

Case Study



A clear understanding

Company Profile

Thames Water
www.thames-water.com

Headquarters

UK

Industry

Utilities

Headset Users

800

Services

Drinking water and waste water services for 13.5 million people across London and Thames Valley

Business Challenge

Optimise service for 13.5 million customers

Plantronics Solution

SupraPlus® and SupraPlus®
Wireless Headsets

Background

Thames Water is the UK's largest water and waste-water Services Company, supplying drinking water and wastewater services for 13.5 million people across London and the Thames Valley.

The company's dedicated Customer Centre handles some 4 million in-bound calls every year, whilst handling 3.5 million accounts.

As a result of a detailed planning process and extensive research amongst Thames Water customer centre staff, the team of 800 agents, support staff, managers and directors now use either corded or wireless, monaural or binaural Plantronics SupraPlus® headsets.

Thames Water tell the story

Will Brown, who is in charge of performance and planning at this Customer Centre, explains the background to Thames Water's decision to go hands-free, and how this has benefited a team of 800 customer service staff.

Benefits

- Call clarity has helped Thames Water to increase first-time resolution of customer service issues and the new environment overall, helping to reduce customer complaints by 30 per cent
- Improved working conditions have helped to significantly reduce absenteeism, now down to 4-5 per cent
- Noise-cancelling feature ensures the customer receives good sound levels. This in turn has helped reduce call referrals and increased call closure
- The new ACD (IPCC) has helped route calls to any person
- Hands-free call environment increases comfort for agents who are on the phone all day
- Wireless users are able to 'take the customer with you', and walk round the office



“We are very impressed with both the Plantronics SupraPlus® wired and wireless headsets that we use in our contact centre. I have a wireless headset and regularly use it when I’m talking to customers. It gives me the flexibility to move around in the office, and the clarity on each call is exceptional.”

Mike Tempest, Customer Service Director, Thames Water

Updating Thames Water’s infrastructure

“Thames Water went through a major transition process for the Customer Centre. We recognised that the infrastructure had to ensure continuity in our ability to receive calls and talk to customers, even in the most severe of circumstances.”

“We left no stone unturned when choosing our headsets. We really wanted solutions that could be tailor-made for our staff and their working environment. We have some staff that have hearing disabilities. Plantronics were very supportive of this and we even took our company doctors to the Plantronics site in Wootton Bassett so they could clearly see, test and understand the compatibility of the headsets with hearing disability.”

“Now we have new ACD, phones, IT and Plantronics SupraPlus® headsets. The pre- and post-sales support we have received from Plantronics to provide the right headset solutions, per agent, has been incredibly helpful.”

“Plantronics headsets are extremely durable and hard-wearing. But we can easily get spare ear-pads, cleaning wipes and even replacement headsets if we have an accidental breakage. These may be considered little things, but they make a huge difference in our working environment.”

Highest level of call clarity

“In each shift our agents handle a variety of calls. Each agent may have to accommodate many different cultures, particularly in the London area where there are many different cultures and dialects. So it has been vital to provide them with headsets that suit their working environment and also provide the highest level of call clarity and customer service.”

“Some of our agents can take 50-60 calls on a normal day but during major events this can be as many as 150 calls in their entire shift, so this is where the comfort, durability and call clarity was essential for them to be able to work effectively. This is where we use the SupraPlus® wired headset.”

“Team Leaders and Managers are using the SupraPlus® wireless headsets, which gives them the flexibility to go to another area to find documentation or to confer with their colleagues, and still take the customer with them!”

“Overall we have nothing short of extremely positive feedback from our agents and other staff using and wearing the headsets. Everyone takes the headsets very seriously and is very passionate - firstly about looking after their headset, and secondly in terms of how it helps them in their work.”



Plantronics SupraPlus® Headset

SupraPlus® features:

Comfort and durability is important for staff, but Thames Water also recognise that the functionality of the headsets is vital, when delivering real-time customer service.

- Designed to be worn for long periods of time
- Provide a hands-free working environment
- Precise call clarity on each call
- Automatic noise-cancelling eliminates any phone line interference, sudden loud noises or background noise during calls
- Exceptional wireless range means the wearer can ‘take the call with them’ up to 100 metres from their desk or office

“Our Customer Service Director talks to customers regularly and only uses a SupraPlus® wireless headset to do this!”

Promoting customer service excellence

“If our agents are to achieve first time resolution, they have to understand a customer’s enquiry. This can be difficult with the different cultures we work with. And bear in mind that callers may be quite distressed, particularly if they are suffering from flooding in their home.”

“We want to provide a truly excellent customer support centre. SupraPlus® headsets and the support we have from Plantronics are helping us to achieve this aim.”



Plantronics - The Voice of Unified Communications™

Plantronics offers one of the industry’s most complete families of corded and wireless products for unified communications. Widely recognised for their sound quality, reliability and comfort, Plantronics’ audio solutions help companies extend the benefits of IP communications throughout the extended enterprise, fostering better business communication and efficiency regardless of where professionals are working.

To view our full range or to trial our products please call us on 01793 842 426 or visit our website www.plantronics.com

To read more on how we’ve helped others, please visit www.plantronicscasestudies.com

