

Beating the queues

Sikom sets up modern Contact Center for Stadtwerke Düsseldorf

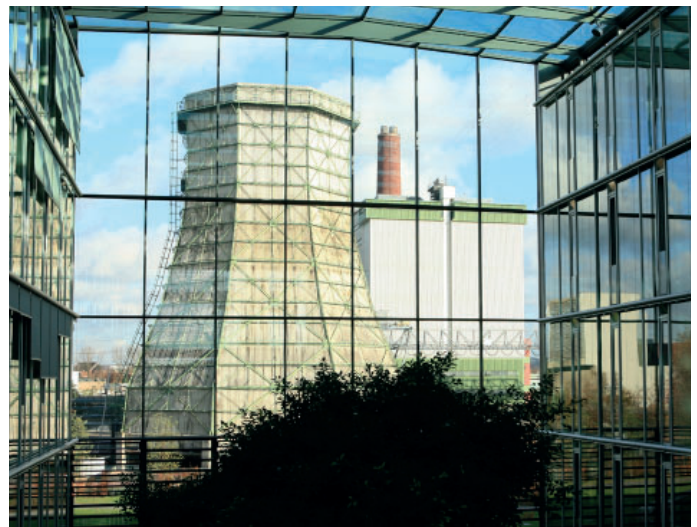
Guido Wolf, head of the Customer Care Center at Stadtwerke Düsseldorf, the city's department of public works, uses imagery from the construction sector to describe Sikom Software GmbH's accomplishments. "It is often easier to build a whole house on a fresh plot of land than to simply renovate a bathroom. Replacing bathroom equipment means integrating the new fittings into an older environment, which is not always straightforward. Starting with a 'blank slate' removes many of the hurdles."



Sikom recently faced such a 'bathroom challenge' when they were commissioned to install a new Contact Center for Stadtwerke Düsseldorf (the department of public works) – without disruption of everyday services and adapted to the existing IT landscape. No easy project, but Wolf was more than satisfied with the whole process. "Everything went really well, the entire project team did an excellent job."

Stadtwerke Düsseldorf is one of Germany's largest public works, and is municipally owned. In 2015, the company generated revenues of €1.76 billion, of which €1.16 billion came from electricity sales (17.55 billion kWh). Natural gas sales yielded €0.25 billion (6.71 billion kWh). Stadtwerke Düsseldorf employs just under 1,600 staff.

The company is an important economic factor for Düsseldorf. Around €50 million flow into the city treasury as franchise fees or municipal taxes. Stadtwerke has also seen a considerable rise in its purchasing power, resulting in several hundred million Euros per annum paid either as salaries or for commissions to local firms.



The atrium

The Customer Care Center plays a significant role in this economic success – and the time had come for the outdated call center system to be replaced with a new, state-of-the-art version. Damovo Deutschland GmbH & Co. KG commissioned Sikom from Heidelberg with this task.

The new system – AgentOne® ContactCenter Suite – has taken Stadtwerke Düsseldorf a huge step forward in terms of customer-friendly service and customer retention. What are the main improvements?

Routing: The new system enables targeted control of customer calls to the Contact Center. Additional communication channels such as e-mail management have also been added. Should a customer leave a voicemail, the call won't 'get lost' in the system. A free agent will automatically be informed about the contact – and the customer will be contacted quickly. E-mails are also allocated to free agents for more prompt processing.



Web Callback: Customers who don't want to wait in a queue or leave a voicemail can use the Web Callback feature on Stadtwerke's homepage. They can leave their phone number and will be called back within half an hour. An intelligent solution and a blessing for long-suffering 'hotline' callers ...

Web Self-Service: Callers identify themselves in a voice dialogue, for instance with the last four digits of their customer number, before conveying the required data (electricity meter readings, etc.). The 'conversation' will last exactly as long as with a person. The system checks the plausibility of the data and if it detects any inconsistencies, an employee will step into the conversation.

Voice dialogue for payments: Advance payments can put customers in credit with the Stadtwerke. Previously, such payments had to be done per crossed cheque in a fairly complex system. The new system lets customers provide their account data for the transfer in a voice dialogue, making the whole process much more efficient than in the past.

Two additional new features also provide considerable added value. "There is a special reason for every call," says Guido Wolf, "and we now allocate a 'work code' to each one." As such, Stadtwerke is accumulating a comprehensive database which its marketing team can use for market research. This also makes it easier to identify the source of technical faults – for instance, if many customers call to report electricity supply interruptions. The second new feature facilitates cost allocation. Each call generates internal costs, which must be properly allocated and in some cases divided between several cost centers. The new system takes this into account.

In short: Sikom has managed not only to fully equip a 'bathroom' with beautiful new tiles, but also to update all the fittings to the latest standards. Almost like starting on a 'blank slate'! The IT company has thus provided Stadtwerke Düsseldorf with a good tool to communicate with its customers in a number of ways. Quickly, competently, and efficiently.



Office, Höherweg

About Sikom

Sikom Software GmbH is the leading manufacturer of contact center solutions and automated voice applications. Sikom implements powerful and future-proof solutions, based on open standards, for optimizing communication processes in all industries.

The multi-award winning multimodal voice recognition system VoiceMan®, ContactCenter Suite AgentOne®, and AgentOne Dialer® for outbound communication form the core products of the comprehensive portfolio.

Alongside many other awards, Sikom also won the Sustainability Prize of the German Business Innovation Awards 2010. Working in strong partnerships, e.g. in major research projects with universities and industrial partners, Sikom can report several significant successes.

Customers include Deutsche Telekom, INTER Versicherungen, Bausparkasse Schwäbisch Hall, Signal Iduna, arvato, Techem, Henkel, Microsoft, numerous public utility firms, banks, savings banks, and public and local authorities.

Any questions?

Our competent account managers will be happy to help. Please call us or visit us on the internet:

www.sikom.de

Sikom Software GmbH

Tullastraße 4 | 69126 Heidelberg | E-mail: info@sikom.de

Phone: +49 (0)6221-13788 0

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