Swinton Group make the right call with Non-Geographic Numbers

Swinton Group is the UK's biggest high street insurance broker with over 350 branches across the country. Over 3,000 highly-trained staff offer advice on insuring a home, car, caravan, motorbike, business, holiday or even a classic car. The company has specialist insurance call centres in Manchester, Halifax, Leeds, Maidstone and Norwich. It handles over four million policies each year.

The Challenge

Swinton offers hundreds of varieties of insurance, including car, home, travel, business, and many more. Customers and potential customers call an 0800 or local number and naturally expect to get through to someone quickly.

Having a local presence is a vital part of Swinton's strategy and path to success. Non-Geographic Numbers (NGNs) support this, helping to optimise customer service on a local level and ensure customers get that personal touch. Swinton provides a local number and, if a branch is busy, calls are routed to a nearby branch or contact centre with an available agent.

With over 14,000 different numbers, Swinton's day-to-day requirements change rapidly. There is little opportunity for testing. And no room for error.

Tim Milburn, Operational Planning Manager, says, "To manage that volume we require flexibility to do things like routing changes almost immediately. We like to work in quite a dynamic way, for example routing an 0800 number to a different location for a few days. We need to have access to and control of our call routing, night and day. It's critical to our business. Our existing system had so many different lines that it forced us to log and record requests days in advance then try to keep track of them manually. This was far too complex and far too slow."

"We looked at various suppliers, but we knew it would make operational and commercial sense to have a single supplier for all fixed voice services. So we asked O₂ – who provided our mobile and outbound fixed voices – to overhaul our 0800 network and telephone system. We knew they had the capability to deliver the solution for us, and by bringing the services together we could make significant cost savings."

Painless transfer

"We have thousands of numbers using multiple platforms so the transfer process was going to be pretty complex. O₂ got involved in planning from the word go and engaged with our previous supplier to make it all happen without a hitch. We just had to ensure all our housekeeping was in order. They kept me informed and involved throughout the transition and, all in all, it was completely painless. Everything was done for us in under two days.

"O₂ even resolved issues beyond their brief, working with us to ensure that our main call network, which links to our branch network, worked seamlessly with the new system. It's a tremendous advantage to have someone with that experience and expertise take care of everything."

Helping internal customers

Using the O₂ NGN setup has given Swinton's marketing team ready access to calling statistic data, helping them analyse advertising campaigns and promotions quickly, and respond accordingly.

"The whole experience for our internal customers has been transformed. They make a request and we don't need to tell them a waiting time. We say "Yes, I'll do it now" with confidence."

"If, for whatever reason, there's a mistake, such as a wrong number being published in an advertisement, we can identify and correct the call routing right away. Or if the business has resource issues we can divert calls instantly so we don't get bottlenecks. That's a lot of customers captured and saved."

"My team find it very intuitive. On average, we're getting all changes done in half the time."

"Now that we've moved to O₂ we have much better functionality. We can make changes from our mobiles, iPads, from home or wherever we are via the web portal because it's all cloud-based. I've been at a football game and made an urgent change without leaving my seat."
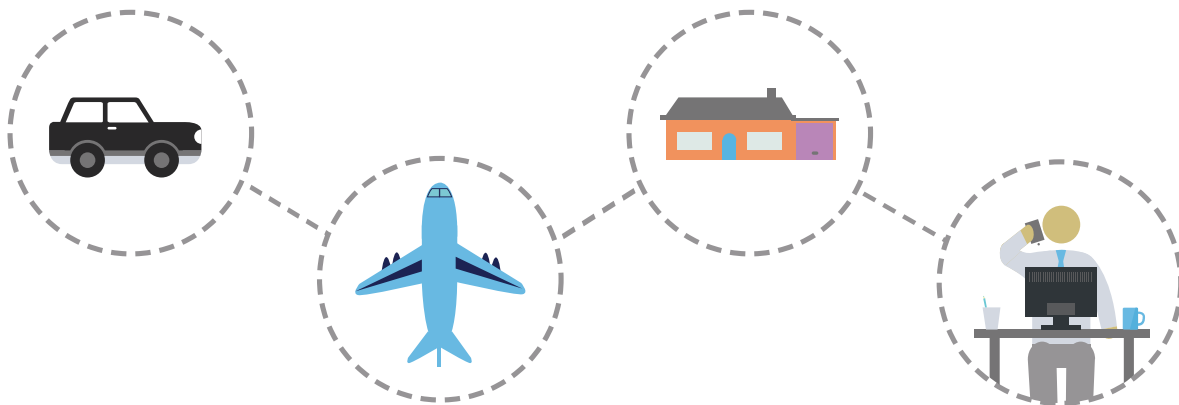
Promises delivered and more

"O₂ delivered on all their promises, and more. Everything we were told we could do, we can do."

"We have full control of our NGNs. We have the benefits of being with O₂ for all our voice services and have much more functionality. We've gone beyond what we planned by also working with O₂ on strategy. They have suggested how new technology can help us – for example, intelligent routing for NGNs – and this has added enormous value to our business."
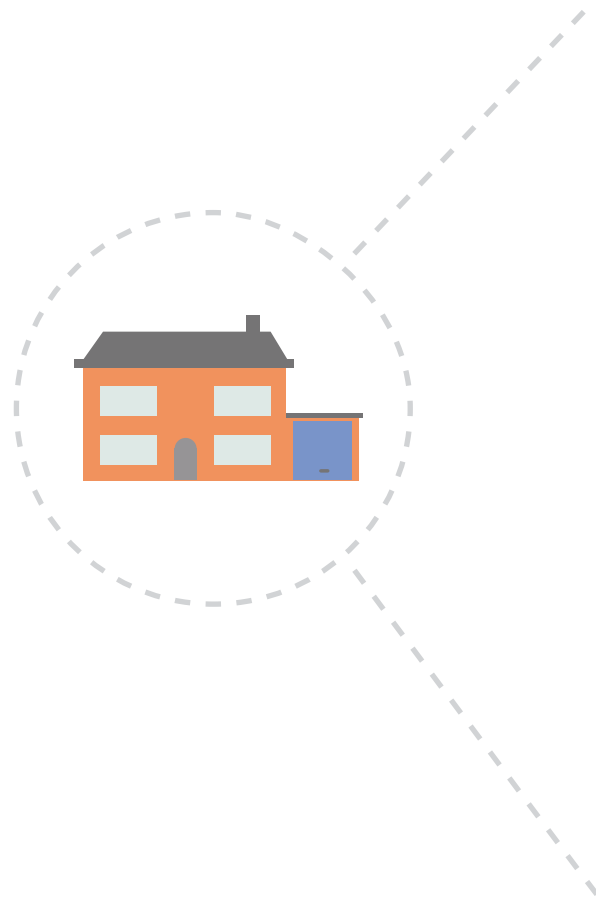
We'd love to hear from you. To find out more about how O₂ can help your business, just contact your Account Manager or call Tara Wilson on 01235 433670

You can also visit o2.co.uk/enterprise

O₂ business