

Enhancing Customer Experience Through Digital Innovation

Opus Energy uses innovative Customer Care solutions delivered by Cisco partners to scale efficiently, support communication, and increase customer engagement



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Customer: Opus Energy Limited
Industry: Energy, Information Technology and Services
Location: Northampton, Oxford and Cardiff, United Kingdom
Employees: 800

Opus Energy is a UK-based electricity and gas supplier with offices in Northampton, Oxford and Cardiff. An independent supplier of business energy, Opus Energy differentiates from larger competitors through their commitment to upholding the highest standards in all of their interactions with customers. This commitment means maintaining transparency, honesty, and fairness in all aspects of business.

Background

Cisco began their relationship with Opus Energy in 2014, at first focusing on transformations in data center solutions and network connectivity, providing a solid foundation for future business growth. Starting as supplier of IT connectivity services, Cisco's relationship with Opus Energy has blossomed into a fully realized strategic partnership.

“Cisco is talking about the future of services, getting clients excited about how a contact center can transform their business. Cisco provides a fabulous vision of future transformation.”

– **Mark Adams**
Bright Cloud

“We are delivering on Opus Energy’s business objectives of reducing customer effort, gaining cost efficiencies, and improving productivity.”

– **Ivor Nicholls**
Cisilion

The Challenge

As the market expands, Opus Energy needed to scale to meet demand without compromising efficiency and managing the cost to serve customers. Seeing dramatic growth in their business and enterprise offerings and recognizing their potential to expand further, Opus Energy identified the need to integrate their silos and to offer more choice to customers across touch points and channels. As Lisa Cochran, Service Delivery Director at Opus Energy, states, “We expect about 20% growth year to year in corporate customers. Ultimately, with our rate of growth we want to make sure our efficiencies are coming through in technology. Innovation helps us improve customer experience and cost to serve.” Cisco technology provided the additional capability to maintain their excellence in customer commitments. To maintain their leadership among their competitors, the company focused on innovation in customer experience, highlighting the following goals:

- Increase the effectiveness of sales, debt collection, customer retention/renewal, and high-value customer management while reducing the cost of servicing customers by 14%
- Support multiple communication channels/devices through ‘best of breed’ technology
- Support the continued high growth of Opus Energy through a scalable, phased, flexible solution implemented in close partnership with Cisco
- Provide a robust customer engagement platform that simplifies and supports an ever-more complex Opus Energy business environment

The Solution

Opus Energy needed a scalable, reliable, customer-focused platform to enable an engaging customer experience that operated across multiple channels of communication. Cisco worked with Opus Energy on finding gaps in partner expertise, recommending Cisco partner options that could equally deliver to their expectations. “Cisco brought us a short list of accredited partners, with quality across the board,” states Lisa. Opus Energy examined the proposed partners’ qualifications through a rigorous audit process. Cisilion and Bright Cloud pulled ahead of the competition, and are now working together to deliver the solution jointly.

Andy Powell, the Telecommunications Systems Manager at Opus Energy, spoke to the company’s expectations from partner solutions: “We expect reliability but it is fundamental that the solution is agile and enables Opus Energy to react to consumers’ current and future demands.” Opus Energy’s customer engagement strategy revolves heavily around engaging customers on their level, and responding efficiently to clients’ and customers’ needs in real time. Chris Massey, the Cisco Customer Experience Solution Specialist, echoed this sentiment, saying, “It was key for Opus Energy that their customer engagement platform would provide a complete digital transformation to both business and customer, enabling a full omni-channel experience.” Businesses must now provide a seamless customer experience that

is continuous and universal, regardless of channel or device. Modern consumers have more control over their engagement with a company—in a store, on a website or app, through a catalog, or through social media. In order to deliver a true omni-channel experience, each seemingly-disparate component of the consumer’s experience must be consistent and complementary. With these expectations in mind, Opus Energy selected Gartner Magic Quadrant Leader Cisco to provide the full Customer Experience Solution suite for their business. The full suite includes Cisco High Availability voice infrastructure, Packaged Contact Center Enterprise (PCCE), and Omni-channel Finesse agent experience with integrated Work Force Optimization and Work Force Management.

The Results

Opus Energy has deployed a unified customer experience solution and now enjoys the advantages of the simplified management interface, smaller hardware footprint, and reduced time to install. “By opening more channels for customers to contact us, we are building both a knowledge base and improving the customer experience,” says Lisa. The solution is virtualized to work across multiple sites, is flexible and delivers the full range of contact center services including:

- Improved flexibility through robust, open-standards-based platforms supporting inter-operability with other vendor’s solutions
- Increased security through a validated PCI-compliant solution
- Improved customer/contact management through integrated communications
- Support for inbound/outbound voice, email and web chat
- Integration with CRM system for customer account information, retrieval and input
- Increased first call resolution by 10% and reduced customer effort with enhanced interactive voice response routing
- Future scalability and flexibility



The shift to customer self-service has enabled more efficient transactions for Opus Energy clients, providing seamless service 24/7. Productivity and workplace efficiency are on the rise, thanks to increased communication. As Andy Powell states, “The enablement of email to the agent has increased productivity by 10%.” Once the migration is completed, Opus Energy expects to see productivity and efficiency gains in excess of 20%.

Ivor Nicholls, from Cisilion, describes the engagement with Opus Energy in developing a transformational project. “We are delivering an omni-channel customer experience with the ability to map and report on what that experience is,” said Nicholls. “From a project point of view, we are delivering on Opus Energy’s business objectives of reducing customer effort, gaining cost efficiencies, and improving productivity. We bring visibility of performance against of those objectives to allow Opus Energy to continue to evolve the business.” Cisco is educating clients on the most cutting-edge technological advances, and working hand-in-hand to support customers just starting the journey to digital transformation. Ivor continues, “From Cisco we get the thought leadership and direction on how the market is developing, and how the technology serves that transformation. Their solutions are primed to digitally transform our customer’s business.”

“With our rate of growth we want to make sure our efficiencies are coming through in technology. Innovation helps us improve customer experience and cost to serve.”

– Lisa Cochran
Opus Energy

“By adding more depth and dimension to our customer analytics, Opus Energy is leading the charge in the digitization of business.”

– Andy Powell
Opus Energy

Defining the Future with Digital Transformation

Opus Energy will continue to optimize their customer experience. Andy Powell, Telecommunications System Manager, defines this continued transformation. “By adding more depth and dimension to our customer analytics, Opus Energy is leading the charge in the digitization of business.” Their goal remains to make things as easy as possible for customers. As Lisa Cochran explains, “Technology can do that and make it seamless. We aim to make our services so easy that customers stay. We are at the cusp of digital transformation.”

Cisco’s Commitment to Customer Experience

Mark Adams, describing the partnership between Cisco, Cisilion and his own company Bright Cloud, identified the strengths of the two partners as “short and medium term” while Cisco is “good in the long term.” Cisco’s long-term vision allows them to define the path to get Opus Energy where they want to be, while the partners help fill in the details and flawlessly execute on this roadmap. As Adams explains, “Cisco is talking about the future of services, getting clients excited about how a contact center can transform their business. Cisco provides a fabulous vision of the future of digital transformation.”

What made this engagement successful from a partner perspective was the relationship Cisco forged with the customer: by working closely with the customer, Cisco is able to achieve status as a trusted advisor and business partner as well as solutions manufacturer. More importantly, Cisco stays involved with the customer, leading conversations about future innovations, which keeps future projects in the pipeline for the partners.

From the partners’ perspective, Cisco truly became an extension of their existing team, providing additional resources and guidance throughout the process, and eventually sharing new opportunities for partnership in the future. Cisco was able to help bridge gaps and build relationships with partners, simultaneously implementing solutions and helping to define Opus Energy’s goals with partner implementation. Opus Energy was interested in leveraging their investment in Cisco technology in order to enhance the user experience for their customers. Mark Adams of Bright Cloud describes the process of working with Cisco to develop solutions and maximize customer effort, stating simply, “We want to ensure they have maximum efficiency to make the customer experience as good as it can be.”

For More Information

To accelerate digital transformation with Customer Experience, please visit:
<http://www.cisco.com/go/digitalsolutionspartner>



Americas Headquarters
Cisco Systems, Inc.
San Jose, CA

Asia Pacific Headquarters
Cisco Systems (USA) Pte. Ltd.
Singapore

Europe Headquarters
Cisco Systems International BV Amsterdam,
The Netherlands

Cisco has more than 200 offices worldwide. Addresses, phone numbers, and fax numbers are listed on the Cisco Website at www.cisco.com/go/offices.

Cisco and the Cisco Logo are trademarks of Cisco Systems, Inc. and/or its affiliates in the U.S. and other countries. A listing of Cisco’s trademarks can be found at www.cisco.com/go/trademarks. Third party trademarks mentioned are the property of their respective owners. The use of the word partner does not imply a partnership relationship between Cisco and any other company. (1005R)