

OpEx

Hosted Telephony Services

Case Study



Carers UK team up with OPEX Hosting to support home working volunteers

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Emily Hodge,
Project Manager,
Carers UK



With 6.5 million carers across Great Britain, charity organisation Carers UK was set up nearly 50 years ago to offer support to unpaid carers looking after family or friends. Providing a telephone advice line to help sustain carers with emotional support and guidance, they recently appointed 10 home-based volunteers to complement the 2 office based advisors who collectively handle over 100 calls a day.

Carers UK identified a need for call recording to support this pilot 'volunteer project' and when deciding on a system to adopt, sought advice from the telephone helpline association in recommending vendors. OPEX Hosting came out top on value for money and providing vital features, Emily Hodge, Project Manager at Carers UK said "the call recording system was easy to implement, user friendly and easy to manage following a brief training session. After a one month trial, I was keen to continue using OPEX as the customer service was second to none and the shift changing function was easy to administer."

Receiving calls on their advice helpline the OPEX call routing function enables the volunteer on duty to take the call from the comfort of their own home, a key factor in being able to offer quality and compassionate listeners.

Not only was the charity unable to house a 'call centre' at their Southwark offices, volunteers have no additional travel costs and a key factor in recruiting them for the role was the ability to provide a flexible working environment, something the OPEX system has facilitated.

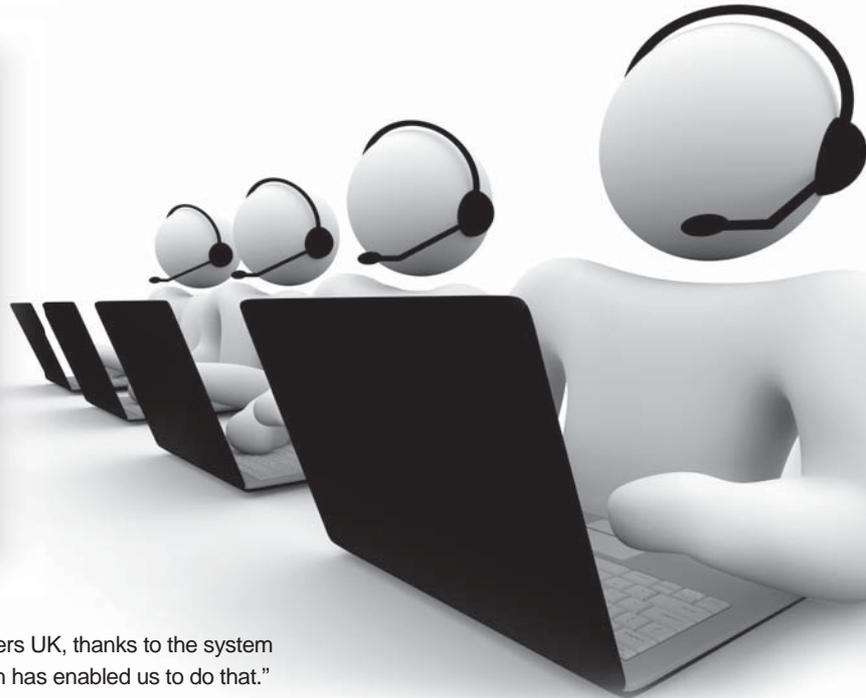
The primary role of the volunteer is to be there in a listening capacity and it is important that the boundaries between counselling and simply listening are not crossed. The OPEX system has provided the ability to give de-briefs and feedback by sharing and playing back calls whilst allowing Carers UK to ensure volunteers do not undertake counselling and advising.

CARERS UK
the voice of carers

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Emily Hodge, Project Manager,
Carers UK



Recordings are also played back by the Project Manager to assess how the volunteers are handling calls, empathising with callers and due to the sensitive nature of some of the calls assess the impact of the call on the volunteer. These calls are then shared within a private group forum and used to hold remote training sessions as a way to improve response handling and better preparing the volunteers for different situations.

This commitment to quality and service ensures that they are giving their callers the most they can from the service. Emily Hodge commented “feedback from people who have called the service indicates they felt supported and listened to and have got an holistic

service from Carers UK, thanks to the system we’ve used which has enabled us to do that.”

An additional and unanticipated benefit of the system has been the ability to listen to calls to pinpoint, report on and block offensive callers. This has been integral in preventing team morale deteriorating by playing back these calls during training and explaining best practice techniques but also providing reassurance that calls will be blocked and no longer a nuisance.

Being a charity looking to expand, a key aim is to highlight what has actually been delivered for those it sets out to help. With the use of reporting on call volumes and handling this is now something they can do.

Emily stated “the reporting function has been fantastic - it has provided us with reports that we couldn’t easily access before, and I am now able to demonstrate to senior managers, trustees and funders, the impact we are having on the people we are calling.”

Emily concluded by saying “Overall the OPEX call recording and routing system provides high quality information which meets our overall objective of supporting carers in a meaningful way, it was everything we hoped it would be.”

About OPEX Hosting Ltd

OPEX Hosting is a specialist provider of hosted “pay-as-you-go” telephony and call centre solutions. Applications are designed for general businesses and specialist call centres and are provided without the need to install and maintain expensive capital equipment on client premises.

Solutions from OPEX are typically customised to provide the right corporate look and feel and are used to manage multiple campaigns, back up call centre resources when demand is excessive and can provide multi-site and home worker connectivity.

Services include: call recording, mobile phone recording, ACD /

routing, self-service IVR and scheduling.

The key benefits forming the bedrock of this hosted applications suite include low cost access to specialist technology, scalability of service, systems resilience, centralised management and most importantly flexible working.

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