

ISS UK

Business



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Company: Lynx Technology Customer: ISS UK Submitted by: Lynx Technology

Finding a company to supply help desk support and maintenance to 75 offices nationwide wasn't an easy task for ISS UK Ltd, the £175m turnover multi-services company headquartered in Hounslow. Specialising in office cleaning but now expanding into other services for large organisations, ISS has 400 IT users out of a 23, 000 strong workforce." Many support companies are only too willing to provide a help desk for one site serving 2, 000 users, but very few can take on the more difficult task of looking after many small sites around the country – and make a success of it," says Mike Straw, IT Director at ISS. Lynx was to eventually emerge as the IT partner that ISS was looking for, offering a new type of help desk and support service.

The Need

In 1994 the ISS group decided to decentralise and return responsibility to its eight operating companies.

" At the time, all our IT people were located at Aylesbury and we realised that providing IT desktop support for the whole of the UK was a specialist function and not core to our business," explains Mike. A series of networks were installed and for a while the ISS IT team endeavoured to support the new structure. " When we reviewed the situation we decided to bring it under control and provide a better service to our users. We were faced with a situation of either expanding our internal department or outsourcing." ISS then used an external company to run the support and maintenance function, while the existing help desk staff focused on delivering first line

telephone support. But the service provided by the outsourced company brought frustrations.

“ We had several suppliers looking after us, because our main supplier had to rely on a number of sub contractors. Our staff were frustrated with dealing with different companies, who would sometimes pass ownership of a problem to another of the sub contractors,” says Mike. “ This created time delays and increased calls to the help desk, leading to a vicious circle of more enquiries and complaints.”

The Solution

In 1997 ISS began searching for a supplier which had its own national support and maintenance presence and could provide help desk expertise. It eventually chose Lynx Technology. Mike Straw outlines the reasons why.

“ We wanted a company that would deliver what it promised and Lynx Technology’s track record showed that it could do just that. In addition, the Lynx offering is more of a partnership than just a service; they dedicate specific people to look after ISS and sort out both hardware and software problems. We were also impressed by Lynx Technology’s nationwide coverage and their ability to provide the required level of service. Lynx is now providing us with the closest we can find to a one-stop-shop service.” Under the terms of the agreement, Lynx supplies a dedicated help desk team which includes a first-line operator and second-line co-ordinator to manage calls and ensure resolution of all users’ problems. Hardware and network support is provided via three full time dedicated Lynx engineers.

This five-strong team is complemented by Lynx Technology's general field service staff – to guarantee that Lynx will meet the Service Level Agreements stipulated by ISS. In addition, Lynx has carried out a company-wide technical audit of the existing asset base and provides procurement for file servers, PCs and related products. The help desk uses Utopia's Enterprise Support Centre – a tightly integrated suite of applications that includes Utopia/Help Desk. Lynx provided help desk consultancy as part of the contract and recommended that ISS evaluate three software packages, including Utopia, which was chosen as the preferred system.

The Benefits

How does Lynx manage to keep on top of a task that even ISS admits must be a difficult one?" We are committed to treating our customers as partners. The result is an improved working environment for everyone, a more effective information flow, and a better service," say Paul Edgeley, Lynx Sales & Marketing Director.

Mike Straw believes this policy works. " Lynx people associate very much with our own and are therefore able to prioritise work. They know what our priorities are and can schedule their engineers accordingly. We wouldn't get that sort of approach with a traditional maintenance contract."" Our Guaranteed Service Levels to ISS are maintained because we have our own nationwide support service and place the emphasis on partnering.

It's the way forward if you want to keep customers on a national level," adds Paul Edgeley. Managed help desk support is a high priority service. " Help desks provide quality internal support for IT users and generate a good

internal customer service culture, which in turn helps our customers to improve their external client relations.” Mike Straw says there is even more to the service than all this. “ Because Lynx is also a hardware and software supplier, they help us with procurement and advice. This is an important added bonus as it frees us up to concentrate on our core business.”