

Voyager® 



Nottingham

City Council



Nottingham City Council - driving efficiency and channel shift with Engouse Interactive

www.voyager.net.uk

Enabling more agile, future-proofed customer service

Nottingham City Council is the unitary authority that provides public services to the 330,000 residents of the city. Its 6,500 staff are responsible for a wide range of services, from transport and education to leisure and social care. Additionally, it has wholly owned subsidiaries covering areas such as revenue and benefits and housing, via Nottingham City Homes.



Consolidating platform to deliver an omnichannel foundation

Across the public sector, local authorities are increasingly focused on meeting the changing needs of their citizens, while at the same time maximising efficiency.

Nottingham City Council's 150 seat contact centre is at the frontline of delivering services to citizens, responsible for answering over 675,000 calls every year. Along with routine enquiries they also cover diverse areas, many of which see rapid spikes in volume at peak times, such as around school admissions and appeals deadlines.

Historically the council's contact centre had two separate solutions in place, one of which was Enghouse. The decision was made to consolidate to a single platform to increase efficiency and reduce management overheads.

Simon Salmon, Head of IT at Nottingham City Council explains, "We wanted a platform that was reliable and functionally rich, enabling us to grow our services moving forward.

Efficiency is key, but as our citizens increasingly switch from face-to-face interactions to the phone and then digital, we required a solution that we could build on in the future."

After evaluating a number of suppliers and solutions in the marketplace, the council chose to extend the capabilities of the Enghouse Interactive Communications Center solution, implemented by partner Voyager Networks, to cover its entire customer contact requirements. A complete contact centre solution designed to cover all interactions and channels, Communications Center features a user-friendly interface, powerful reporting and seamless integration with a range of telephony and collaboration platforms including both Cisco and Microsoft Teams.

Rapid implementation to deliver support for critical services

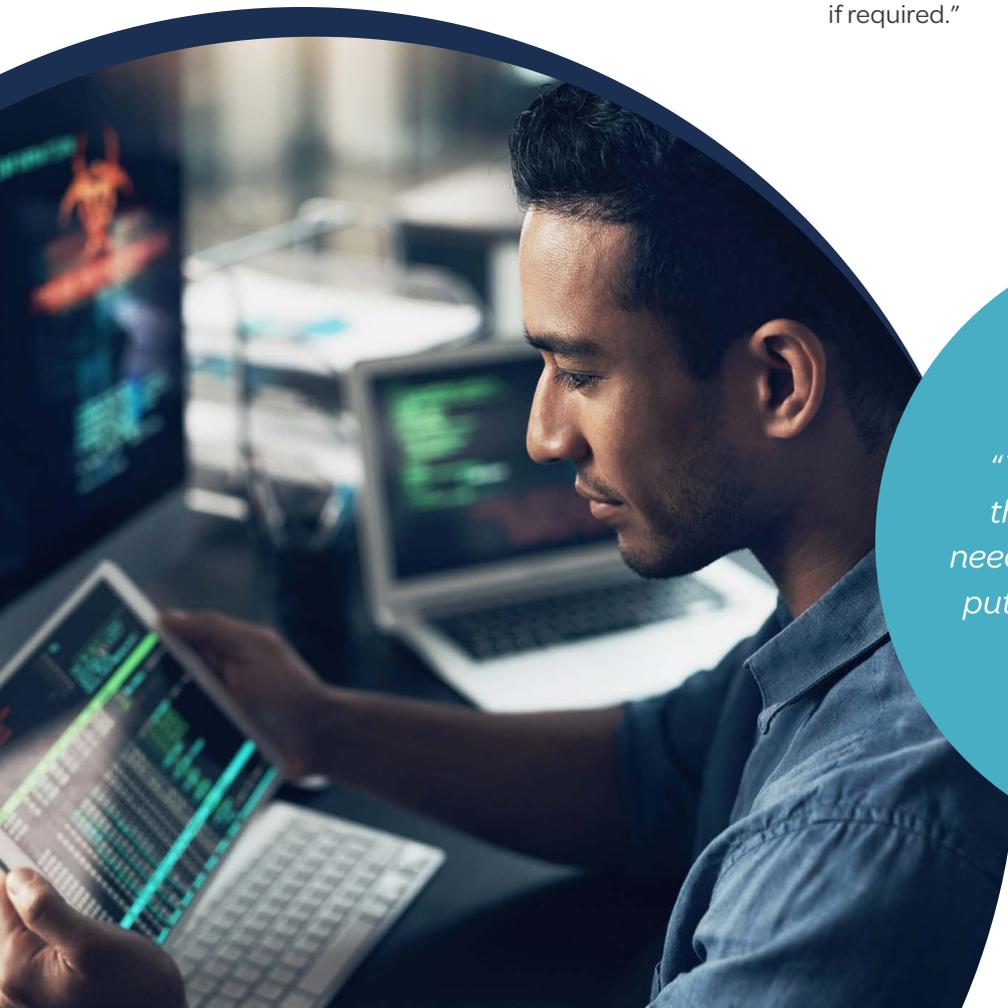
Once the competitive tender process was complete, implementation to cover the council's 28 services had to meet tight timescales, as Simon explains:

"When making our choice we knew the strengths of the Enghouse platform and appreciated its reliability and the features it offered. We had just 3-4 weeks to get everything implemented and Voyager Networks delivered the solution end to end. The migration was quick, effective and we had zero outages or issues raised by our teams. I'm full of praise for Voyager Networks and the implementation team. They took the time to understand our needs and challenges and really put in extra effort to ensure we hit our deadlines. It was a real partnership approach that added value to our implementation."

With the unified platform, all calls now come into the contact centre, either through the council's single Customer Hub number or specialist numbers related to more sensitive areas such as when contacting social care.

They are then routed to the best agent to provide support, who can then transfer them onto relevant back office staff or services.

"Given the range of services we are responsible for our call flows are much more diverse than a typical private sector organisation," adds Simon. "Many are critical services - we have to be sure that our platform is working today, tomorrow and at 3am when there is a domestic abuse referral that has to be handled and passed onto the police if required."



"They [Voyager team] took the time to understand our needs and challenges and really put in extra effort to ensure we hit our deadlines."

An efficient foundation for the future

Since the implementation was completed, Nottingham City Council is seeing key benefits around efficiency, reliability, channel shift and agility.

Moving from two platforms to a single solution has significantly reduced support costs, while increasing stability, thus reducing the time required from the IT team. As Simon explains, "The Enghouse platform has enabled us to save lots of time, energy and emotion. There's an obvious saving in operating expenses, but also in unwanted downtime which is critical when dealing with major incidents."

Beyond efficiency gains, the platform is a central part of the council's plans for channel shift. "Citizens increasingly want to deal with us over the phone and digital channels rather than through face-to-face means – something that the pandemic has only accelerated. Delivering on their needs not only increases satisfaction but also saves money, which can be reinvested in other areas."

Figures from industry body SOCITM put the cost of a face-to-face interaction in local government at £14, falling to £5 for a telephone call, and 17p when handled digitally. Building on the Enghouse platform's functionality, the Council is launching new digital services and automating relevant call flows to increase efficiency – while always ensuring that citizens can speak to an agent if required.

"Having a really capable telephony system that is feature rich and is able to offer a good range of services is really important in terms of channel shift," says Simon. "Enghouse provides a foundation for something bigger – our requirements will change over time, and we needed a partnership that could work with that change. And given Voyager's experience and skills I'm confident they'll be able to help us deliver on our strategy moving forward into the future."

As well as enabling channel shift, Enghouse's flexibility enables the council to be more agile, notably in responding to the fast-changing needs of the COVID pandemic. Agents can now seamlessly work remotely or in the office, without requiring any additional training and without impacting the customer experience.

"Given Voyager's experience and skills I'm confident they'll be able to help us deliver on our strategy moving forward into the future."



It also enables the council to deliver new initiatives to combat the pandemic in a much faster, more agile way, as Simon explains, "We've had to create new COVID initiatives, such as around Track and Trace, virtually overnight."

The platform enables us to create these capabilities and handle large call volumes to new phone numbers that literally didn't exist a few days earlier. For example, we were able to very quickly build a virtual contact centre group to call vulnerable adults to check they were OK during lockdowns."

Agility also extends to devolving management to individual departments, who receive their own reports and can easily define and amend their call flows, without needing to involve the IT team. This saves time and allows them to easily effect change without needing technical skills.

"As an organisation Nottingham City Council will continue to change and evolve. We therefore needed both the right technology and equally importantly a partnership that can work with us to deliver on our needs. Enghouse and Voyager together have been fantastic – I don't doubt that we have the right group of people to work with to deliver on our future needs."

Benefits include:

- Implementation of 150 seat contact centre within 4 weeks
- Significantly reduced support costs and dramatically reduced downtime
- Underpinned channel shift initiatives to increase efficiency and choice
- Agility to quickly launch new services and enable hybrid working
- Partnership and foundation for future innovation

Industry:

Local government

Goals:

To increase efficiency, reliability and enable channel shift

Solution:

Communications Center



Voyager® 



CALL: +(0) 870 170 9700

EMAIL: contactus@voyager.net.uk

www.voyager.net.uk