

protocolone
making contact centres work for you



NSPCC

NSPCC 
Cruelty to children must stop. FULL STOP.

AT A GLANCE



NSPCC
www.nspcc.org.uk/

Industry:
Charity

Number of Contact
Centres: **19**

Number of Agents:
1,400

Number of Interactions:
Approximately 1.5 million annually

NSPCC chooses Genesys and ProtoCall One to break down barriers to multi-channel contact

The NSPCC (National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children), the UK's leading charity specialising in child protection and cruelty prevention, has been supporting vulnerable children and their families since it was founded in 1884.

The NSPCC has helped more than 10 million children in the UK through various projects and services, including free, confidential 24-hour helplines that connect counsellors to those in need of advice and support — ChildLine for children and young people in distress or danger, and the NSPCC Child Protection Helpline for adults who are worried about a child or suspect a child to be in danger. In 2008/09 ChildLine's volunteer counsellors answered almost 700,000 calls from children in need of support, whilst the NSPCC Child Protection Helpline spoke to nearly 30,000 adults worried about a child.

Pledging to answer every call with care

Getting each and every call answered is the overriding priority for the charity, as connecting to a counsellor can be vital to a child's safety and well being. The helplines have over 1,400 part-time volunteers across the UK, whose shift patterns vary greatly due to the variance in time that they can contribute. Despite the best efforts of the volunteers to cover all shifts, the NSPCC still found it difficult to fulfil its pledge to answer every single call. In 2008, ChildLine received around 2.3 million calls, but could only answer around 64 per cent of them.

Rosie Slater, Senior Business Partner at NSPCC, explains: "Our helpline system was greatly in need of modernisation. The challenge was that our requirements are highly unique. As the range of access methods was limited to phone contact, we needed a system that would not only increase our call handling capacity, but also expand our reach to the public. What's more, we needed to improve internal processes, particularly around job scheduling, and remain considerate of our sensitive environment. Every caller must be given detailed personal attention, as well as be treated with full confidentiality and anonymity. All of these requirements meant that we had to narrow down which systems we can actually put in place."

Increasing capacity and communication channels

The creation of a unified national service with multiple touchpoints across a range of channels would help a wider range of children to get in touch with a counsellor, and get the help they need.

Therefore, the NSPCC started the 'Helplines Development Programme' to modernise the existing phone system, implement new methods of contact for users, and allow for the significant expansion in staff and volunteers.

"The key driver behind the Helplines Development Programme was to allow all potential users of the services to communicate via their preferred channel of contact," said Rosie Slater. "Many children today are as comfortable using the Web, e-mail, SMS, or instant messaging as they are picking up the phone — so these channels became a key focus."

Creating a cross-channel environment

The NSPCC worked closely with ProtoCall One, Ciber, CharITyshare and Genesys to create and implement the bespoke technology required to fulfil its objectives. The combination of the Genesys Customer Interaction Management (CIM) platform and ProtoCall One's experience proved to be ideal, and the new system launched in September 2009.

"The Genesys CIM platform provided the reach and the flexibility we needed for our expansive new system and ProtoCall One helped us fine-tune the technology to best fit our unique requirements," commented Phil Reed, Chief Information Officer, NSPCC. "The Genesys system enables us to route all calls, e-mails, and Web interactions on one system to ensure consistency for all users of the service. With two new data centres and an improved infrastructure, we can fully monitor and optimise the service across all channels, make the most of our resources, and grow at a speed that suits us. Genesys also provides the necessary cross-channel integration that enables any customer conversation to move from one medium to another. This helps us to escalate high priority cases or to adapt and accommodate potential changes in the child's environment, mid-interaction."

ProtoCall One developed a bespoke solution that ensured secure confidentiality on-the-ground, but also enabled the details of callers and online interactions to be available at the very top level in extreme cases. This was vital, because NSPCC cannot use CLI (Caller Line Identification) due to the importance of anonymity for the caller. NSPCC's responsibility to each caller must be confidentiality, but they also have a duty of care and must be able to contact emergency services in critical cases.

Widening their reach

The NSPCC invested heavily in new online tools to make its Website a more user friendly place for children and young people — including an integrated chat function that enables Website users to connect directly to a counsellor. And because certain users find it easier to express themselves in writing or pictures rather than to talk to a counsellor on the phone, it also added interactive white boards, which allow users to write or draw pictures on the virtual board — which the NSPCC has found helps many children express themselves more easily, especially where serious issues are concerned.

The final development was to add Personal Inboxes (PIBS), which allow users to have their own personal area on the Website. Users can anonymously send e-mails, pose questions to the online agony aunt/uncle 'Ask Sam,' and also request one-to-one sessions with counsellors — all without having to use their every-day home e-mails accounts.

Rosie Slater explained: "Adding these new functions has enabled more children, young people, and adults to feel comfortable talking to us. For the period of May 2009 to March 2010, we have had 40,500 one-to-one chats between children and counsellors and have answered over 1,400 PIB messages. We have also seen an increase in the number of boys contacting ChildLine."

Results

- > 40,500 one to one chats between children and counsellors have occurred, and 1,400 Personal In-box (PIB) messages have been answered (*for the period May 2009 - March 2010*)
- > The overall number of calls answered has increased to 75 per cent — up from 51 per cent in 2006/2007
- > New technology platform supports multiple communication channels, and enables children, young people, and adults to communicate via Internet, e-mail, SMS, and pictures

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Phil Reed,
Chief Information Officer,
NSPCC

Keeping costs down and service levels high

“We know how unique we are, but in other areas we are similar to any other contact centre: we needed to optimise resources, reduce costs, and continually increase service levels — and we’re doing just that,” said Phil Reed. “Genesys has helped our volunteers to manage larger volumes of interactions and keep service levels high. The number of calls answered has increased to 75 per cent — up from 51 per cent in 2006/2007.”

Rosie Slater continued: “ProtoCall One worked with Ciber to build a case notes system that integrates with Genesys and automates the case management process. Volunteers now have all case information at hand when they’re talking to someone in need, which enables the counsellors to be more effective in identifying how they can progress the case and deliver the necessary help.”

The new system also enables the NSPCC to better manage its large volunteer team and its variable shift pattern for the adult helpline. The NSPCC now has complete visibility across different shifts and can more efficiently plan for volunteer coverage at all times — on both phonelines and online systems.

The NSPCC must also administer extensive and intense training for its counsellors, whilst still ensuring that the volunteers can get on the phones and online as soon as possible. “The techniques involved in handling the serious and life-threatening issues that we face on a daily basis must be learned and learned in detail,” explained Rosie Slater. “Our volunteers must be able to deal with the children, young people, and adults who call in, so having easy-to-use technology is a big plus. The centralised system enables our focus to be on training the volunteers to provide the required services, and not on the technical elements of delivering it.”

Satisfying results

“The Helplines Development Programme has succeeded so far — we have modernised our contact centre, increased efficiency, and widened our reach,” said Rosie Slater. “We have seen a huge increase in the amount of Web contact since completing the project at the end of last year, and we expect that growth to continue. We are currently working with Genesys and ProtoCall One to add an SMS channel so that users can contact us via text message in the near future.

“In addition, we now have high quality performance management data and interactive job scheduling across the ChildLine contact centres. This helps us ensure that our service is adequately staffed at all times, so that we can continue to provide assistance to thousands of children, young people, and adults around the UK,” concluded Rosie Slater.

Solutions

- > Genesys CIM Platform
- > Genesys Routing

Genesys Worldwide

Genesys is the leading provider of software to manage customer interactions over the phone, Web, and mobile devices. The Genesys software suite manages customer conversations across multiple channels and resources — self-service, assisted-service, and proactive outreach — to fulfill customer requests, optimize customer care goals, and efficiently use resources. Genesys software directs more than 100 million customer interactions every day for 4,000 companies and government agencies in 80 countries. These companies and agencies can leverage their entire organization, from the contact center to the back office, to dynamically engage with their customers. As a result, Genesys stops customer frustration, drives efficiency, and accelerates business innovation. For more information visit us on the Web:

www.genesyslab.com, or call **+1 888 GENESYS**
or **1-650-466-1100**.

Americas

Corporate Headquarters

Genesys
2001 Junipero Serra Blvd.
Daly City, CA 94014
USA

Tel: +1 650 466 1100
Fax: +1 650 466 1260
E-mail: info@genesyslab.com
www.genesyslab.com

Europe, Middle East, Africa

EMEA Headquarters

Genesys House
100 Frimley Business Park
Frimley
Camberley
Surrey GU16 7SG
United Kingdom

Tel: +44 1276 45 7000
Fax: +44 1276 45 7001

Asia Pacific

APAC Headquarters

Genesys Laboratories
Australasia Pty Ltd
Level 17, 124 Walker Street
North Sydney NSW 2060
Australia

Tel: +61 2 9463 8500

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