



AVAYA



Case Study: Helping npower Securely Serve Customers

Background

One of Britain's largest energy companies, npower Group Limited (npower) serves around 5 million residential and business accounts with electricity and gas. As part of innogy SE, a leading energy company based in Germany that operates in 10 European markets, npower is committed to leading the way with smart products and services that make life easier for customers.

To transform its operational capabilities and enable customers to engage with its contact centre via voice, email, SMS and web chat, npower wanted to initiate a new communications platform that would enhance the customer experience and enable the delivery of time-saving self-service features.

Challenges

Moving to a managed cloud solution that delivers multi-channel customer contact as part of a single integrated solution was just part of the challenge.

Determined to create a platform for the future, npower wanted to introduce advanced new features that would boost customer satisfaction. Everything from supporting new smart metering services to enabling customers to pay their bill or enter their meter reading by simply pushing the buttons on their phone.



The ground-breaking solution also had to enable npower to take customer payments over the phone securely and in compliance with the Payment Card Industry Data Security Standard (PCI DSS). Alongside protecting the customers, achieving PCI DSS compliance was a top commercial priority, as the company's acquiring bank had plans to apply a two percent uplift on all transactions if bullet-proof PCI DSS compliance was not in place.

To achieve all this, npower needed to engage with a number of expert providers who could, work in close partnership to deliver a streamlined and unified solution that met its every need.

Solution

Semafone and 4net Technologies joined forces with Avaya and BT to provide npower with an innovative PCI DSS compliant cloud-based contact centre solution. Based on Avaya's Aura contact centre technology, and delivered as a BT hosted communications solution; the end-to-end service is fully managed by 4net.

Delivering multi-channel customer contact as part of a single integrated solution, the solution's automated telephony features include Interactive Voice Response (IVR), which routes calls to the most appropriate agent. Customers also have the option to self-serve, without the need to speak to an operator, and can even book and manage their own SMART meter installation appointments.

To keep customer payment data safe and assure PCI DSS compliance for all its contact centre locations, npower took the decision to utilise BT Secure Payments, an innovative cloud telephone payment solution underpinned by Semafone technology.

The solution allows customers to input their payment card data directly into their telephone keypad. There's no requirement for callers to share their card details with contact centre agents, who can stay on the line to help with any issues that may occur.



How BT Secure Payments Works

BT Secure Payments allows customers to enter their payment card numbers directly into their telephone keypad.



Giving customers complete peace of mind that their card details remain safe, BT Secure Payments protects against fraud and data breaches by ensuring that payment card details do not enter the company's IT infrastructure. Instead, customer details are transferred directly to the payment service provider (PSP), by passing the contact centre environment entirely. It's a robust, elegant solution that both de-scopes the contact centre and cuts through the cost and complexity of PCI DSS compliance.

Ideal for both outbound and inbound calls, contact centre agents simply initiate Securemode at the point of payment; there's no need to dial other telephone numbers or to put the caller on hold. If the caller makes a mistake, the agent is always on hand to help but is never able to hear the customer's sensitive payment information.

The entire end-to-end cloud service is delivered over BT's hosted communications platform, SIP trunking and an ultrafast ethernet network which boasts business grade levels of security, reliability and resiliency.

Implementation

Working in close collaboration with 4net, Avaya and BT Wholesale, Semafone worked alongside its key partners to enable the transition of 12 UK and international call centre sites, operated by npower's parent company innogy SE, to the new cloud service.

Semafone played a pivotal role in the delivery of multiple workshops hosted by 4net to support the implementation and adoption of the new solution by npower staff. This training ensured that agents were ready and able to fully exploit the new multi-channel contact technologies and utilise BT Secure Payments, secured by Semafone, to take secure PCI DSS compliant payments over the phone.

"Achieving PCI DSS compliance is no easy task for any organisation, especially one as large and complex as npower and innogy, but it was a key operational objective and one that has paid off for them in saved payment costs. Working with partners like Semafone, we were able to create a truly innovative solution, one which helped to transform their business, reducing costs while improving the experience of their customers."

Richard Pennington - Managing Director, 4net Technologies

Partnership in Action – The Benefits

- The pay-per-use nature of the cloud solution eliminates the need for upfront capital investment and monthly service charges are aligned with customer demand/seasonal peaks
- Fast and easy to scale, npower is now able to scale its service and unleash new digital services
- New automated features significantly boost the efficiency and productivity of call centre agents
- Energy consumers can now contact npower utilising the channel of their choice, enjoy journey-driven experiences that improve customer satisfaction, loyalty and retention
- Customer payment risk has been removed, thanks to BT Secure Payments secured by Semafone, and PCI DSS compliance is assured
- npower now has the ability to offer PCI DSS compliant homeworking options to contact centre staff