

More and more organizations are turning to web-based “software as a service” to attain the most advanced systems without the capital cost. Utility-based pricing offers a return on investment from the very first use.

The challenge

Local Authorities are constantly under pressure to achieve the objectives set out in various Government strategies: Transformational Government, Efficiency reviews, National Indicators and many more. A key requirement of nearly all the strategies is to improve citizen communication services without increasing operational costs.

What’s needed is a more cost effective way of managing high volume outbound communications and inbound repetitive enquiries, thus reducing “avoidable contact”.

“Develop modern channels for citizen and business access to services, and actively manage the shift in channels towards the most efficient and effective.”

Effective communications

There are a number of alternative solutions to this problem but the most significant cost savings can be achieved by replacing traditional methods of communication e.g. postal services, with e-channel services such as SMS.

However, simple like for like replacement is only part of the answer. To maximise cost savings and improve efficiency, e-channel services need to be integrated into existing work flow systems and deployed as shared services across all departments within a Local Authority.

The use of e-channels enables more regular communication and the ability to target messages to specific communities, and can contribute to the reduction of a carbon foot-print.

Early adopters have already seen the numerous benefits of using e-channel services:

- Response rates for surveys increasing by 40%
- Reduction of inbound calls by 25%
- At least 15% reduction in cost

Integration e-channels with existing CRM and data management systems can significantly increase the effectiveness and efficiency of a range of business processes.

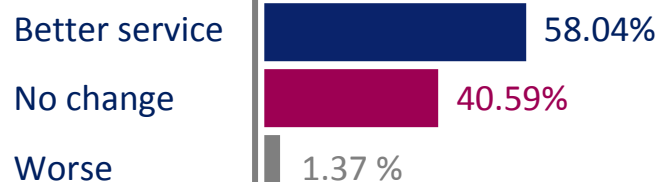
- **Customer Service** – increase information flow and reduce avoidable contact
- **Incident Management** – multi-channel information and alert delivery to enhance community safety
- **Billing and Payment** – automated payment reminders and payment collection
- **Marketing** – more effective, personalised marketing campaigns

Designed for today

Community Direct is one of a family of services developed to meet the specific needs of different organisations.

A tailored solution using a range of modular communication applications, it provides multiple communication channels to keep communities informed about events and services of interest. When necessary, it can also be used to warn them about situations, explaining clearly what people should do to protect themselves and their property.

In a recent survey by one of our Direct customers, over 99% of respondents said they valued the service as useful, and 58% said it gave them a better opinion of the organisation.



Community Direct is designed for the multi-channel world we live in today. The product of many years of industry-leading expertise and experience, it uses a combination of phone calls, text messages, emails and postings to web sites to supplement or replace newsletters, bulletin boards and other traditional ways of getting messages out to large – and often widely distributed – audiences.

Information can be broadcast to everyone in the community or targeted groups of individuals based on their geographical location, affiliation with community groups, council services received, or other details captured when they subscribe.

HTK Community Direct also includes inbound response channels, such as mobile text messaging and interactive voice response (IVR) using speech recognition, to automate routine enquiries that would otherwise distract staff from more important tasks. Incoming calls are dealt with much more quickly and handling costs are significantly reduced.

Expertise

Our expert consultants will help you integrate HTK Community Direct into your existing CRM systems and business processes, working with you to create a communications service for you to use in different situations, with clear guidance on what and what-not to do.

This expertise has been gained through unique insight and experience dealing with UK emergency planning and major incident handling, including operation of the National Police Portal and its use during the 7/7 London bombings.

Secure and reliable

HTK Community Direct runs in HTK's professionally-managed and highly-secure automated communications centre, capable of handling thousands of simultaneous telephone calls alongside high volumes of both incoming and outgoing text messages and emails.

The centre is managed in accordance with ISO27001 and is supported around the clock, 365 days a year.

All HTK staff have National Security Clearance to NPPV level.

Easy to use

HTK Community Direct is easy to use. It's offered as a fully-managed hosted service, so there's no need for expensive up-front investments in hardware or software and all the service features can be managed via a simple web based user interface. Regulations require you to get people's permission before sending warnings and other information by phone, text message or email, so the first step will be to set up a web page where they can opt-in.

Designed to integrate with your existing online services, the web page will also ask people to provide whatever details you need to correctly target your communications – their address, whether they want to receive messages by phone, text or email, and so on. Users are given a password so they can change these details as often as they wish.

Detailed records are kept throughout to help you demonstrate compliance with relevant laws, regulations and procedures. Audit trails are kept both of all system usage and activity, including every message sent or received.

Tried and tested

HTK Community Direct is a tried and tested solution, proven to be effective in a range of different market sectors.

HTK Police Direct™ – a parallel service tailored to the needs of Britain's police service – is the official National Policing solution for public warning and informing, available to all forces through the PNN3 purchasing framework.

Suffolk Constabulary uses the service to offer advice in crime reduction and keep people in touch with problems affecting their community – major accidents, vandalism, burglaries, bogus callers and so on. In a recent survey, more than 99 per cent of users rated the service useful, and 53% said it made them feel safer where they live. 58% said it had positively improved their opinion of the police.

In the configuration of a shared service working across departments, agencies and organisations, offering on-demand utilisation and best-value pricing, communication can be truly joined-up and delivered in a quality way – whatever the situation.