

## Case Study

### Northern Ireland Environment Agency



# BT applications support lets Agency concentrate on core business

## Challenge

The Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) implements the government's environmental policies in the region, with responsibilities that range from pollution prevention controls and treatment of hazardous waste to protecting the natural environment and built heritage sites.

Whilst support of the IT infrastructure is in the main managed by IT Assist (the ICT Shared Service Centre for the Northern Ireland Civil Service), the NIEA recognised that it needed to maintain a separate support role for its Line of Business applications.

"There are a large number of small to medium systems used by a large number of people within the organisation, they are business critical and quite unique. So it was important to find a service provider that could take on the responsibility of developing and running them," said Sean Connolly, IT Manager, NIEA.

After a competitive tender process, BT won the contract to develop and support the 60 bespoke line of business applications and provide a managed service wrap around the infrastructure. Managing an on-line presence, where the agency interacts with citizens, was another aspect of the agreement.

## Benefits

Applications are hosted and run from the NIEA's Klondyke Building in Belfast. The agency has three head offices and 20 remote sites across Northern Ireland. While some of them require remote access to the applications, the vast majority of users are based in Klondyke.

An on-site BT development team quickly became an extension of the Agency's own IT resources. By focusing on a very specific and potentially time-consuming application layer, the rest of the organisation is free to carry on with its day-to-day business. The inhouse IT team is available to firefight unexpected problems or work on more strategic projects.

A number of applications that BT has developed for the NIEA have a mapping component. BT has a strong relationship with ESRI Ireland, who manage the core GIS applications using ArcGIS, ensuring that the critical mapping thread is in safe hands.

Another aspect of BT's role is in supporting a web site where Northern Ireland citizens are able to interact with the agency across the different areas of its work.

"All the support elements add up to make it a more efficient and effective way of doing things," said Sean Connolly. "BT takes the pressure off us around key parts of the business and lets us concentrate on doing the rest."

The precise number of BT people on site people will vary depending on the workload. It is this flexibility that brings added benefits to the arrangement. "We proposed a flexible model of working from the outset," explained Kevin McEnoy, BT Account Manager. "We can scale up or down to meet the requirements of a particular project and its budget. Basically NIEA can draw on BT expertise as and when they need it. This is a very attractive model in the current economic climate."

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