

Opal Telecom

www.opaltelecom.co.uk



At A Glance:

- **Company:** Opal Telecom
- **Location:** Manchester, UK
- **Industry:**
Telecommunication/Wireless;
Distribution/Wholesale
- **Challenges:**
 - Paper-based processes inhibiting growth
 - Very limited sales pipeline visibility
 - Order creation errors negatively affecting standards of service
- **Other software considered:**
SalesLogix, Remedy
- **Results with NetSuite:**
 - Improved service levels through proactive data-entry error checking
 - Restored organisational flexibility, clearing the way for continued growth
 - Created a clear pipeline for account executives and sales managers

“*In previous lives, I've worked with clients implementing Siebel and I've worked directly with Clarify, and I was very nervous of these large-scale implementations ending up in significant wastes of money that ultimately deliver little benefit to the business. But it became clear quite quickly that NetSuite would allow us to bring in better workflow...and that it would be quickly deployable.*”

— Phil Haslam, Customer Operations Director
Opal Telecom

The Results

Opal Telecom turned to NetSuite to bring workflow automation, process consistency, and greatly improved sales visibility to the company. Opal had been wary of being trapped by a large-scale, high-cost enterprise software implementation, but found NetSuite's hosted model to fit the bill perfectly.

“In previous lives, I've worked with Siebel and Clarify, and I'm very nervous of these large-scale implementations ending up in money pits. But it became clear quite quickly that NetSuite would allow us to bring in better workflow, and that despite there being a number of areas to our business and us being a big animal, that it would be quickly deployable,” says Phil Haslam, customer operations director for Opal Telecom.

Replacing disparate spreadsheets with a single view of prospecting activity has greatly improved Opal's understanding of the sales pipeline. By using NetSuite as a workflow management and order validation gatekeeper, Opal has significantly increased the number of first-time order acceptances, correcting invalid address entries or improperly completed contracts before they can be filed in the system. “We've been able to do a lot on the front-end with data entry validation—NetSuite doesn't let the order progress if one of the business rules has been invalidated,” Haslam says. “Now, mistakes get resolved much closer to the customer contact, and they don't become a bigger issue later on, which would put us on the back foot with respect to customer expectations. Provisioning is the front door to our business—if we halve the time it takes, that's a massive benefit to us in terms of revenue.”

The Challenges

Opal Telecom provides wireline and wireless telecommunications services on the wholesale and business market to a wide range of customers in the United Kingdom. Its promising growth was



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— *Clive Dorsman*
Technical Director
Opal Telecom

coming under pressure from an efficiency crisis. Except for an industry-specific account management package and certain specialised applications, including a handful of Access databases and the occasional spreadsheet, Opal conducted a large amount of its business on paper—and the strain was starting to show.

“We historically hadn’t invested a particularly large amount of time or money into business automation. It’s fair to say that our business model accommodated it for a time, but about 18 months ago, it was obvious that we were getting to a point where we needed more business automation—more efficiency, accuracy, and sharing of data,” says Clive Dorsman, Opal technical director.

The company also needed to respond with greater depth and accuracy to its clients through the help desk. “We don’t have a high-volume call centre environment, but we do have a small number of customers who are high touch, so we needed a system which managed the relationship with customers, interacting with the billing system and tracking more of our interactions so we knew more about the customers’ issues,” Dorsman says.

“It was becoming obvious that we couldn’t continue to grow unless some of our overheads could be managed more effectively.”

The Solution

Opal needed to modernise its order management, prospecting, and help desk functions, and create an overall unified corporate workflow. So in December 2004, the company began its NetSuite conversion. The first stage of the deployment was tested in the help desk, where job-based workflow was successfully implemented. That quickly led to a sales project, as well as other key areas of customer service and fulfilment.

After some helpful NetSuite customisation and the combined efforts of the NetSuite UK professional services team and Opal technical staff, Opal Telecom is a quarter of the way through the roll-out of 1,000 NetSuite seats company-wide as more functions come on-line. Already 130 members of the sales staff use NetSuite for prospecting, pipeline tracking and deal confirmation, with discounting and special-deal handling to be deployed shortly.

Opal is also evaluating the use of partner and customer portals via NetSuite in the near future. “We plan to empower those dealers with the NetSuite partner portal—and that way generate much greater partner loyalty as we are easier to do business with,” Haslam says.