



British Telecom

British Telecom Calls on Knoa to Manage Siebel CRM Applications

INDUSTRY

Communications

CLIENT

British Telecommunications plc (BT), a world-leading provider of network-centric solutions, services and products serving 170 countries.

CHALLENGE

Optimize performance of employees using one of Europe's largest Siebel systems while absorbing 8,000 new users migrating from legacy customer service platforms. Penalties will be assessed unless schedule and performance goals are met.

SOLUTION

Use Knoa's EPM™ – Experience and Performance Monitor – to monitor real end-user *experience received* and *performance achieved* by all users, in all locations, at all times.

Knoa EPM RESULTS

- Reduced annual support costs by £152,000 while enabling unchanged Support head count despite doubled user population.
- Provided annual £1,500,000 productivity gains by enabling call center agents to process orders 25% faster.
- Delivered one-time revenue gain of £1,420,000 by accelerating new users to full functionality days sooner than otherwise possible.
- Realized £1,200,000 revenue gain by cutting 10 days off the resolution of a configuration problem affecting 600 business sales associates.

British Telecom (BT) one of the world's leading providers of communications solutions and services deployed the Knoa Experience and Performance Manager (EPM) suite to optimize the performance of Siebel CRM and other enterprise applications within its global organization. This case study highlights the results BT has experienced using Knoa in its Retail Division.

Rolling into 2007, BT was facing a business challenge to dramatically scale-up the end-user population of the CRM application used in its Retail Division. After conducting a Telecoms Strategic Review, the UK Office of Communications announced that it would end substantial business and competitive constraints that had affected BT ever since telecom deregulation and BT's transformation into a public company. This would let BT take bold new initiatives with its traditional PSTN (consumer land line) business, still its biggest source of volume. But the legacy systems with which BT managed PSTN customer service would not meet its new needs, and reworking these systems to suit their new role was deemed impractical.

Mass migration with a ticking clock

BT already used a modern and mature Customer Management Platform (CMP) in another realm of its retail business: New Wave Platforms (e.g., Video on Demand, Mobile, and Convergence Products). Known as "OneView", this Siebel software-based CMP served 8,000 BT Call Center Advisors while meeting rigorous standards including:

- "Always Up/Always Fast" – consistent sub-3-second response times
- Productivity-enhancing support for all sales advisor functions
- Continuous incremental improvements on a 90-day upgrade release cycle

To exploit its new opportunities, BT decided to transfer its PSTN Call Center Advisors en masse from their ill-suited legacy systems to OneView, doubling OneView's user population and tripling concurrent session levels from 2,500 to 7,500. Despite this mass migration of new users, BT planned to keep its OneView support staff the same size, and to upgrade from Siebel 7.5 to 7.8 to prepare for the big move. Raising the stakes, the UK Office of Communications was poised to fine BT unless the company migrated all customer-facing business to OneView by June 2007, with Advisors operating at full proficiency.

In short, the upgraded, expanded system *and all of its users* had to work well early and always – hardly a given – even under less taxing scenarios.

The search for a secret weapon

To support the impending upgrade and migration, BT's Director of CRM Performance, Stuart Smith, searched for some means to monitor and optimize system performance. As Smith evaluated BT's options for performance monitoring, one choice stood out: the Knoa Experience and Performance Manager (EPM) suite. "BT evaluated other performance management applications but found these did not record individual transaction navigation or response time without significant development costs," said Smith.

By contrast, Knoa EPM captures the actual end-user experience, ecosystem and application errors, with time-synchronized workflow from all users, at all locations, at all times – without further development, without requiring system configuration or enhancement, and without imposing system overhead that could degrade the very performance the host organization aims to optimize. In these attributes and advantages, Knoa EPM stands alone. “Without requiring any configuration or extensive set-up, Knoa EPM gives us visibility that enables us to uncover and proactively resolve problems that would otherwise extend transaction times and impact the end-users,” said Smith.

But, Smith knew that system performance per se accounts for only about half of the productivity gains or ills associated with CRM applications. The other half falls to end-user proficiency or lack thereof, making it vital to know how well the users themselves are performing. Knoa goes beyond application performance to monitor, measure and manage how end-users are utilizing an application to optimize business process execution. “We had been looking to deploy a response time monitoring tool, when we evaluated Knoa EPM,” Smith explained. “Knoa monitors user experience and performance which gives us insight across the board, helping target response time issues, solve end-user problems faster, identify usage and adoption issues, and even take priority decisions on ongoing application investments.”

Insurance policy for an upgrade

As a trial of Knoa EPM, BT contracted to monitor 500 OneView users. Fortuitously, timing of the trial corresponded with BT’s Siebel 7.5 to 7.8 upgrade, giving BT an opportunity to measure both the value of Knoa EPM and the ROI of its upgrade project.

For several reasons, this upgrade promised to be complicated and costly. BT was jumping a release level, requiring OS changes from Solaris 8 to Solaris 9. Many application changes accompanied the upgrade. And because OneView could never be down for more than six hours, BT had to build a new, 40-plus server data center to stage and test Siebel 7.8.

BT’s Siebel 7.8 upgrade was a success – and thanks to Knoa EPM, BT’s IT department could prove the value of this upgrade in unprecedented detail. IT used Knoa to capture such before-and-after metrics as average response time per day, response time per view across the time period, average errors encountered per day, and a breakdown of individual error categories across the time period.



Knoa EPM captured and reported data revealing that BT’s OneView upgrade:

- Reduced average response time for key transactions by 45% to 120%
- Reduced system errors by 25%
- Reduced user errors by 34%

“This was exactly what we needed to see,” said Stuart. “Knoa EPM gave us the strongest set of statistics ever to take back to the business to demonstrate the value of the upgrade, and thus the value of IT to the business.”

Knoa’s EPM demonstrated merit in many ways throughout its BT trial. For example, one Call Center Advisor at BT’s Doncaster Call Center kept experiencing significant problems that reduced her productivity. The problem reports delivered to the Support Team were too sketchy to act upon, so Knoa EPM was deployed to this Advisor. Knoa revealed that the Advisor’s OneView response times were well within the 3-second target, and system error rates were below average for her peer group. The Advisor’s user error rate, however, was three times that of her peer group. Workflow analysis showed that the Advisor was using the wrong business process to validate a customer – the root cause of the reported “application problem.” Simple training quickly brought the Advisor’s productivity up to snuff without the costly on-site support site visits that would have been inevitable without Knoa EPM to reveal the root cause.

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High power with low overhead

BT was also impressed by how readily Knoa's EPM rolled up its virtual sleeves and got down to work. Knoa's EPM architecture offers automated application discovery capabilities. Without requiring organizations to design a data collection strategy, define transactions to the system, or train the system to recognize transactions, EPM automatically discovers what is really happening throughout the global application landscape. It not only recognizes transactions; it also discovers which transactions are being executed, how often, by how many users, in which locations.

The EPM organizes end-user performance data as powerfully as it gathers it. For instance, the opening screen on BT's EPM "dashboard" console summarizes overall performance trends, offers shortcuts to frequently-accessed reports, and hierarchically lists functional modules according to the number of errors experienced, with the most problem-prone modules on top. These list-toppers correspond to the warning lights on the dashboard of your car. In both cases, the message is: *don't ignore this and just keep cruising.*

Other BT EPM console screens present Workflow data, capturing key user interactions across the board, isolating run-time errors, and associating them with the users who experience them and the circumstances that generate them. As the Doncaster example above illustrates, this is especially helpful when users cannot accurately describe performance issues and their context.

In its trial, the Knoa EPM met or exceeded every BT goal and requirement, making the decision to purchase the additional end-user licenses easy – and, as it has turned out, highly rewarding.

Transforming brilliance into standard operating procedure

EPM not only spotlights substandard user performance; it also brings brilliant performance to light so it can become the new norm. For BT, Knoa EPM revealed that the Advisors in one particular Call Center consistently outperformed all peers. Knoa's utilization statistics and workflow information revealed that these Advisors had invented a more effective and efficient way of using certain aspects of the CRM software.

By implementing the new, user-invented process as Standard Operating Procedure at all Call Centers, BT's improved the productivity of 300 hundred call Center Advisors by 25%. This is equivalent to gaining 75 additional, full-time Call Center Advisors. BT values its annual recurring productivity gain from this single Knoa EPM-enabled change at £1,500,000. In addition, BT estimates a one-time gain of £1,332,000 in realized revenue. All of this is in addition to the intangible, but significant improvement to customer-experience from the improved process.

Driving revenues and costs in opposite directions

Knoa EPM has helped BT contain or avoid potential costs while enhancing revenues. For instance, EPM not only helped BT avoid non-compliance fines by achieving its OneView migration within the Office of Communication's window of six months, it enabled BT to telescope this migration into *three* months by making the needs for and affects of targeted training and support actions so abundantly clear. By BT's conservative estimate, the value of this accelerated migration was at least £1,480,000, based on the daily revenue impact of over 2,000 customer-facing sales associates, each of whom achieved full productivity two days sooner than otherwise possible.

And Knoa EPM has not only helped BT bring 8,000 new users onto OneView without adding support staff; it's actually helping BT lower its overall support costs in the bargain. Approximately 40 reported OneView performance problems are escalated to the second-level IT Support Team each month. Using Knoa EPM metrics, the Team is able to determine that roughly one-fourth of these reported problems are not valid. This alone saves some 80 hours per month.

For the remaining three out of four problems that require intervention, the IT Team believes that Knoa's metrics and workflow capture accelerate their problem resolution process by four hours per incident.

Thanks to detailed visibility into the conditions that each monitored end-user experiences and the actions they take (and fail to take), BT has been able to reduce its onsite troubleshooting visits by about 30 visits per year.

These process efficiencies amount to a total recurring annual productivity savings of £152,000.

Benefits across the board

Knoa EPM is delivering benefits to BT across the entire IT and Business spectrum surrounding its OneView CPM. Here's a quick overview:

CIO gains

- Comprehensive metrics to support better reporting to the business on SLAs, application usage and performance
- Improved Requirements Analysis and Systems Design through increased understanding of usage patterns and problems
- Global insight for intelligent resource deployment
- Reduced Support cost for key enterprise applications
- Improved, more cost-effective testing, better aligned w/real-world use

Business Owner gains

- Ability to pinpoint and analyze user adoption issues that block bus. goals
- Ability to proactively address problems that reduce end-user effectiveness
- Minimized business disruption due to application and end-user issues
- Minimized productivity loss because end-users spend less time talking with help desk, while problems are more swiftly resolved
- Ability to correlate business outcomes with efficient, effective app. use
- Reduced support costs

Application Performance Team gains

- 100% visibility into actual application performance
- Ability to determine impact of user actions on transaction performance
- Ability to prioritize efforts and allocate resources for highest bus. impact
- Ability to finely correlate infrastructure performance with local user impact

End-user Support gains

- Faster problem resolution with visibility into Advisor usage patterns and full context for reported faults
- Reduced time spent with each user
- Ability to support more users and/or applications with given staff
- Ability to proactively resolve problems before business is impacted
- The elimination of costly, time-consuming onsite visits
- The elimination of problem replication and non-reproducible issues



Training gains

- Precise knowledge of user needs for additional training and support
- Time savings in obtaining accurate user performance data
- Ability to better allocate training resources
- Ability to calculate and demonstrate Training ROI

BT gains all these benefits at a licensing cost that is a small percentage of its quantifiable annual returns. "When we look at Knoa's costs against its benefits, and factor in the qualitative improvements that Knoa has so widely brought us, it's been a simply brilliant decision for BT," Stuart Smith concludes.