Business-As-Usual support

Class-leading engineering resources with innovative toolsets deliver Smarter Support results

Executive summary

ExcelRedstone provides datacentre to desktop business-as-usual (BAU) support services to one of the world's largest banking and investment companies.

Our engineers, systems and toolsets support five UK datacentres and deliver frontline support to thousands of employees across 10 major UK office locations and several hundred retail branches nationwide.

Our proactive *Smarter Support* BAU philosophy has turned a support service into a genuine partnership; so that as well as helping the client achieve the required performance levels from its infrastructure investments, we have consistently innovated to introduce new efficiencies, improved service quality and new service functionality.

Our emphasis throughout this enduring relationship has been on service excellence, integration and innovation:

- embedding the very best engineering resources alongside the client's in-house teams;
- aligning our processes to client systems; and
- creating innovative toolsets and solutions designed to improve service quality, drive down the cost of support and introduce new services.

As a result of these commitments, ExcelRedstone is recognised as one of only 50 global suppliers across all categories to be awarded Approved Supplier status by the client – not only achieving best-in-category scores for quality and cost but also significantly above average in all other categories including risk, customer and service delivery.

At a glance

» Optimised BAU support across the full physical infrastructure, including desktop, datacentre, moves and asset management

» Leveraging specialist toolsets including imVision (largest global deployment) and ExcelRedstone's proprietary MIS and occupancy management software

» Awarded Approved Supplier status

» Supporting 20,000 end-users across 10 major office locations in the UK; >3,300 incidents and >21,500 scheduled tasks in 2013

» Supporting five UK datacentres; 23,000 tasks and nearly 900 reported infrastructure incidents in 2013

» Up to 15,000 desktop moves per annum

» More than 4,000 network devices migrated over two years

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The client

ExcelRedstone has provided BAU support to this client for more than 20 years.

Originally requiring support for simple network and voice infrastructures, the bank has drawn on an increasing portfolio of services across a range of new facilities and technologies.

Throughout the relationship, the challenge for the ExcelRedstone team has been to adapt to the evolving needs of the bank, innovating to reduce costs (or deliver more for the same) while continuing to deliver BAU with the same excellent level of service and reliability.

Today our engineers, systems and toolsets provide comprehensive front line support for five UK datacentres and deliver frontline support more than 20,000 employees across 10 major UK office locations and hundreds of retail outlets nationwide.

The solution | smart engineers

Fundamental to the delivery of our BAU services has always been our focus on finding and retaining the highest calibre of people – IT infrastructure professionals who combine the highest level of skill and experience with a commitment to the values and attitudes which have come to define the 'ExcelRedstone experience'.

The successful delivery of continuous improvement, risk control and quality assurance through our integrated service delivery model depends on every 'link' in the ExcelRedstone chain operating to the same high standard. This principle underpins our development programme, with more than 40 hours of training and development every year for every member of our engineering and project teams.

In addition, each engineer possesses an array of qualities to ensure they can fulfil the full range of support requirements: all are fully qualified, exhibit great team player qualities and importantly, given they are often the only network engineers at a particular site, are great communicators.

The result is a flexible, knowledgeable and skilled resource pool that is ideally suited to meet the high demands of our clients.

The solution | smart toolsets

Excel's *Smarter Support* approach revolves around the deployment of these market-leading engineering resources alongside advanced infrastructure-specific toolsets – whether aligning ourselves to the client's existing systems, introducing leading-edge infrastructure technology (such as imVision), or deploying our own proprietary tools for datacentre and desktop management (Xact™).

The toolsets work together to increase engineer productivity but also to provide real-time information that helps the client manage their environments in better and more cost effective ways.

Client systems: our engineering teams interact with, and are fully conversant with ITSM systems including: Remedy; HP Service Manager; Cisco Works; Infoblox IPAM; Assetpoint; and Sharepoint.

imVision: ExcelRedstone is a global leader not only in the deployment and management of imVision (intelligent infrastructure management – IIM), but also in the leveraging of imVision's capabilities with bespoke solutions and efficiencies which deliver benefits across a range of business streams, such as:

- Reduced IT support costs through our proprietary APIs that work with imVision

- Improved asset management through the identification of devices on the network and their location

- Network optimisation through real-time switch capacity and port capacity management (including redundant circuit recovery)

- Optimised moves, adds and changes processes

- Improved security, with rapid identification of intrusion or suspicious activity as well as the rapid location and isolation of suspicious devices.

This infrastructure represents the largest global deployment of imVision technology, with more than 750,000 ports under management.

Occupancy Management toolset: Excel's proprietary toolset for space management is a seamless and unobtrusive software solution which accurately monitors and highlights real-time usage of space, delivering an unequalled clarity of management information in support of ever-more sophisticated real estate strategies.

By deploying this toolset across the estate, property / facility managers have been able to fully understand the usage of their buildings, in turn driving optimisation strategies to either contract existing real estate footprint or make informed decisions with regards to forecasted headcount growth.

A comprehensive moves planning module optimises moves planning and implementation across the business, providing easy-to-use web based graphical "drag'n'drop" style moves planning, automated moves documentation, support for both large phased moves and multi-step moves, and more.

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Finally, this toolset provides for an improved user experience across the organisation, from the rapid deployment of services to new starters through to the potential expansion into intelligent desk booking and people finding solutions.

Xact™: ExcelRedstone's powerful and highly customisable MIS tool is deployed to support the client teams and our own engineers across the full range of installation, support and improvement initiatives.

By aggregating information from a wide range of systems into a customisable and easy-to-use dashboard, Xact provides the real-time management information needed to effectively manage this complex IT infrastructure environments. Key features include

- Real-time project delivery status across all projects, allowing project managers to manage multiple programmes simultaneously and give customers 24 x 7 access to project delivery status

- In-field engineer reports in real time, with tickets updated as tasks are completed

- Customisable and easy-to-use dashboard

- In-depth statistics around support service requests and faults – allowing users to carry out root cause analysis

- Online procurement module to reduce procurement time and simplify the approval processes

- Detailed view of ExcelRedstone's on-site resources, allowing easy monitoring and management of more efficient resourcing levels.

BAU Implementation

A flexible BAU team leverages this comprehensive toolset to deliver optimised and efficient support across the infrastructure.

Support engineers are specialists across all relevant disciplines relating to structured cabling, network topology, BAU management, asset management and moves, adds and changes (MAC). Critically, their cross-training ensures they can deliver all required activities around the physical infrastructure / connectivity layer within the business.

Together they deliver 07:00 to 19:00 support plus out-of-hours response across:

The desktop environment
We support approximately 20,000 end-users across 10 major office locations in the UK. In 2013, the team responded to more than 3,300 incidents and completed more than 21,500 scheduled tasks.

Activities include the install, break/fix, connectivity and testing of technologies including: network infrastructure; VOIP; Meridian telephony; market data services; dealerboard, Speakerbus & headsets; faxes & printers; ADSL and BRI provisioning.

In addition, we provide Microsoft Office support, manage hardware rollouts to include Blackberry and desktops, and implement around 15 daily BAU moves and changes (approx. 2,000 per year).

The datacentre
Trained and supported to work equally well alongside their client team colleagues or as the only on-site infrastructure network, our engineers hold responsibilities including: patching; install and break/fix; racking and stacking; server, switch and router installation; and third-party chaperoning. ExcelRedstone's BAU support is fully integrated with the Remedy ITSM system.

During 2013, our team implemented in excess of 23,000 tasks and responded to nearly 900 reported infrastructure incidents.

Desktop moves
In addition to smaller, less complex 'BAU moves', ExcelRedstone provides supports for up to 15,000 desktop moves in a typical year. Moves can vary between a single person move to whole department relocations, can take place in front-office (trading) or 'back-office' (support) environments – with a trader's desk, for example, including up to five PCs, eight screens and dealer voice telephony.

The majority of moves take place at weekends, although smaller moves can take place during the week out of business hours. Our bespoke moves management toolset efficiently manages the entire process, allowing the bank to make changes to the requirements right up to the Friday afternoon before the move.

Network infrastructure migration
We have supported this client across a two-year network infrastructure migration programme that has seen approximately 4,000 network infrastructure devices migrated.

Throughout the programme, ExcelRedstone has provided comprehensive patching, connectivity, logistics, rack & stack, migration and testing, as well as project management support. While the majority of the moves were to new purpose-built datacentres and sites, many were between existing facilities and buildings.

The Intelligent Infrastructure Management (IIM) capabilities of imVision were key to the smooth delivery of this demanding migrating schedule, with our specialist engineers using it to manage all patching and connectivity requirements.

Asset management
We further help this client achieve an optimised physical infrastructure with an end-to-end asset lifecycle management service designed to improve asset control, efficiency and performance across the IT infrastructure.

Responsibilities include full asset registry management, the deployment/collection of equipment and recycling / end-of-life services as required.

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Results: The Excel Advantage

By implementing the *Smarter Support* principles of smart engineering resources working with smart toolsets, ExcelRedstone's BAU service has delivered consistently high results across service quality, response times, cost control and service innovation, with highlights including:

- **Desktop response:** throughout the growth and development of the BAU service, ExcelRedstone has consistently been able to reduce call and request response times. Average calls in queue have been reduced by 75% in just 12 months (122 to 20).

- **Workload management:** our BAU team has been able to achieve this reduction in response times despite needing to accommodate an ever increasing workload without adding additional resources; a combination of training, management processes and new toolsets has been key to this.

- **Service development** our close relationship with the client has meant we have been able to help them further monetise their investment in leading edge infrastructure with a range of new services around occupancy management, capacity planning, energy management and the user experience – together generating annualised savings running to many millions of pounds.

As a result of these outcomes, ExcelRedstone is one of only 50 global suppliers with Approved Supplier status from this client.

Through an assessment process benchmarking suppliers across seven key metrics, ExcelRedstone posted best-in-category scores for quality and cost, as well as above average scores in all other categories including risk, customer and service delivery.

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