Capital Radio Streamlines IT Support

Company Name
Captial Radio Group

Industry
Media

Business Benefits
- Accurate call logging
- Structured support
- Team building
- Customer management
- Facilities management

Quick Stats
Product:	HEAT
Users:	6
Employees:	350

COMPANY BACKGROUND

Capital Radio first hit the airwaves in 1973, as the country's second commercial radio station. Since then, the group has extensively expanded its operations well beyond its two flagship London radio stations. Capital Radio is the largest and most successful commercial radio group in the UK, broadcasting in London, Birmingham, Sussex, Hampshire, Kent, Cardiff and Oxford. The group recently acquired the Century Group of radio stations in a deal with Border Television, which now gives the Capital Radio Group a total reach of 8 million listeners.

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Hina Patel, IT Support Manager

Capital Radio

UNSTRUCTURED SUPPORT

Hina Patel, IT Support Manager at Capital Radio, explains the dilemma internal IT support faced. "To support over 350 employees you need a department capable of recording all in coming calls, ensuring all problems are addressed quickly and efficiently as well as keeping a history of all queries."

"Unfortunately, the systems we had in place couldn't meet these expectations. Although we had an Access database, hardly any one used it. It was too complicated. To complicate things further we had to rely on voicemails, bits of paper and word of mouth when no one was available to take calls."

As there was no formal call logging system in place, the support staff found it difficult to know who was dealing with which issue. Other problems included; mislaid information, support queries not being dealt with, no central store of information, no follow up to ensure the query was resolved and no query history was kept.

One of the first things Patel implemented on joining was a paper-based call-logging sheet called a 'Fault Log' in order to record each call to the help desk. All live calls were kept in 'in' trays and all completed calls were placed in 'out' trays on each analyst's desk so Patel could see at a glance how many calls were outstanding. The 'Fault Log' tracked basic information including a description of the problem, description of the fix, call completion date and the time it took to close the call. It was not perfect but it was a massive improvement. Phase 2 involved the automation of all help desk activities.

RAPID, FLEXIBLE SOLUTION

Initially, some staff were wary of working with an automated system, believing that 'big brother' was looking over them. Patel commented, "I've used HEAT before, so I knew the benefits this kind of automation brings to a support team. It is far from a big brother scenario."

It was essential for the support department to chooses a solution that could be 'up and running' in a matter of days. Using HEAT's wizard system meant the solution was implemented in less than a week. For Patel the rapid installation meant that the problems they were experiencing could be tackled almost instantly.

HEAT's flexibility proved a very attractive feature to the department. Unlike some of the competitors solutions they considered, HEAT allowed staff to add as many fields as they wanted to the main screen. Patel was impressed with the way HEAT could be customized: "HEAT allows first level support to assign a call to several people where as with other solutions we looked at only allowed us to assign a call to one person at a time. For the help desk to be efficient, you need a flexible solution."

SUPPORT RESTRUCTURE

Capital Radio purchased a six user HEAT license for 18 HEAT users to reflect the changes in the processes and procedures the Support Department was restructured. The department of six was split into first, second and third line support. Under Patel's supervision and the help of a FrontRange consultant the transformation took just three days. The implementation included the migration of Capital Radio's database imported from a telephone list held in Word to HEAT. In addition to IT support, HEAT was rolled out to the company's Networks, Database and Programming team, which also offers technical support to staff on their network systems and in-house designed software programmes.

TEAM BUILDING

HEAT's impact was immediate. The Quick Call option proved invaluable for logging and completing routine requests. To ensure are not lost, the HEAT Alert facility alarms staff when a new call is registered, staff can access each others call lists and it has encouraged team building.

Call tracking was a problem before HEAT. Now the Automatic Ticket Generator enables internal staff to email queries to their help desk rather than calling or leaving messages, therefore the query is dealt with quickly and efficiently. With HEAT's Auto Escalation facility users are sent emails when calls are logged and when they are closed. As a result internal staff are kept informed of the progress of the query from start to finish. As Patel pointed out, this has made the department more efficient; "Note only has HEAT made it easier to log all calls and made the team work better collectively, but we can ensure that all queries logged are seen through to the end. Nothing falls through the cracks."

NON IT SUPPORT

News of the difference HEAT made to the IT Support Department soon spread to Sally Oldham, Managing Director of Group Radio, who requested that HEAT was installed in other areas of the business. "Both the Office Services & Building Maintenance and Customer Liaison Departments are vital to the continuing success of our Head Office in Leicester Square," commented Oldham: "It was a natural progression to extend it to these two departments."

The Office Services & Building Maintenance and Customer Liaison departments faced similar problems as IT Support i.e. working from bits of paper, no structure, no call tracking or history and no information sharing. John Hall, Head of Office Services & Building Maintenance said; "Before HEAT we had a string of voicemails to deal with and not real way of efficiently sharing them the queries out to my team. Now by using the Auto Ticket Generator in HEAT all queries are automatically logged and an Administrator assigns calls to the team. We have found HEAT to be a great tool for helping prioritise our work, meeting deadlines and keeping the team focused on the service we provide."

Patel joked; "I had requested on numerous occasions that they fix the lock on the 'ladies' and it was only after HEAT was implemented and my call was officially logged that the problem was resolved!"

The Capital Radio Group is comprised of various radio stations rough the country so the customer liaison department deals with a significant number of calls from listeners on a daily basis. As Sharmaine Matthews, Customer Liaison Manager comments, HEAT has provided instrumental in the efficient running of the department: "We've tailored HEAT to our very specific needs. We capture and deal with queries from radio stations nationwide. HEAT makes me feel confident that nothing is going to slip through the net, which is a great comfort."

EXPANDING HEAT

Capital Radio has plans to extend HEAT to its other two main regional centres. As Patel explained: "The company benefits everyday from HEAT so it seemed only natural to extend this to our other two regional centres. We can now be confident of handling all queries quickly and efficiently, which consolidates our position as the UK's leading commercial radio station."