

# BT WINS IMPORTANT CONTRACT WITH UNITED UTILITIES

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United Utilities to transform customer service with its first integrated multi-utility customer contact centre

BT today announced that it has won an important contract with United Utilities for a new customer contact centre, to be delivered by BT's consulting and systems integration business. United Utilities claims that this will create the UK's first integrated multi-utility customer contact centre. The contact centre will handle all service calls from United Utilities' water, wastewater and electricity customers. The new centre is designed to transform the way that United Utilities manages its relationships with its customers, as well as leading to significant cost savings for the company.

United Utilities, the largest operator of water and wastewater infrastructure networks in the UK and manager of the electricity distribution system for more than two million homes in the north-west of England, currently handles customer telephone calls and correspondence for both its water and electricity services using a number of disparate systems. These ageing systems are not easily modified and are not readily integrated with other applications, such as sales and billing.

At the heart of the new operation will be BT's Contact Central customer handling software. Working with Vertex, which manages the call centre operations on behalf of United Utilities, BT's system will enable customers to communicate by letter, email, phone, fax or the web site. In addition to this increased customer convenience, call-handling agents will be able to view comprehensive customer data through a single integrated desktop screen, while speaking to callers. Such data will include contact history, service commitments made and job status, and will enable the call centre teams to deliver a more personalised and efficient service.

General Manager of United Utilities Service Delivery, Tricia Williams, explained: "Our stated aim is to be number one in delivering against targets set by our regulators, and these include key customer service measures. We see the new contact system, as a key enabler to helping us achieve this aim."

She continued: "We want to provide our customers with a greatly enhanced service as well as reducing our customer service costs. We shall be reducing the number of repeat calls, decreasing call handling times and improving efficiencies in the overall utilisation of our people and resources. BT will provide us with the ideal system to enable us to achieve our customer service targets. We believe this will be the UK's first multi-utility contact centre dedicated to customer service"

Jeremy Stafford, UK Managing Director of BT's consulting and systems integration business, commented: "We have a notable track record of delivering outstanding contact centre systems to the utility sector, and delivering this critical system to a multi-utility will add a new and exciting dimension to the project. This innovative project will provide an ideal template for future work, for example with the recent sale of Local Distribution Zones (LDZs) by National Grid Transco, which will undoubtedly create

new broader-based service-focused multi-utilities in the UK. We are delighted to have been chosen to deliver this new system and look forward to working with United Utilities and its partner Vertex on this exciting project.”

- ENDS -

#### About BT

BT Group plc is the holding company for an integrated group of communications businesses and is listed on stock exchanges in London and New York. British Telecommunications plc (BT) is a wholly-owned subsidiary of BT Group and encompasses virtually all businesses and assets of the BT Group.

BT is one of the world's leading providers of communications solutions serving customers in Europe, the Americas and Asia Pacific. Its principal activities include network centric Information and Communications Technology (ICT) solutions, local, national and international telecommunications services, and higher-value broadband and internet products and services.

BT consists principally of three lines of business:

- BT Retail, providing fixed and mobile communications services and solutions to over 20 million business and residential customers in the UK. It is also a leading UK internet services provider.
- BT Wholesale, providing network services and solutions within the UK to more than 600 fixed and mobile operators and to service providers including the provision of broadband, Private Circuits and PSTN.
- BT Global Services, providing ICT services internationally to meet the needs of multi-site organisations with European operations. BT Global Services operates in 136 countries and also offers international carrier services.

In the year ended 31 March 2004, BT Group's turnover was £18,519 million with profit before goodwill amortisation, exceptional items and taxation of £2,013 million.

For more information, visit [www.btplc.com](http://www.btplc.com).

#### About BT Consulting & Systems Integration

BT Consulting & Systems Integration is part of BT Global Services and specialises in business transformation and change management.

Its primary activity is the provision of consulting and systems integration services, including business consultancy, complex programme management and custom systems design, development and management.

With major operational centres in the UK, Continental Europe and North America, the business employs more than 5000 people.

#### About United Utilities

From keeping taps flowing and lights shining to helping businesses communicate, United Utilities makes life easier for millions of people.

With headquarters in Warrington, United Utilities has operations stretching across the UK and around the

globe.

The multi-utility company currently has the equivalent of 14,000 full-time employees and has an annual turnover of £1.7 billion, making it one of the UK's top 100 companies.

Formed in 1996 with the merger of electricity company, NORWEB and water company, North West Water, United Utilities is now the largest operator of water and wastewater treatment systems in the UK.

[www.unitedutilities.com](http://www.unitedutilities.com)