

BT SmartNumbers for virtual branch switchboards

Seamless voice services for an enhanced customer experience

A branch switchboard with built-in voice continuity that distributes customer calls across multiple branches to the next available agent, helping you to manage peaks and troughs in demand, monitor agent performance and deliver service excellence



The branch is back

As more and more retail store-style bank branches start opening across the country, it is clear that UK banks now realise that their branches are not just cost centres but sources of potential profit.

But customers are becoming increasingly demanding. They want to be able to contact their bank at the time and via the channel that best suits them, and they expect a highly personalised and seamless service when they do. According to research from BT and the Henley Centre* 78 % of bank customers say they have to wait longer than ever to have their calls answered and many say the time kept waiting on premium rate numbers is frustrating.

So while branch networks become larger and more dispersed, banks need to deliver excellent and consistent customer contact at reduced cost.

This is where the virtual branch switchboard comes in.

One point of contact

The virtual branch switchboard with BT SmartNumbers gives you a single point of contact for customers. This means all your organisation's call-handling capacity can be used to respond promptly to customers, and your organisation can flex to meet peaks and troughs of demand. And with an inbound voice gateway across all your branches you can monitor the quality and consistency of the customer service experience across the entire network. To contact their bank, customers simply call a single telephone number or numbers, which may be either local, national or non-geographic. Calls are routed to the their closest branch for personal answering, and if all customer advisers are busy they are routed to the next closest branch, or to a service centre if they are not answered quickly enough. All branch switchboard staff can then be focused on the single most important aspect of your business – serving the needs of the next caller.

You can choose the call routing logic that best suits you – according to the geographic location of callers, for example, or the time of day or the nature of the call itself. Call queuing, the playing of comfort messages at regular intervals and the option for the caller to break out and talk to the closest available branch or service centre at any point can all be programmed into the service and changed at a moment's notice.

Staying in the call-flow to guarantee customer satisfaction

Not only does the BT SmartNumbers service deliver the call to the most appropriate branch or service centre, but the service stays in the call throughout to ensure both the branch staff and customers are given the best service experience.

If branch staff are unable to answer a customer question directly, they can 'press 0' on their telephone handset and BT SmartNumbers will then take the call and escalate it to the service centre, where agents may be better equipped to answer customer questions. And in order to inform the agents in the service centre that this is an escalated call from the branch, BT SmartNumbers can 'whisper' to the agent that this is a call that has been escalated from a branch rather than one which has come in directly from a customer. This enables the service centre to fine-tune the service experience they deliver to all its customers.

Built-in voice continuity

The virtual branch switchboard with BT SmartNumbers comes with built-in business continuity that helps you prepare for unforeseen events like fire, flood or bomb scares that may deny staff access to the branch and stop them taking customer calls.

Branch-based staff can connect to the service from any location – perhaps even logging in from their home telephone, their mobile, or their BlackBerry handsets – and take incoming calls to the branch. Alternatively calls can be routed automatically to other nearby branches or a centralised service centre in the event of disruption. Voice services continue seamlessly, so your customers can call the usual number and get the same service they have come to expect. It's much faster than moving your staff to back up facilities and the financial impact of the disruption on your business is far less too.

The service itself is fully resilient against network failure both at a branch and local telephone exchange. Should either of these fail, your staff can connect to the service and choose to have calls routed to alternative locations, such as other branches, mobile telephones or even their home-office.

* Effective branch marketing: the good, the bad and the ugly, Henley Centre, 2005

Monitoring the customer experience

The virtual branch switchboard allows you to track and monitor all aspects of the customer service experience of callers at branch, regional or national level.

It provides detailed reports on the number of calls, the average time to answer, call abandonment rates and other important metrics such as peak call times, which can be delivered in real time to online monitoring screens or weekly in comprehensive management information (MI) reports, as you choose. Administrators can manage and fine-tune the service from any location without any special equipment.

This enables you to ensure maximum availability of call-handling staff during times of peak demand,

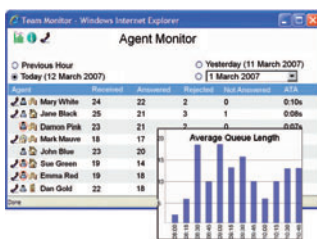
while increasing their efficiency during times of excess capacity.

Why BT SmartNumbers?

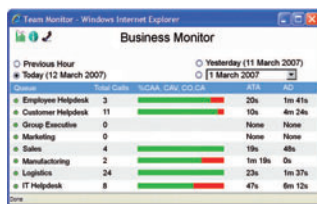
The virtual branch switchboard with BT SmartNumbers uses the latest in voice and internet technology and can be up and running in days. It can be delivered across any combination of network, including legacy, VoIP, mobile and BT Hosted Voice.

The service is fully managed, so there is no initial outlay on new hardware, software or networks and it is fully scalable with a range of à la carte services which mean it can grow as your business grows.

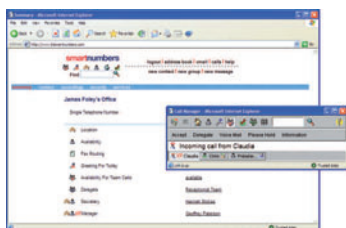
BT SmartNumbers for virtual branch switchboards Features at a glance



Individual agent performance can be measured in real time



Full visibility with virtual wallboards for managing multiple teams



Call manager with CRM integration

Inbound voice gateway for all branches

- Available with local, national or non-geographic numbers
- Ensures calls into one branch can be handled by other branches or by a centralised contact centre if necessary
- Harnesses all your business call-handling capacity behind a single number
- Provides call queuing and playing of comfort messages in periods of peak demand
- Services are accessible from BlackBerry handsets

Automatic call routing

- Calls are routed to the caller's closest branch for a more personal service
- Automatic routing to the next closest branch or service centre when this branch is busy
- All waiting calls can be advertised so branch staff across the country can take the next call in the queue

IVR

- Network-delivered IVR allows customers to choose how they want their calls handled
- Staff can be organised into skill groups to match the IVR options
- There's no limit to the number of IVR options or menu layers
- Callers are always given the option to break out of the IVR to speak to a person at a nearby branch or service centre

Assuring customer satisfaction

- Branch staff can 'press 0' during the customer conversation to transfer the call to the service centre. This service works no matter what PBX infrastructure is in each branch
- Service can 'whisper' to service centre staff to inform them of calls transferred from the branch
- VIP callers may be given priority numbers for prioritised customer service

Management information

- Presents detailed call handling information in real-time or weekly management reports
- Shows call-handling performance at branch, regional or national level
- Highlights times and locations of peak call volumes and excess capacity
- Can be benchmarked against best practices and performance to agreed SLAs

Voicemail

- Can be supplied with business-class voicemail behind each number for busy or out-of-hours messages
- Enables voicemails to be handled locally at each branch, or centrally
- Provides unified messaging to route voicemail to email for more effective handling of customers calls
- Provides unlimited storage and archiving capacity for messages

Faxmail

- Built in fax-to-email service ensures inbound faxes are delivered to the branch by email
- Converts faxes to easy reading format for screen delivery or hard copy printing
- Enables creation of an archive directory for all faxes

Business continuity

- Voice continuity is maintained seamlessly in the event of 'outages' that affect individual branches or your entire network
- Staff can connect to the service from any location and have calls delivered to them, so outages remain undetectable by callers
- Calls can be routed to caller's next closest local branch or service centre in the event of disruption at the closest branch
- Seamless service continues in the event of a crisis, so your revenue and reputation remain unaffected

Fast time to service

- You do not need to install any new hardware, software or networks
- The service works across all telephone systems – analogue, digital and VoIP
- Can be up and running in days
- BT SmartNumbers can be included in your BT OneBill

Offices worldwide

The services described in this publication are subject to availability and may be modified from time to time. Services and equipment are provided subject to British Telecommunications plc's respective standard conditions of contract. Nothing in this publication forms any part of any contract.

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next generation voice services