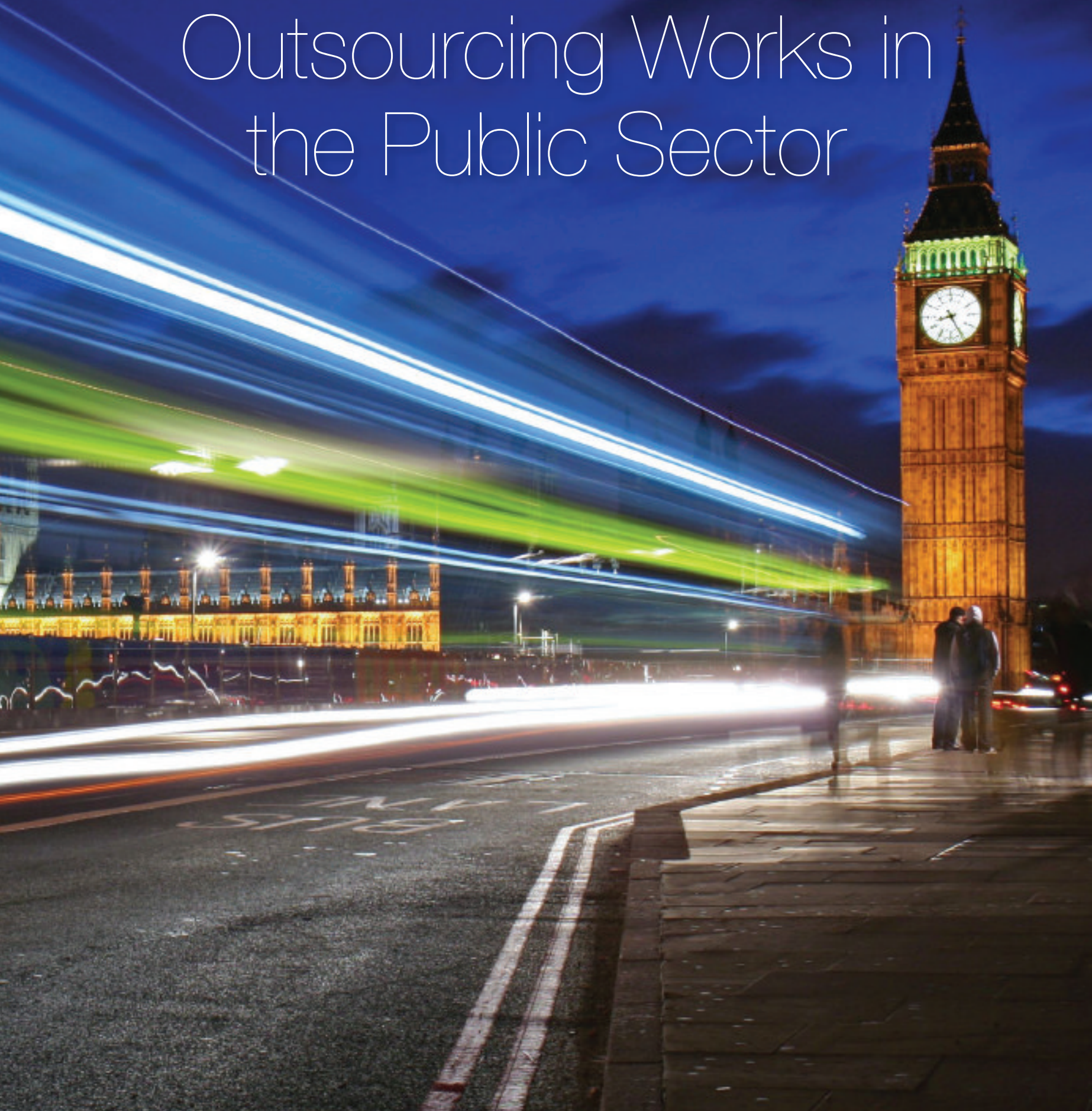




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Accreditation
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- How do we compare to our competitors?
- Are we achieving outsourcing best practice?

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- Highlight changes to be made to achieve cost savings & service improvements
- Assure clients, stakeholders & company heads that you’re outsourcing to the best industry standards

“The BBC undertook corporate accreditation to get external expert analysis of our processes and procedures for the awarding and governing of our major outsourced contracts. We chose the NOA as an external accreditor because they are widely recognised as being at the forefront of contract management.”

“In the long term, the NOA’s analysis will initiate the simplification of some processes, and help us create a more efficient outsourcing lifecycle model... that will remove unnecessary costs from our procurement process and lead to even more efficient contract delivery, giving further opportunity to create ongoing value through the lifecycle of our contracts.”

- Jim Hemmington, Director of Procurement, BBC

Contact the NOA today to start your corporate accreditation journey:
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How do we rid the public sector of outsourcing failure?

The NOA launched its inaugural Public Sector Day to drive public sector outsourcing success.

When giving the welcome for the NOA Public Sector Day, BBC director of procurement and NOA Council member Jim Hemmington acknowledged that the timing of the event was more than appropriate. Despite plenty of contracts performing admirably and the government's use of outsourcing increasing day by day, extensive vitriol in the press directed towards public sector outsourcing is more prevalent than ever.

Hence why the NOA opted to bring civil servants and supply-side experts together for a day to showcase recent outsourcing successes, discuss the latest best practices and provide professional training focused on relationship management and good governance. Trust, collaboration and relationship-building between buyer and service provider were all key topics throughout the day.

Following Jim's welcome, NOA marketing director Tom Quigley presented the NOA's latest research findings on how effective our industry believes public sector outsourcing to be.

The findings in full

The NOA's snap poll of the UK outsourcing industry found that 72 per cent of those in outsourcing working in or with the public sector think clear standards for outsourcing conduct must be implemented; the same survey found this view is reflected by 80 per cent of the UK outsourcing industry overall.

The NOA's survey also found that 88 per cent of the UK outsourcing industry thinks increased transparency would not harm the efficiency of outsourced public

services, and should be encouraged. Corporate accreditation with the NOA is proven to give public sector organisations an improved understanding of their outsourcing processes end to end, making transparency much easier to achieve. The BBC has testified to this fact, stating that the NOA's corporate accreditation has helped the broadcaster handle "intense scrutiny" and "satisfy the BBC's external auditors".

Otherwise the NOA's survey demonstrated that, despite the negative media coverage and total lack of vocal government support, the majority of the UK outsourcing industry still thinks outsourcing helps the public sector more than it hinders it. 65 per cent of the industry called outsourcing the public sector's "saviour", while 35 per cent see it as more of a "villain".

Accordingly, the industry is adamant that the benefits of public sector outsourcing outweigh the negatives. 75 per cent believe that outsourcing helps the public sector significantly cut costs; 63 per cent say it increases process efficiency, while 57 per cent argue service providers help the public sector by handling non-core processes, allowing government organisations to focus on what's core.

However, the negative results of public sector outsourcing were also acknowledged. Specifically, 47 per cent of public sector buyers say that "service providers not delivering as promised" is an all-too-common outcome of their outsourcing; 27 per cent of service providers to the public sector agreed with this statement. And 37 per cent of the entire industry think

that, when the public sector opts to outsource, the retained knowledge of public sector workers is rarely put to good use.

Meanwhile, only four per cent of those with first-hand public sector outsourcing experience think that the UK media’s coverage of outsourcing in the public sector is acceptable as it currently stands. 80 per cent think that the media’s negative coverage of outsourcing in the public sector should be balanced with more success stories.

These findings demonstrate that public sector outsourcing has a significant image problem, with a firm consensus across the industry that the media doesn’t do nearly enough to recognise the benefits outsourcing frequently provides for the UK public sector. However, there’s also clear room for improvement, which could be achieved with the benefit of specialised training and clearly defined standards to follow – both areas in which the NOA is working hard to drive the outsourcing industry forward.



Adam Fineberg delivers his talk on devolution and its effect on public sector outsourcing.



Chris Halward leads an NOA Governance workshop at the Public Sector Day

BBC paves the way for best practice in public sector outsourcing

Find out why the BBC undertook corporate accreditation and how the organisation has benefitted.

Following a six-month process of internal review and external assessment, the BBC has achieved full corporate accreditation for its outsourcing, making it the first organisation to complete the NOA's Corporate Accreditation Programme, which has been implemented fully across all of its major outsourcing contracts.

As a major public sector organisation with an annual budget of circa £5 billion, the BBC's spending is placed under intense scrutiny. To ensure that outsourcing best practice is being achieved across the board, the NOA's Corporate Accreditation Programme has been implemented company-wide, across 12 major outsourcing contracts end-to-end, involving all stages of the contract lifecycle - the outsourcing portfolio covered is valued at circa £570 million per annum.

The corporate accreditation process involved high-level decision makers from across the entire BBC contributing their perspectives on different touch points from the outsourcing contracts they oversee, led by a dedicated BBC project manager. NOA software was then used to consolidate these views, highlighting prominent trends and issues. Accreditation was conducted by an external NOA auditor, who assessed the BBC's outsourcing capabilities following a day of evidence gathering onsite.

Jim Hemmington provided his own explanation of how corporate accreditation benefitted the BBC:

"The BBC undertook corporate accreditation to get external expert analysis of our processes and procedures for the awarding and governing of our major outsourced contracts. We chose the NOA as an external accreditor because they are widely recognised as being at the forefront of contract management. Thanks to the programme, we've identified specific areas for refinement, including simple steps we can take to make quick and meaningful improvements. "In the long term, the NOA's analysis will initiate the simplification of some processes, and help us create a more

efficient outsourcing lifecycle model – closely based on the NOA's – that will remove unnecessary costs from our procurement process and lead to even more efficient contract delivery, giving further opportunity to create ongoing value through the lifecycle of our contracts.

"Overall, we're anticipating greater efficiency and lower costs in both the acquisition and delivery of outsourced services. The BBC plans to use the NOA's outsourcing standards long into the future, to help demonstrate that we are keeping pace with emerging best practice and driving as much value as possible through our outsourced provision."

Kerry Hallard, CEO of the NOA, has also shared her views on why corporate accreditation is beneficial to the industry as a whole:

"At a time when government organisations are increasingly utilising outsourcing to help with cuts to funding, and the media is rife with public sector contract failures, it is crucial that public sector organisations take a measured approach towards their outsourcing relationships, so that they are able to achieve the utmost success with their sourcing.

"The Corporate Accreditation Programme is a crucial part of the NOA's ongoing campaign to professionalise the outsourcing industry. Participating organisations see the process as a journey towards outsourcing excellence, confirming competency, tackling weaknesses, and assuring customers and stakeholders that they're in the safest hands. "We're seeing a number of large, high profile buyers of outsourcing follow in the BBC's footsteps and sign up for corporate accreditation, particularly those operating in heavily regulated industries, including those in the public sector. I'd like to congratulate the BBC on completing the programme in such an impressive fashion - their adherence to best practice has set a very high standard for what organisations can achieve when they embrace outsourcing fully."

Background to the NOA's Corporate Accreditation Programme

The global outsourcing industry currently lacks any clear, definitive standards. The NOA's Corporate Accreditation Programme has been developed to sit above the framework outlined in the NOA's Outsourcing Life Cycle Model – accreditation gives organisations that participate a much better picture of their outsourcing maturity, and highlights strengths and weaknesses in their current approach to outsourcing.

The programme centres around the NOA's Life Cycle Model, a framework that acts as a global standard for excellent outsourcing. The model has been used, critiqued and refined by over 200 organisations, ensuring that it remains the definitive guide for outsourcing best practice globally. It is free to access for all NOA members.

Organisations can start their journey towards corporate accreditation by taking the Outsourcing Maturity Index Assessment via the NOA website or email admin@noa.co.uk for further information.



Collaboration in procurement

In a breakout session at the NOA's Public Sector Day, the Department for Work and Pensions' Paul Carter led a session on how to achieve real collaboration through procurement and outsourcing, providing some insights into how the organisation handles its own procurement processes and outsourcing partnerships.



With an annual spend of £3.2 billion on goods and services in the 2014-2015 period, it is vital for the Department for Work and Pensions to ensure it collaborates with its service providers as effectively as possible. And the government department has a proven track record, having been recently noted as the “most collaborative” partner of the Crown Commercial Service.

In a room of individuals responsible for managing the spend of billions on procurement and outsourcing collectively, Public Sector Day attendees broke off into groups to discuss where service providers and their clients in the public sector must improve in order to collaborate effectively. Here are the fruits of their labour:

Top 10 tips for effective collaboration

- 1)** Never seek to outsource a problem, as problems cannot be outsourced easily. The buyer can work with the service provider and advisors to solve the problem prior to outsourcing if necessary.
- 2)** Don't be afraid to try a multi-vendor approach.
- 3)** Buyers should recognise the importance of market engagement pre-procurement, encouraging numerous service providers to pitch and taking full advantage of their combined knowledge.
- 4)** When doing this, buyers should do their utmost to ensure a level playing field for all bidders involved.
- 5)** Service providers must strive to fully understand their client's requirements, vision and culture from the beginning; buyers should do all that they can to share this information with suppliers.
- 6)** Build fluidity into the contract where possible. The longer the contract span, the more you should anticipate eventual changes in expectation and delivery.
- 7)** Both sides should strive for transparency and articulate any issues early on.
- 8)** Don't let the contract blind you or your common sense – a good relationship between service provider and client is often reliant on elements that can't be contracted for.
- 9)** Similarly buyers should ensure they only use punitive measures as a last resort – an understanding attitude fosters trust between service provider and client, meaning better collaboration long term.
- 10)** The sharing of information and best practice is key – public sector buyers need to recognise the importance of sharing experiences (good and bad) of service providers used and approaching service providers for feedback on themselves as clients.

What you need to know about the Public Contracts Regulations 2015

Nick Blane, partner at Eversheds LLP, offered his firm's summary of recent key changes to procurement regulations, along with some tips on how public sector contract managers can run an effective and compliant procurement process.

On 26 February 2015 the Public Contracts Regulations (PCR 2015) were first published, replacing the 2006 regulations, and subsequently updated in April 2016. The new regulations can be broken down into three main categories as follows:

1) Procurement documents

PCR Regulation 53 dictates that all procurement documents must be issued from the date that a contract or OJEU notice is published.

This means you should be publishing PQQs (including selection criteria, weightings and scoring methodology), descriptive documents, any heads of terms/draft contracts, and any pre-existing plans or surveys that are deemed relevant.

Quick tip: Once the outsourcing deal is in action, flexibility to add or amend procurement documents is extremely limited. It's prudent to reserve a "right to amend" where possible and keep an audit trail at all times.

2) Modifications

Moving onward, substantial modifications to public sector contracts are prohibited, although there are safe harbour provisions which set out circumstances where some modifications not deemed substantial will be accepted.

That said, opportunities for modification are narrow and severely limited. These modification rules apply to contracts concluded both pre and post-PCR 2015.

Quick tip: Commit time to predicting any likely potential changes or optional requirements that may occur in the future of the contract – incorporate them into the contract/OJEU notice and take them into account when specifying scope/value. Bidders should be asked to take into account such options/changes in their offers and explain how it will affect their bid.

3) Termination

All public contracts must now contain provisions enabling an authority to terminate a contract in three circumstances – these provisions will set out the basis on which the power to terminate is to be exercisable. These new rules will apply to existing contracts as well as new ones.

Tips on how to run an effective procurement:

- Preparation is the key – allow enough time to prepare adequately
- Know what you want from the get-go
- Pre-market engagement is highly valuable
- Get your documentation right
- Make sure that your evaluation criteria are geared to produce the right outcome
- Maintain flexibility – don't back yourself into a corner
- Beware material change / adding to scope
- Be realistic about the "art of the possible"
- Remember these key principles:
 - transparency
 - equal treatment
 - non-discrimination

The effects of devolution and combined authorities on the outsourcing market

Adam Fineberg, government services advisor, led a session at the NOA's Public Sector Day analysing the impact of devolution on outsourcing.

Adam's session addressed market changes that will emanate out of the combined authorities and devolution movement, off the back of changes to commissioning in the government health sector, leading to a different playing field in terms of the provision of government services.

It followed research findings from the NOA and other presentations where a series of terms kept on being repeated: "integrators", "collaboration", "outcomes", "incentivisation" etc. The case study presented focused on the experience of efforts around public sector reform – and leaving it to the sector to self-reform. Opportunities for the outsourcing industry to realise these changes were identified, building on the above themes and explaining how to take advantage of these opportunities across different scales, sectors and geographies.

It's important to recognise that the government's devolution plans could lead to the creation of sub-regional markets of public services, ready to be privatised. Just as the previous government reorganised the NHS to create commissioning and separate provider organisations (leading to further outsourcing of public services), so devolution could ultimately disrupt the traditional organisation of council services, potentially bundling them into parcels suitable for outsourcing.

It is likely that devolution will relaunch the previous government's attempts to open up more public services to outsourcing – with this government's offer of devolution to local government potentially leading to several potent unintended consequences: combined authorities losing their local touch, more layers of managerialism and the further fragmentation of public services, potentially paving the way for private sector intervention.

After a traditional presentation the floor was opened up to a personal debate about the dilemmas around public services. This included the opportunities and constraints that the outsourcing sector has in rising to the public service reform challenge and how to realise better outcomes at lower cost. The conclusion was a rallying call for organised sector action, outlining the potential activity required to assist in market development including:

- The publishing/placing of thought leadership pieces, and other publications and quotes
- Engagement with think tanks and government reviews
- The organisation of conferences and roundtables
- The opportunity the outsourcing industry has in delivering on this

About Adam Fineberg

Adam is a leading advisor on government services. He has driven public service reform efforts and designed required, integrated service delivery models over the last 15 years. He helps private sector clients consider how they can support public service reform in a way that opens up new and changing opportunities for their products and services.

This comes on the back of the significant development and growth of regional health economies, now as a result of the recent devolution, combined authorities and growth agenda which is leading to larger, multi-service and geography markets.



Konecta and the Money Advice Service

In under two years Konecta has transformed the way in which MAS assists its customers, also providing reliable support and consistently high results.

The client / the challenge

Due to new regulations being enforced by the FCA regarding the way in which debt management companies (DMCs) operate, the Money Advice Service (MAS) were notified that many services may cease trading, leaving potentially thousands of customers with no debt support.

In late 2014 MAS approached Konecta to create a brand new inbound service to handle this unknown call type. The aim: to service all customers impacted by the DMCs who have ceased trading and are in need of free, additional debt help or support in a positive, friendly and professional manner, and refer them to the best channel of support for their individual needs.

The solution

In December 2014 Konecta began working with MAS to learn and understand the aims, processes and policies of the campaign and MAS as a whole, to plan and arrange the operational set-up which began with 10 FTEs. Konecta recruited and trained the required agents within two weeks, ready for a live date in January 2015.

The initial start-up call volumes were significantly lower than forecast due to delays with FCA announcements. However, due to Konecta's attention to detail in quality, compliance and efficiency during this time, MAS requested the company to train and recruit for an additional service of inbound debt support calls.

This request was met successfully by Konecta from April 2015 and they continue to service both call types to the present day, with the volumes for "impacted client" call type ramping up significantly 2015-2016. Konecta have worked very closely with MAS to understand the issues they face, assisting to combat the debt issues which the customers face, and to identify and report on as soon and as accurately as possible.

This has led to Konecta working on two additional pilot services for MAS due to their engagement and reporting skills.

Results

Sizing: The size of the overall service has almost doubled since it began in January 2015, with the addition of the debt service and increase in impacted client calls. Konecta's promise to MAS is to recruit and train up to double the staff in a two-week period.

Service level vs calls against forecast: Despite unpredictable, fluctuating call volumes, Konecta have always been able to maintain service levels no lower than 97% against call volumes of up to 273% against forecast, meaning all clients queries are handled efficiently. This is achieved by taking the correct customer-focused approach to fully understanding the queries and make certain the clients receive the best possible solution. This approach has been implemented to meet individual needs, and as a result enhance first contact resolution.

Internal quality results: Konecta holds monthly calibrations with MAS to verify the marketing of their calls is of excellent quality – this is the most important area for MAS, and Konecta have therefore focussed their attention as such to achieve and maintain consistently high results across the board.

Konecta's dedicated quality assurance team work closely with the operational team; sharing hints, tips and best practice to maintain high performance and steady improvement. Following the first month of full service the results have consistently remained above the 90% pass mark with the only dips in results coming in periods of large volumes of new starters.

de Poel and North East Procurement Organisation (NEPO)

A national skills gap, political determination for deficit reduction, rising demand for 24/7 access to a nimble workforce and economic growth challenges; the public sector is in the middle of a perfect storm.

Since late 2014, outsourcing specialist de Poel has been working with North East Procurement Organisation (NEPO) – their first ever public sector client – to enhance their customers’ temporary labour provision.

Established in 1976, NEPO undertakes high-value procurement in major strategic areas of spend (such as construction, energy, facilities management and professional services) on behalf of eleven north east local authorities and a range of associate members. All authorities rely heavily on temporary staff to keep services running smoothly – their partnership with NEPO is key to this, and in turn NEPO’s partnership with de Poel.

As an intermediary sitting between NEPO and a panel of recruitment agencies, de Poel fulfils a wide range of skilled job categories for NEPO’s customers on a 24/7/365 basis, managing over 120 agency suppliers every day. The contract is delivered across 260 north east locations via a neutral vendor model.

In a demanding climate, the partnership has already delivered significant efficiencies and improvements, including:

- Cost savings of £1.23m – £230k above the original estimate
- Over £30m in spend – initial projected spend was £25m
- Greater visibility and control of agency spend, through real-time MI
- Captured “out of panel” spend in areas where higher rates were being paid for contingent labour
- Almost 2,000 agency workers transacted per week – up from 1,100
- Access to a high volume, constant supply of quality staff
- Targeting new areas that NEPO was unable to previously, such as social care and education
- Agencies now competing on quality rather than price through standard agreements

- Suppliers working in a transparent, ethical way and sharing NEPO’s values
- Supporting the local economy – in the initial 12-month period, 65% of revenue was within the local economy and 35% from national businesses, equating to £19,727,048 and £10,416,486 respectively
- Total compliance to legislation such as Agency Worker Regulations (AWR) and Modern Day Slave Labour, with a standard and parity safeguarding process in place throughout the entire supply chain
- A significant reduction in administration, with all framework authorities going from hundreds of invoices per week to just four per month
- A certainty that the right workforce will be in play at the right time – ultimately ensuring a positive service to all NEPO’s local authorities and associate members

The target now is to grow the contract to a minimum of £40m in the next twelve months and continue to deliver savings to all authorities.

Due to the levels of service delivery and savings that have been delivered, a decision was made to extend the contract for a further two years. This serves as testament to a successful project between a neutral vendor outsourcing specialist and public sector organisation.

de Poel and NEPO won the award for Excellence in BPO (Public Sector) at the NOA’s Professional Awards 2016.

“The success of the partnership so far is a direct reflection of the processes/systems de Poel has put in place, as well as the efforts Chris and the team have made to cater for each individual authority and their requirements. The team’s determination and enthusiasm for the contract to do well has been evident throughout.”

- Adam Smith, Region Procurement Officer, **NEPO**

CDS and Birmingham City Council

CDS works in close partnership with Birmingham City Council to transform the way the organisation approaches its printing.

The requirement

Birmingham City Council, one of the UK's largest local authorities, required a fully managed, end-to-end print service which would deliver minimum guaranteed savings of 15% and use a Birmingham-based supply chain in order to boost the local economy and comply with the council's Business Charter for Social Responsibility. The council did not have a formal print contract in place, and their existing solution was fragmented which attracted high transactional costs with no opportunity to obtain volume discounts.

The solution

Through the Wider Public Sector Print Services agreement (RM1687) CDS was appointed to manage the marketing and communications print spend for Birmingham City Council. As the council's strategic print partner, CDS has appointed an experienced project manager to engage with the local print market to ensure that the council's Business Charter for Social Responsibility is met. This means that where local capability exists, CDS will deliver 100% of the print spend via suppliers within 30 miles of the Birmingham Council House. To ensure value and savings are achieved the CDS solution includes a bespoke print portal which will manage the council's end-to-end requirements, including the provision of management information, a digital asset management system

and a web to print self-serve tool. Electronic invoicing has also been implemented. Together with guidance on all areas of print specification, the move towards electronic solutions will provide the service and savings that the council requires.

The results

CDS is working in close partnership with the council and the local supplier base to realise efficiencies and transform the way the organisation thinks about print. Their commitment to the Business Charter for Social Responsibility has been recognised with an award, and all supply chain suppliers are committed to the principles of the charter which include embracing local employment, Buy Birmingham First and Partners in Communities.

Now that the print contract is in place the council is dealing with just one supplier rather than the 250 individual suppliers they dealt with previously, and has visibility of all print spend. The single point of contact ensures visibility of all print requests and consistency of branding and messaging. Previously 40% of all print spend bypassed corporate communications and went directly to printers leading to inconsistencies. This has also benefitted the development of a strategy for moving away from tactical print to digital solutions. Internal customer feedback has been excellent, and six months into the contract CDS has delivered 13% of the 15% savings target.

The Environment Agency & Teleperformance

The Environment Agency's flood information call centre service, Floodline was established in 1999 to provide a 24-hour telephone helpline through which the public could access up-to-date information about flooding in their area and make detailed enquiries. The Environment Agency partnered with Teleperformance, the world leader in call centre management, to build and shape a bespoke high volume service that met the needs of customers. Floodline not only provides an important information service to the public in England but also to partners in Scotland (Scottish Environmental Protection Agency) and Wales (Natural Resources Wales).

Floodline and Teleperformance

Teleperformance is a world leading provider of outsourced customer contact management and has worked with the Environment Agency since the outset, delivering an integrated multimedia warning and information service. Both organisations view the programme as a partnership and work closely to deliver the service to the highest standards of quality and customer satisfaction. Due to the high availability and exacting standards of service required, it operates like a "fourth emergency service".

Flexible solution to flood threat

During "Steady State" periods, when inbound call volumes are low, Teleperformance operates Floodline with a small team of dedicated agents who handle the business-as-usual calls and carry out administration tasks. This core team is supported by a much larger pool of trained advisors sited throughout Teleperformance UK's call centre network, who can be called upon at short notice in the event of a flood situation. This works well and provides support to the customers when needed, as well as providing resilience across the range of call centres. When a flood event occurs the service moves to a different level of service called "Event Status". As expected during a flood event there are a large number of distressed and vulnerable callers, which requires advisors to be calm, sensitive and sometimes initiate emergency assistance. Therefore, to

maintain quality of service, each advisor within this pool receives regular refresher training which ensures they are ready to handle Floodline calls should the need arise.

When there is advance notice of adverse weather that may cause call volumes to increase quickly, advisors on a call out list across all participating sites are informed of this possibility, and are alerted to be prepared. Once "Flood Event Status" has been invoked, the point of contact at each site arranges for advisors to become available for the Floodline Service. Once the advisors are in place, the emergency call routing is activated to route the calls to all necessary locations. This ensures that as the call volumes increase, they can be managed by the increased number of fully trained Floodline agents.

More detailed resource planning then takes over to ensure the required advisor coverage necessary to support a prolonged flood event is in place, bringing online other data centres as and when needed at short notice.

This active call management allows the Environment Agency to control costs and still deliver a world class call centre experience for our customers.

This case study originally appeared in the Outsourcing Yearbook 2016.

BBC Audience Services & Capita

Capita works with BBC Audience Services to dramatically change service reputation.

Five years ago the BBC Audience Services contract had been through a bumpy transition; its reputation (and its outsourced partner's reputation) had been affected by this. Clearly the priority was to fix the problems - which happened quickly - and the contract was running smoothly and effectively within a few months. But contract difficulties can linger in the memory long after they are fixed, and that needed to be tackled too.

Rather than just fix the service and hope the rest would follow, the team used the following tactics to dramatically change their reputation:

- Regular internal newsletters
- A programme of visits from senior BBC managers to the contact centre (including the director-general and eight of the 12 BBC trustees)
- Using the externally facing "About the BBC Blog"

- Slots at divisional "awaydays"
- Speaking externally at the NOA, the Customer Contact Association and the Market Research Society
- Getting in front of sceptical stakeholders regularly with evidence of good performance
- Using regular forums such as the Strategic Contracts board, the Complaints Management board and meetings of the BBC Trust to update regularly on new initiatives
- Celebrating success by entering awards ceremonies

This has all been very successful and, in addition to improving the team and Capita's reputation internally and externally, the team are now regularly invited to share their story with other contract professionals.

This case study originally appeared in the Outsourcing Yearbook 2016.

The Home Office & VFS Global

The Home Office and VFS Global come together to provide a highly successful global visa application service.

VFS Global is the world's largest outsourcing and technology services specialist for governments and diplomatic missions worldwide, serving 48 client governments in 123 countries. Established in 2001, it has a global work force of some 7,000 and recently processed its 100 millionth visa applicant. In September 2013 the Home Office awarded VFS a contract for managing UK visa applications globally. The required service packages included application and submission services, biometric enrolment, document registration, interview booking and courier services across six global regions.

The paramount objective was to deliver these services in over 90 separate locations - spread over 40 countries - in just six months, ensuring continuity of service for the Home Office. VFS prides itself on its ability to demonstrate best practice, using methodology such as Lean and Six Sigma to achieve this. It has a structured approach to governance, ensuring effective performance management at all levels and has been constantly innovative, pioneering changes that enhance efficiency and customer service.

Challenges faced included locating and fitting out many new visa application centres, and ensuring that any existing facilities fully met the new requirements, whilst continuing to deliver services under the previous contractual arrangements. The result was a fully successful transition and implementation from an organisation that prides itself at putting people and relationship skills first in order to deliver a world class customer service.

"VFS successfully delivered the requirements of NGOV in over 90 visa application centres across six diverse global regions against a very demanding timeline, ensuring that a secure, effective and high quality service was maintained to all UK visa applicants. Their transition was managed extremely efficiently with excellent communication, planning and governance in place."

- **Simon Peachey, Head of Visa Operations,
UK Visas and Immigration**

This case study originally appeared in the Outsourcing Yearbook 2016.

NHS Blood and Transplant – Online Donor Portal

NHS Blood and Transplant demonstrates dazzling supplier management skills to produce the world's number one blood servicing portal.

The introduction of the NHSBT online donor portal has been an amazing piece of digital development which has not only transformed NHSBT's relationship with donors, but has also had a truly life changing impact on many patients. Led by Jon Latham, Assistant Director Blood Donation, key to the success of this project was cross functional support from all parts of the organisation.

Marketing, IT, operations, business transformation and communications teams were brought together with the objective of designing NHSBT's self-service future. This team was then augmented by procured specialist input from online design agencies (Sapient and Twenty-Six) as well as a core operational system developer (Savant). On top of all this, input from donors was used in every part of the process to ensure that the look and functionality would be attractive to the overall donor pool.

Key achievements include:

- It will truly save lives by not only increasing the number of donations available through greater attendance on session (30,000+ in the first year) but also delivering £1.2 million net saving in the first five years to be reinvested back into frontline services
- It has been universally praised by new and potential donors alike as it has delivered channel shift to provide donor self-service, enhancing the reputation of the blood service
- Its delivery was first class and illustrated best-of-breed in terms of private and public partners working in an agile way, illustrative of the digital delivery that the government is looking for in the public sector

International blood services have also taken note as they aspire to have a similar service of their own – NHSBT is now the number one blood servicing portal in the world.

This case study originally appeared in the Outsourcing Yearbook 2016.