

South Ayrshire Council

South Ayrshire Council serves a population of just over 110,000 people in an area that includes both urban and rural environments. Its principal towns include Ayr, Alloway, Girvan, Maybole, Prestwick, Symington and Troon.



Solution required

South Ayrshire Council, like many other Scottish local authorities, needed to embrace flexible and remote working to help the Council make savings on real estate, travel and communications costs and improve productivity.

The Council also wanted to improve its communication and enhance the services available.

Communication between the Council's various offices has been expensive, historically. The area covers four dialling codes, and the old system meant calls were being made across conventional cost structures.

In addition, the system offered no additional services, such as instant messaging, presence, audio, video or web conferencing. Modernising work practices means that employees are becoming more accustomed to 'hot desking', working from home, or from a variety of different Council sites.

The system provided no enhancements to facilitate this and the Council needed a solution that could manage more data and richer media.

Applications utilised

Microsoft OCS 2007 R2
Exchange 2007 Unified Messaging

Solution delivered

Exactive helped South Ayrshire Council prepare for a significant upgrade which would involve the introduction of Microsoft Office Communications Server (OCS) 2007 R2, branded locally within the Council as Prism.

For the South Ayrshire team, this involved everything from arranging new telephone lines to upgrading PC hardware with additional memory and greater power, where necessary.



SOUTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL OFFICE

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*John Porter,
Service Development Manager,
South Ayrshire Council*

After an initial pilot involving 50 users – an excellent means of gauging progress and identifying issues – the team rolled out the new communications system to nearly 3,000 users within two months.

This included staff in all local schools and Council offices. The intention is to continue adding to the range of services available through OCS, and to encourage their use.

Wherever possible, the Council and its employees will benefit from improved flexibility such as 'hot desking' or working from home, thereby freeing up facilities and space within the Council property portfolio. Operating costs have been reduced, especially in telephony, and travel costs are reducing significantly, which also contributes to the Council's carbon management programme.

Client comment

"Exactive's expertise and deep knowledge of the Microsoft solution has been a fundamental part of this project. It is the right size of company to provide services to us, and had been providing IT support services for two years prior to this project.

"with Prism – our name for Microsoft OCS – we can really begin to reap the benefits of flexible working, and do it properly and efficiently, which benefits both the organisation and our employees. This is a real attraction. Exactive is good at developing a good working relationship quickly, but with a personal touch. The team is approachable, responsive and works as a strong partner in this exciting project that is transforming how we work."

**John Porter, Service Development Manager,
South Ayrshire Council.**

Exactive comment

"This was a significant, complex project, the largest of its type in the UK, and has been a huge success with South Ayrshire Council deserving a lot of credit for choosing the right solution and working hard with us to make it happen. We are absolutely delighted with the progress, and we have developed a strong understanding of the way they work. That is of key importance to us wherever we work, especially in local government where there are many stakeholders. Exactive prides itself in being able to integrate well with client's project teams."

Robert Hutchison, Director, Exactive.



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