

Argyll & Bute Council

Argyll & Bute Council covers the second largest land-mass of all Scottish local authorities, covering a diverse geographical area that stretches from Oban to the Isle of Bute. It includes towns such as Oban, Lochgilphead, Inveraray, Helensburgh and Rothesay, as well as many rural areas. Its staff need to work closely to the communities whom they serve, wherever possible.



Solution required

Argyll & Bute Council is in the midst of an ambitious programme of change, aimed at improving efficiency, introducing more flexible working, and using new practices and technology to deliver services across the area it serves.

The council has nearly 1,850 corporate staff, and 1,320 of them are becoming “flexible” workers, using information and communications technology to work from home, within their communities. A pilot scheme was launched in Oban during 2010.

While planning for such a change, the Council knew that it needed to pull together its various IT and telecoms systems in an efficient and coherent manner. It chose Microsoft solutions and picked Exactive as the company to help deliver them.



Applications utilised

Microsoft Lync

Solution delivered

Exactive worked alongside Argyll & Bute Council’s IT Infrastructure Manager, Gerry Wilson, and his team, using Microsoft Lync to replace the council’s existing telephone system.

An initial pilot of 50 users was run successfully, and the programme was extended quickly to a much larger group. The implementation team reviewed the Council’s needs, balancing the need to make the concept of flexible working happen, whilst integrating new technology with “legacy” systems and also helping the council to save money and work more efficiently.

The move to flexible working is being helped by general improvements in broadband access across Argyll & Bute, thanks to Scottish Government support. The project introduced and integrated a range of Microsoft product features, including

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instant messaging (IM), presence, audio, video & web conferencing and voice.

It was completed on time and so successfully that the Council is now examining a broader roll-out of services to other staff.

Client comment

“There have been real challenges in this project, which has required careful thinking from all concerned. We certainly got that from Exactive and the rest of the team as we set about integrating systems and supporting the move towards flexible working.

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“For Exactive, Robert Hutchison and Richard McPhee really excelled. It became quickly apparent to us that Exactive were the right choice for this project. They have demonstrated good attention to detail, and a willingness to work hard to make sure things happen.

“The council employs a total of 5,000 people and there will be a further roll-out wherever practicable over the coming years.”

**Gerry Wilson, IT Infrastructure Manager,
Argyll & Bute Council.**

Exactive comment

“The geographical spread of Argyll & Bute Council’s services and activities provides an excellent platform for Microsoft’s highly competitive and ground-breaking communications technology.

“This project gave Exactive the opportunity to show what we can do with that technology, working alongside the client every step of the way.”

Robert Hutchison, Director, Exactive.



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