

Bristol City Council (BCC) initially introduced Self Service from Inform Communications plc (IC) in March 2013 to assist with Revenue & Benefit enquiries, including Welfare Reform. Following success within these challenging areas, BCC has since extended the use of Self Service to selected areas of Housing and Environmental services where it has provided residents with 24/7 customer service, reduced the number of enquiries hitting the contact centre and improved overall efficiency.

IC works closely with BCC to continually enhance and improve the performance of the service to ensure it delivers both good customer service and the required business benefits. An example of this is the recent addition of the sms service that allows links to relevant electronic forms and web pages to be sent directly and instantly to the customer's smartphone.

Introduction:

As a large City Council, BCC faced challenges in upholding customer service standards whilst meeting budget reductions. Prior to implementing Self Service, BCC was experiencing a strain on call centre resources and receiving high volumes of calls, where direct contact was often unnecessary and work processing times were suffering accordingly.



Objectives & Priorities:

- To meet rising customer demands and withstand the impact of Welfare Reform, BCC required fast and effective support tools that eased the pressure on already strained Council resources
- Skilled advisors needed to be released from dealing with high volumes of simple enquiries, giving them time to deal with more urgent or complex enquiries.
- Call abandonment rates were rising and it was a matter of priority to reduce them, especially during peak periods.
- Any support service needed to be robust and flexible enough to deal with high demands and the diverse requirements of its users.
- BCC required a call handling solution that was reliable, simply to use and available 24/7 - to provide support during opening hours and a comprehensive range of self-service opportunities when the contact centre closed.
- To help BCC meet budget reduction challenges, it was important that Self Service had the proven ability to deliver quantifiable savings and a rapid return on investment.



Testimonial:

"...Inform's Client Support team has an unusual mix of operational experience and technical expertise that has proved vital in successfully implementing and growing our services. Our use of the service is still evolving as it is fine-tuned to match our needs and we have built a good working relationship with the Inform team who always respond to our requirements in a timely and professional manner. By reducing the volume of calls our Contact Centre receives for some service areas by up to 30%, Self Service has proved to be a valuable tool in our channel shift strategy"

Simon Evans,
Service Development Manager



Operational & Financial Benefits:

- ✓ On average, 57,000 calls are now answered by Self Service every month.
- Self Service retains and resolves up to 30% of all incoming telephone enquiries without the need to transfer to an operator.
- ✓ Self Service has freed up considerable staff time to focus on the callers who need direct assistance and interaction.
- ✓ Self Service has provided a solid Business Case providing savings and efficiencies significantly in excess of costs.
- ✓ All changes and updates can be made quickly and efficiently without additional charges to ensure that Self Service is meeting changing customer needs and delivering optimum performance.
- ✓ In addition to the various options given by the ivr service to resolve customer enquiries, information, advice or forms can be sent directly to the customer's smartphone, speeding up their experience and working towards resolving enquiries at the first point of contact.
- ✓ IC's experienced client services team have worked closely with BCC to develop new service areas, offering advice and guidance through every step.

Demonstration: