls between themselves.

Emma Botfield recalls: “BT performed a fantastic juggling act in managing the different organisations’ varying requirements. Not a single date was missed, there was no loss of service during the changeover, and all functionality was fully operational on schedule.”

The key performance indicator (KPI) set for customer satisfaction in the Transform Sandwell contact centre is a minimum of 90 per cent. Emma Botfield notes: “Most of the time we are seeing scores of well over 95 per cent.” Together with the detailed data collected by customer feedback processes, that’s a major contributor to how Sandwell is viewed through the government’s CAA lens.

First time call resolution is a crucial measure. Against a KPI of 95 per cent, Transform Sandwell is regularly achieving a result of 97 per cent. Driving up the use of multimedia channels is another factor and customers are being encouraged to use email, text, and the Sandwell web site.

Emma Botfield concludes: “The other agencies involved are achieving similarly outstanding results. With the huge success of the virtual contact centre platform, the opportunity now is to offer our services to other agencies; for them to either outsource their work to us or to share the facilities.”

## Core services

- BT One Enterprise Avaya CS1000 IP telephony platform
- BT Onsite Contact Avaya Aura® Contact Center
- BT Onsite Contact Verint Impact 360 workforce optimisation platform including voice recording, workforce management, and quality management
- Verint optional modules including online learning and training, multimedia activity management, and customer feedback management
- Siebel CRM platform
- BT IP Connect MPLS-based network supporting IP telephony
- Professional Services for design, integration, and project management



### Offices worldwide

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