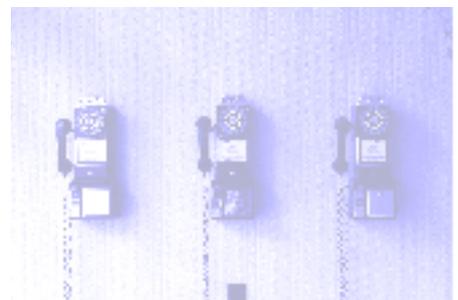




## Case study: A customer service initiative for a New Zealand government agency

(Some information has been omitted to protect our clients privacy)



# Introduction

An NZ government ministry was interested in creating a solid customer facing presence to improve on their previous customer experience. Having already studied their customer service operations and completing a discovery phase they had decided to improve their customer service operations. To do this they needed their IT capabilities supporting the operations to be in a better position.

## Challenge

When the ministry reviewed their current customer service processes and related technology they realised that they had customer channels but they were disparate. Multiple customer technology systems and data sources had been implemented over the course of time and had generated customer information silos.

This made it difficult for customer service staff and internal experts to communicate when a customer raised a query or engaged the ministry in one of their public services.

The customer base stretches from international solo travellers to large multinational corporations so the landscape of services is quite broad. The ministry implements the legislation for more than one industry area including

- ★ Fisheries
- ★ Food Safety
- ★ Biosecurity
- ★ Forestry

Each industry area inside the ministry is subject to different legislation and each set of customer information would need to be protected by the Privacy Act.

Having this variety of customers and so many information collection points meant it would be difficult to consolidate the customer information easily.

## Solution

To help improve the customer experience, the customer service staff needed access to the entire customer information landscape and the internal domain experts needed to understand the customer query. This would enable the staff to have a complete view of the customer, communicate well and provide a background to all customer interactions.

After the discovery phase a proposal was put forward to design and deliver an all agency customer service technology solution. The then CIO was in full support and we believed that this was the right decision. As the ministry followed the “Cloud first” principle a cloud based solution was chosen.

Prior to procuring a system we worked for some months inside the ministry to provide the early design. To do this we needed to build relationships and earn trust within the ministry. We did this by engaging with key stakeholders; business leaders, architects, customer service representatives and facilitating robust discussions about what the future of customer service looks like.

We didn't just focus on the solution for the customer service problem but provided ideas and solutions that would benefit the wider enterprise. Examples of these are things like

- ★ Software integration best practices
- ★ Secure Email communication
- ★ Ensuring compliance with NZISM
- ★ Master data management
- ★ Identity and access management

One of the challenges that required a lot of attention was the need to consolidate information into one cloud data store but also be able to protect customer information and comply with the Privacy Act. For us this meant that we had to get the information security model and the controls that support that right very early on.

After providing a design the work progressed through procurement to implementation. We stayed with our client and continued engaging to ensure that we could provide consistent advice to help support the success of the work.

## Benefit

The presentation of a self-service driven customer experience meant that customers could engage with the ministry at any time of day or from any location. From the interaction the customer queries are routed through to the appropriate ministry expert.

The customer resolution is provided by the internal expert and an answer provided to the customer using automated notifications and interactions guided by the customer service centre operational staff.

- ★ This meant that the customer could get a more rapid response and the internal teams communicate effectively
- ★ The customer information could be shared when appropriate and staff are well informed
- ★ The ministry made a cost saving reengineering their business processes and applying them to the cloud solution

★ Software automation provided benefits in areas like case and queue management, workflows and email communication

## Result

Consolidating the ministry's customer information and improving the processing times of customer interactions helped them to do better business with their customers; NZ citizens, visitors and businesses. It also resulted in the internal teams communicating more effectively which meant reduced resolution times for customer queries.

This became especially important during the COVID-19 incidents.

The ministry also managed to save money from business process reengineering and process automation. The money saved was invested back into the teams where the cost savings were generated.