

Enabling Collaboration & Internal Efficiencies

“Work is something you do, not somewhere you go and technology has been central to achieving this. By upgrading our infrastructure, software and estate we have been able to increase collaborative working with partners by extending the features of Lync and staying connected.”

– Gillian Furlong,
Head of Strategy and Information Governance at Essex County Council

CASE STUDY

This case study looks at how DUCL supported Essex County Council's telephony transformation with a Managed Lync solution.

Microsoft
Lync



“The programme is unlocking the potential of technology whilst enabling all employees and partners to work smarter and more efficiently.” - Gillian Furlong

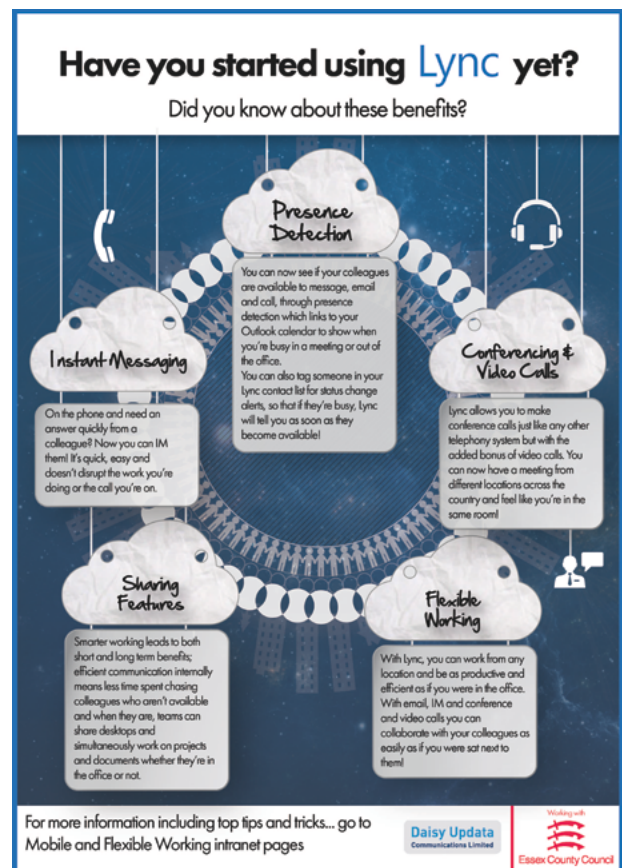
Essex County Council’s (ECC) CIO, David Wilde, has always been an advocate of utilising technology to make working easier and more efficient. David brought ECC to the forefront of the digital revolution with their Next Generation Network (NGN), which saw a complete refresh and overhaul of their Wide Area Network (WAN) and associated WAN services. The partnership started when ECC partnered with DUCL to deploy and support the Essex NGN, hence when ECC needed to refresh their telephony infrastructure, DUCL was the obvious choice.

ECC users were spending much of their time chasing colleagues, rushing to meetings and trawling through files to find information that should have been at their fingertips. Employees out on the road or working remotely were difficult to reach and, in turn, found it difficult to access information back at the office or from office-based colleagues.

Therefore new technology not only needed to reap significant cost savings for the Council, but also needed to facilitate greater collaboration and internal efficiencies for their end users – it needed to save ECC users time and hassle in their daily tasks.

Microsoft Lync had been on David’s radar for a while. Lync would decrease the costs of their telephony estate as they would be able to deploy it over the new NGN. It would also enable ECC to become agile and efficient through its range of communications tools - from instant messaging and presence detection, to online video conferencing - all accessible from any location through ECC’s Virtual Private Network (VPN).

It was clear to ECC that Microsoft Lync was the right fit for their organisational and user needs and would not only meet, but exceed their requirements. Now they had chosen the technology, ECC needed support with the deployment.



This is an example of a Lync poster DUCL produced for ECC sites to highlight the benefits of Lync to their end users.

“The migration process has been a real success.” - Gillian Furlong

Implementing Lync

ECC were set with the task of migrating 15,000 users from their existing estate onto Microsoft Lync.

All users would have Instant Messaging and Presence Detection (IM & P) and 9,000 users would also have voice capabilities making the migration the single biggest such deployment in the UK.

The technical migration was managed by DUCL who worked closely with the ECC team to implement a six week migration process for each team. This meant that all 15,000 users would be migrated in 18 months.

DUCL worked in the background to integrate the system with ECC’s existing Microsoft Exchange and Active Directory systems. They bought and distributed necessary hardware such as Lync headsets to users.

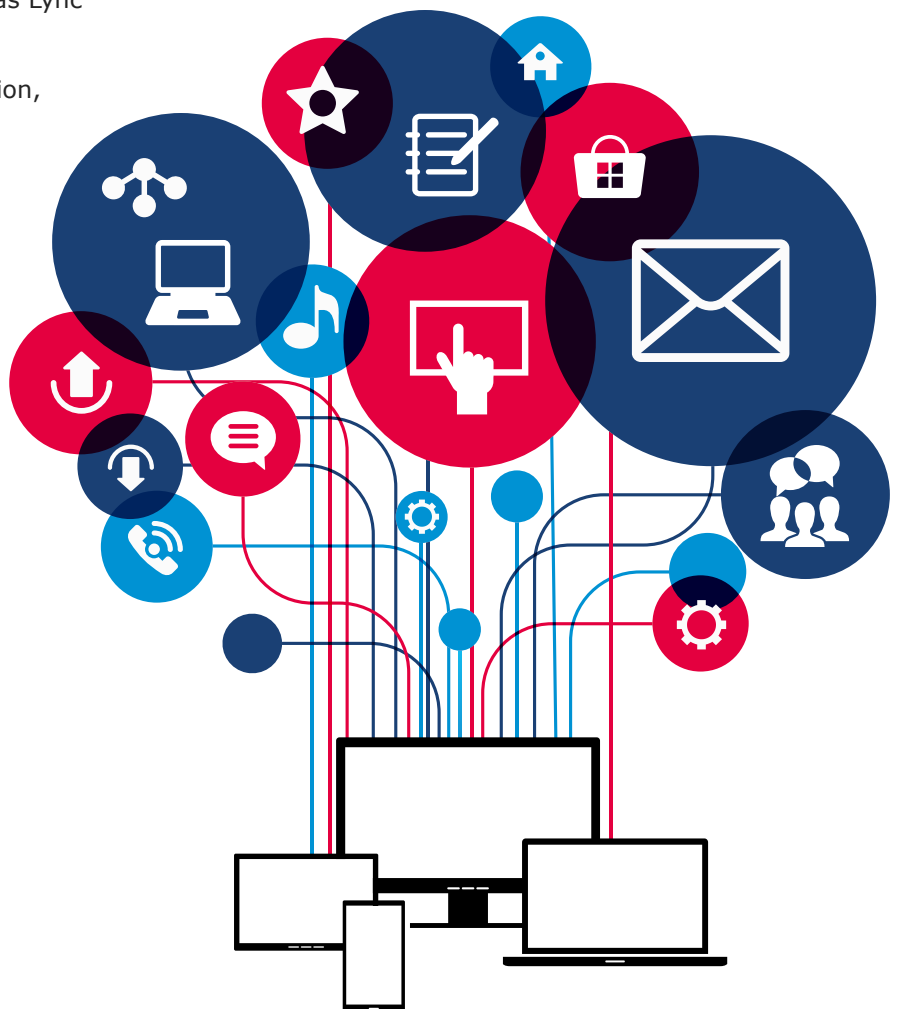
As part of DUCL’s Managed Lync solution, Lync experts were made available to assist each migration group during their ‘go live’ week. As soon as the technology was live, users could engage these “Floor Walkers” for technical and user support.

As part of the overall NGN project, DUCL located key project personnel at County Hall to enable close collaboration with the key ECC teams. If David Wilde or any other member of his team needed immediate assistance, DUCL were on-site to help.

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“The migration processes have been a real success, with effective guidance, support and advice offered. Engineers were friendly, helpful and knowledgeable. Users felt supported and ready to begin working within the new End User Computing environment.”

– Gillian Furlong



“We have changed employee culture and working practices with a strong and engaging change programme embedding information management principles and good practice and developing change around employee roles and not the device.” - Gillian Furlong

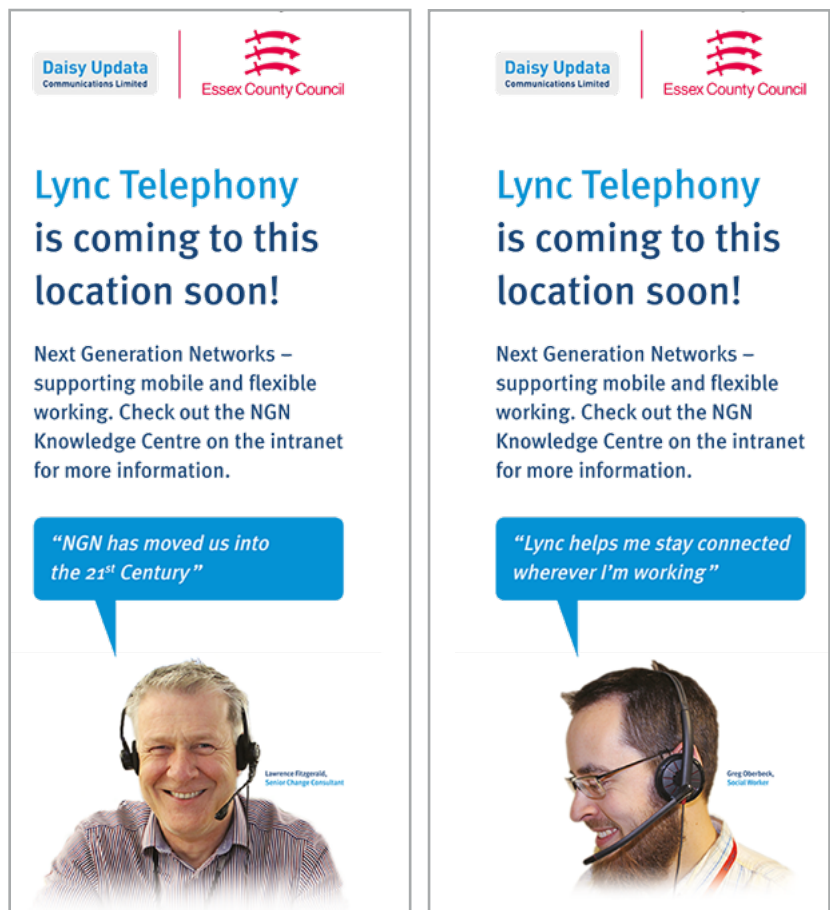
The Viral Effect

ECC undertook a robust change management approach and plan to ensure that benefits were fully realised - the approach focused on ensuring employees had sufficient capability to use the new technology as well as enabling the cultural change by establishing key interventions towards a digital mind-set.

To guide users through the cultural change ECC employed a variety of communications including posters, direct emails, banners, road shows, classroom training, E-learning and on-site technical support. E-learning was the main development tool that employees embraced - multi-media communication kept everyone well informed alongside informal collaboration tools that enabled employees to share their experiences and ideas.

ECC believe that the key to exploiting the value of technology is empowering the leadership. During the rollout ECC also recruited volunteers to become advocates of the technology. These “Super Users” provided a vital support system to their teams through the transformation when adapting to a new way of working, learning new skills and developing new behaviours. They also helped the project team to develop a better understanding of how the change was impacting individuals, teams and customers.

DUCL supported the ECC team throughout the programme with consultancy, on-site technical support and dedicated marketing resource - generating content and communication pieces through a structured marketing plan.



Two Lync pop-up banners displayed at ECC featuring real Lync users benefitting from the technology.

“By employees meeting virtually, we have seen savings from transformational change and how teams operate, consequently optimising work time.” - Gillian Furlong

Post-migration

The results ECC have seen since implementing Lync exceed the objectives set, as they have seen significant increases in efficiency and collaboration amongst colleagues.

Unified Communications (UC) and NGN also enabled Property Transformation and Mobile and Flexible Working programmes which aimed to decrease the number of physical sites and encourage employees to work away from the office.

The biggest result for ECC was having 85% of their workforce mobile by September 2014, with 20% connecting remotely every day. This provides ECC a year on year savings of approximately £5.1 million.

Essex believe that to see significant returns from technology investment, an organisation need to build ambitious business cases. Lync was just one element of a larger NGN and Property Transformation strategy which is fundamental to supporting the council's strategic vision.

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“A survey on Lync telephony revealed that 84% of those that responded to the survey were either 'very satisfied' or 'satisfied' with the new solution with one user saying 'thank you for making the decision to move to this technology, it really is better.'”

- Gillian Furlong



20%

of workforce connect remotely every day



84%

of users were either 'very satisfied' or 'satisfied'



85%

workforce mobile by September 2014



Mobile and Flexible working enables
£5.1 Million
annual cost saving

“Improved collaboration and visibility of employee availability from the use of Lync, particularly instant messaging, has enabled quicker and smarter communication and is pioneering technological use within Local Authorities.” - Gillian Furlong

Users are feeling the benefits too – Lync has facilitated collaboration between colleagues and partner organisations through the ease of instant messaging and Lync conferencing.

Also, with the introduction of Lync Federation, users are even able to communicate with employees in Essex Fire & Rescue Service (EFRS). Both organisations have shared their Active Directory, therefore allowing users in either organisation to contact one-another as if they were in the same room.

ECC employees are now able to work from any location and still contact their colleagues and customers as easily as if they were in the office. Chasing information and running to meetings is a thing of the past, meeting virtually and sharing with the click of a button has transformed the way they work.

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“Employees now have more choice of when and how to communicate resulting in less email traffic, efficient use of time, reduction in mobile phone costs and an increase in virtual meetings with internal and external colleagues.”

– Gillian Furlong

Daisy Updata Communications Limited

DUCL is the Joint Venture between Daisy Group, an experienced supplier of unified business communications services, and Updata Infrastructure, a leading provider of network solutions to the public sector. Combining their respective skills and experience in the design, delivery and support of advanced networks and services, DUCL is working in close partnership with Essex County Council to deliver the innovative vision of the Essex Next Generation Network.



ECC were awarded with the 'Best Enterprise Mobility Project of the Year' award in The UK IT Industry Awards 2014 which included the rollout of Lync Enterprise Voice.

FIND OUT MORE

To understand how Updata's Managed Lync solution can help transform your organisation, please contact us on 01737 224 422.