

Knology's Intensive Service Roll-Out



The Company

Knology was established in 1994, by just two people with a \$600k investment. Their revolutionary concept used fiber optic technology to deliver superior quality cable TV, telephone and Internet services from a single source. The results were better quality, faster speeds, lower consumer costs and the ease of a single provider.

Knology now offers interactive video, voice and data services to cities throughout the Southeast USA. Their interactive broadband network delivers the fastest, most reliable digital cable television, local and long distance digital telephone service and high-speed Internet access. Their bundled package, allows residential and business customers to purchase all three of these services from a single source.

In 2002, Knology employs 1200 personnel to service the needs of 235,000 customer connections, bringing revenues of \$105M. For the future, Knology will be offering digital applications like Web e-mail and Web browsing via TV set-top boxes, as well as video on-demand.

The Challenge

Knology's target markets are cities in the Southeast with a home count of 70,000-300,000 and a geographic density that averages a minimum of 75 homes per mile. Their goal is to provide network access to 1.5 million homes and businesses by 2005 utilizing their network of 200 field technicians.

The Solution

The company had already evaluated service management systems (SMS) and found that the Clarify SMS was the best fit for Knology's business and technical needs but they still needed to find the best optimized scheduling application. They documented their key criteria and scheduling requirements before carrying out a comparative evaluation of optimized scheduling applications and vendors.

KEY BENEFITS

- Reliable service delivery
- Increased 'first time fix' rate
- Increased utilization of field technicians
- Increased utilization of service controllers
- Visibility of all customer requests, technician deployment and schedules
- Flexibility and scalability for growth

At that time ClickSoftware had recently announced their 'FastTrack' implementation approach, enabling optimized scheduling to be introduced in as little as 60 days. Knology selected ClickSchedule as their chosen solution because, as Anthony Palermo, VP of Operations and Marketing, put it:

"Apart from our key requirement for best fit functionality and value for money, speed of implementation was critical to achieving our intensive roll-out program of services and support."

Following visits to ClickSchedule reference sites, Knology and ClickSoftware signed contracts in June 2000 and planned for the swift integration of the ClickSchedule (Version 6.1) scheduler with Clarify using a pre-integrated adaptor between the applications. Discussions followed on the plans for a FastTrack implementation.





The Implementation

Knology agreed that implementation should be phased, so that ClickSchedule would first be applied to 'break/fix' jobs (ensuring service continuity for existing customers) followed by the scheduling of installations for new customers. The ClickSchedule business rules and objectives were defined and tuned to Knology's requirements, followed by the cleansing and loading of the field engineering skill sets. Knology's service personnel received on-site education and training before being directly involved in user acceptance tests on the test system.

Phase 1 (Break/Fix network maintenance) was broken down into an intensive Divisional (City) rollout plan (2-3 Cities/week) and went live across 100 technicians, within the planned 90 days, in October 2000. Some initial resistance to the newly automated support infrastructure from service controllers was swiftly overcome when they recognised the value of having clear visibility of maintenance service operations via the color-coded Gantt display.

Phase 2 expanded the use of ClickSchedule to all 200 technicians, together with some tuning and enhancements to street level travel optimization which will minimize inter-job travel distance and time, allowing the technicians to spend more time on new installations.

Rob Hemker, Project Manager, commented upon the integration and implementation of the new service support infrastructure saying: "We met our project deadlines thanks to the pre-integration between Clarify and ClickSchedule, the relative ease of use and the excellent team-working between Knology, Clarify and ClickSoftware."

Knology is now supporting the Phase 2 rollout by selecting and implementing mobile data communications for job dispatch and real-time status reporting by the field technicians, using the latest PDA handsets and wireless network technology.

"Knology has a powerful focus on delivering customer enthusiasm and market growth, from providing efficient customer service and reliable field engineering - the combined support to the business from Clarify and ClickSchedule is helping us to achieve just that."

- Anthony Palermo, Sales Executive

- For more information on Knology see www.knology.com
- For more information on ClickSoftware see www.clicksoftware.com

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