

Case study

Standard Life

BT assists a financial services transformation in a changing market

When appointed Group IT and Commercial Director, Paul Chong took over creating voice and data networks based on disparate legacy technology – some of which was approaching obsolescence and no longer fully supported.

An outsourcing agreement with BT Global Services provided the fast and reliable infrastructure needed for a group-wide business transformation, while freeing Paul and his team to concentrate on customer service rather than dealing with mundane network matters.

“Working very closely with BT, we achieved the migration in an incredible seven months. Our experience is that normal transformation programmes of this type would take about three-and-a-half years. That’s a six-fold improvement.”

Paul Chong, Group IT and Commercial Director, Standard Life



“Over the five-year contract period, our agreement with BT will save us nearly £15 million. We have a modern and scalable network that’s making us more secure and agile, and changing the way we work. From that, we’re able to provide even better service for our customers.”

Paul Chong, Group IT and Commercial Director, Standard Life

Outsourcing to BT makes Standard Life a leaner, more responsive business with substantially lower costs

Challenge

Standard Life is a leading provider of savings, pension and investment products. Based in Edinburgh it has operations in Europe, North America and Asia, with six million clients worldwide including almost four million in the UK.

The financial services industry has seen rapid change in recent years with tougher regulation and agile new market entrants. To address this fast-moving environment, Standard Life embarked on a far-reaching business transformation programme aimed at becoming more agile while simultaneously improving the customer experience. Paul Chong, Group IT and Commercial Director at Standard Life, says: “A flexible and robust IT platform is central to that transformation.”

However, the company’s voice and data networks were based on inflexible and costly legacy technology. It was fortunate then that impending renewal of its existing network services contract presented an opportunity to help shape the group’s future.

Solution

After considering proposals from a number of suppliers, Standard Life chose BT as its new global network services partner. “In terms of cost, BT was by far the best value,” says Agnes Valentine, Head of Group IT Infrastructure. “But probably more importantly, its cultural fit and partnership ethos were very important to us.” BT also provided the reassurance of financial stability, global reach, and a proven track record of working with major financial services organisations.

A total of 17 different network services were transitioned to BT. “Working very closely with BT, we achieved the migration in an incredible seven months,” says Paul Chong. “Our experience is that normal transformation programmes of this type would take about three-and-a-half years. That’s a six-fold improvement.”

Now a new infrastructure based on BT IP Connect global offers Standard Life a flexible wide area network (WAN) with virtually unlimited scope for future upgrades and developments. That single worldwide WAN carries both data and voice traffic to over 9,000 users, including 2,500 contact centre agents. Meanwhile, the combination of BT One Enterprise Avaya featuring Avaya Communications Server 1000 (CS1000) 7.5 and BT Onsite Contact Avaya featuring Avaya Aura® Contact Center 6.2 provides IP telephony and contact centre services.

As part of the deal, 17 members of the Standard Life IT team moved to BT, with their employment terms fully protected by the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) regulations and enhanced career opportunities. “BT is very experienced at dealing with TUPE transfers, which was another significant competitive differentiator,” says Andy Martin, Head of Network and Security Services. “The whole process was performed in less than two months, which is a fantastic achievement.”

BT global service management for Standard Life uses an India-based offshore resource for monitoring and support, with a dedicated BT service manager in the UK on hand to keep everything running smoothly.

Midway through the project Standard Life decided to extend its presence in new markets in the Middle East and Asia Pacific. BT rose to the challenge by providing the infrastructure in just six weeks using BT Cloud Contact. “Those projects in Singapore and Dubai were progressed in parallel with the original transformation project,” says Agnes Valentine. “That strength in depth of services and skills really confirmed to us that BT was the absolute correct choice for our global sourcing partner.”

Value

The partnership makes Standard Life a leaner and more agile organisation, able to respond quickly and effectively to new market opportunities and competitive threats. The BT solution has also reduced voice and data costs by over 25 per cent compared with the previous network supplier. “Over the five-year contract period, our agreement with BT will save us nearly £15 million,” confirms Paul Chong. The new infrastructure is much more reliable, too. “We’ve benefited from a 10 per cent reduction in network incidents, and this downward trend continues,” says Andy Martin.

But the project is about far more than just cost savings and network performance. With BT as its global network services partner, Standard Life can focus on its core business, confident that its IT infrastructure is in safe hands and able to support current and future plans, whatever they might be. Already, the group has taken advantage of the new technology to improve customer satisfaction – one of its key business priorities – with innovations such as smartphone apps and social networking. In addition, Standard Life has migrated much of its inbound telephony to session initiation protocol (SIP) for lower cost and a more unified communications platform.

“We have a modern and scalable network that’s making us more secure and agile, and changing the way we work,” concludes Paul Chong. “From that, we’re able to provide even better service for our customers.”

Core services

- BT IP Connect global
- BT One Enterprise Avaya featuring Avaya CS1000
- BT Onsite Contact Avaya featuring Avaya Aura® Contact Center 6.2
- BT Cloud Contact
- BT One Voice SIP trunk UK
- BT Service Management



Offices worldwide

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