

# One 2 one

Business



Company: Cybermation Customer: One 2 One Submitted by: MCC  
International Date: March 2000 Over 160 million calls a week, and counting. That's the growing extent of One 2 One's ability to connect people through its mobile telecommunications network. The company has consistently had the right services available at the right time and at the right price, and continues to hold its own by being at the forefront of market innovations. Based in the UK and owned by the third largest telecommunications company in the world — Deutsche Telekom — One 2 One provides coverage for more than 98% of the Great Britain population, has 133 international roaming networks across 75 countries worldwide, and has experienced 95% growth in customer base year on year, as well as 43% revenue growth (to ? 781 million by March 1999). To manage rapid growth and increasing complexity requires a superlative IT infrastructure as well as excellence in automation. The key support element behind One 2 One's success in gaining market share is the successful IT automation strategy, championed by senior management, and implemented by a small but effective team which was spearheaded by Ray Murphy, IS Infrastructure Manager.

### **Customer care, automated**

From the outset One 2 One's single most important business application was Virtuoso, their pivotal customer care and billing system. And because of the rapid customer growth they were experiencing in 1995, they needed a product which would automate Virtuoso for them. The application ran across AS/400s, had a small element on the mainframe, and also touched the UNIX platform. They needed a solution which could manage this crucial application from a single point. For three years they tried every scheduling system

available, one after the other, but none of them would do the job. “ By the time we got to Cybermation, with the same promises as every other vendor — that they could deliver a solution — we weren’t at all receptive”, said Murphy.

“ So we challenged them by saying that if they could deliver automation for Virtuoso within a month, the contract was theirs. They delivered! Cybermation’s enterprise batch management system, ESP Workload Manager (ESP), was the only product that could automate our customer care and billing system.” Murphy applied the ESP technology and gave benefits to his organisation that even he may not have anticipated. “ ESP gave us a large return the first week it went live - in’ human error’ terms, in motivation and everything else,” he observed. “ ESP has made life a lot easier, more predictable, and has made changes more manageable. It has delivered all that it promised.

“ Virtuoso has a long and interactive billing run. It used to take as much as three hours to be able to set up a schedule. Now, because ESP has automated all of this, the three hours has gone away. The only requirement is to put in ad hoc jobs - and ESP makes that easy too. According to Murphy, “ Manual operator intervention dropped noticeably, and our batch times immediately became more efficient. Since then, the business has grown.

Our customers have doubled in 12 months. Today a billing cycle may still take five hours, but as we’re handling many more customers now, that’s a big pay-back. We’ve reached three million customers and now (at time of writing) manage our automation with less staff — a lot less.” Murphy can

now focus on delivering value and service to his organisation. “ The biggest impact business-wide is that ESP has allowed us to reduce the risk.

We can now deliver new initiatives as and when required.”

## **Leading-edge technology**

One 2 One’s environment features nine large AS/400s – the most leading-edge models that IBM can offer. Their Customer Care and Billing systems run on two of these, with the others providing pre-production, development and the financial systems. The mainframe is on the tail end and is not greatly significant.

Looking ahead, the strategic plan is firmly UNIX-based.” We buy leading-edge technology – because we have to stay competitive”, says Murphy. The intent is to eliminate mundane tasks to ensure that people have interesting and diverse roles. Otherwise they would not be able to retain skilled people – and finding the correct skills in this industry can be difficult. One 2 One wants to keep staff not just because of their technical ability, but also because of their business knowledge.

## **Measuring the benefits**

Murphy insists that “ ESP has given us painless automation. Because we’ve been able to get rid of human intervention, operator errors have been almost eliminated.” He recounted that at their last monthly production review there was one operator error compared to at least 30 a month when they first started looking at automating Virtuoso. “ For the last eight months, because of ESP, we have had only one or two a month.”” We do 19 bill runs each

month, and that means that we are working on someone's bill each and every day.

If we miss one billing cycle for whatever reason, it will affect all other billing cycles, said Guy Hammel, Project Manager. " We cannot and will not allow this to happen." Missing deadlines would have a huge knock-on effect.

Through human intervention and subsequently human error, or simply making changes, it would be easy to miss the window to transmit data or for an allocated bill printing slot. In turn, this could potentially mean being two or three days late in sending out bills to customers. Customers expect to see their bills and write their cheques or have a direct debit transaction occur on the same day of the month, and they also expect that the bill will be correct.

Any errors or delays generates additional calls into One 2 One's call centers for customer service, which increases demands and delays on the phones, and takes staff away from other service activities. " All of this can cause service degradation, which means we are not meeting our customers' needs and requirements (our aim in business)," said Murphy. Hammel has set up ESP so that they can run to their pre-allocated timetable reliably, which generates less work throughout the company and keeps customers happy. " Virtuoso is a functionally rich, heavy application, and because of ESP our entire customer care and billing system is managed by one person - me", said Hammel. Now, he is free to spend time improving the application, rather than handling the mundane task of making it run. Not only that, but he can walk in at any time, press a button, and get a view of the whole workload.

He can see how it is going, how long it will be before specific points in the schedule will be reached, and when it will complete. For their interface into ESP Workload Manager for defining, monitoring and controlling workload they have standardised on the graphical user interface, ESP Workstation.” With ESP, we can easily predict the future. We know what will be happening and when, and this allows other parts of the business to plan better,” remarked Hammel. “ We have reduced the effort in managing what people have to do.

For example, the 100 page batch schedule which we used to produce and which Cap Gemini would work with is now five pages, and these only cover additional requirements”” The number of staff required by Cap Gemini to provide the facilities management requirement has been reduced with the introduction of ESP. We now receive a higher quality service that’s manageable and predictive. The reduction in staff is due to ESP’s high efficiency, and is self evident,” said Murphy. “ They are certainly using a lot less people on our account which proves that ESP as a very good investment.”

## **Innovative automation**

When you are looking for maximum return on investment in technology, you find ways to fully exploit your automation tools. One 2 One is no different.

They wanted to simplify views so that it is easy to manage by exception, and to get directly to relevant information. They have been able to separate applications so that systems or technical staff get their own view, and if the application support staff need to know what’s going on they just look at their

schedule rather than wading through a lot of intermixed information. People can see what they are responsible for supporting that night. Then they can easily and quickly get to that screen on ESP Workstation, print it out and take it home in case they are contacted later. One 2 One is also using ESP to eliminate delays by removing the need for telephone interaction between people.

Hammel described how. “ We use ESP’s alert process to trigger e-mails directly from our UNIX systems. Based upon whether a job is running late, completes successfully or fails, we can e-mail our people’s mobile phones using our own network, as well as e-mailing their personal computers. ESP is notifying support teams immediately and they can continue with business without any delays. They know right away if their data is with their supplier, for example, and so they can start chasing reconciliation reports, and audit reports.”

## **Close relationships**

In 1999, One 2 One was acquired by Deutsche Telekom — the third largest carrier in the world.

The resulting financial support will help the business to develop its technological plans, and so become more competitive still. There has been no restructuring, change in direction or new goals for One 2 One. It’s ‘ business as usual’. For expansion beyond the phenomenal customer growth they are experiencing, they are also looking elsewhere for opportunities. For example, Virgin Mobile, launched late in 1999, looked to the success and

expertise of One 2 One to help them to automate and manage their pre-payment mobile phone system.

One 2 One provided the infrastructure for Virgin Mobile - the hardware and software and the applications to run it, of which Virtuoso forms a key part (Virgin Mobile is a 50: 50 joint venture partner of One 2 One). Cybermation has turned out to be a key player for One 2 One. “ You work with us more as a partner than as a supplier, and that’s the way we like to operate. We can work with you to bounce around new ideas and you help us to get the best return out of ESP. The fact that we can bring ideas for you to incorporate into new versions works very well for us.

On top of that, you provide timely responses to requests - only 30 minutes today for example.” One 2 One needs its suppliers to understand their business so that they can provide the solutions they need. One 2 One is proactive, and that’s why it has been such a great success.