

Case Study: Brimbank City Council evolves to become more customer-centric with help from Precisely

Putting the community first

The city of Brimbank encompasses 25 new and established suburbs lying to the west of Melbourne, Australia, and includes a rapidly growing mix of industrial and residential property. The city council's systems were outdated and expensive to run, data was siloed and hard to leverage, and the council was challenged to meet increased community expectations whilst reducing inefficiencies. With an impending move to a new, efficient building, the time was right to start fresh. Putting the community first was the council's top priority, which required a shift in business model from property-centric to customer-centric.

Business challenge

"Our mission was to drive a community-first work culture right across the organisation", says Helen Morrissey, the director of corporate and community relations at Brimbank City Council. "In order to do this, we had to support our staff with the right technology so that they could provide the best service possible".

However, the city council was saddled with older corporate systems that were inflexible and unresponsive, yet expensive to run. Any new solutions that the city council elected to incorporate needed to create short-term efficiencies while equipping them to meet the long-term complexities surrounding an expanding, increasingly diverse city. This requirement launched a pioneering digital transformation initiative at Brimbank City Council.

Inefficient siloed data

City councils create data and lots of it. At Brimbank, the data is collected in many different ways and was held in numerous siloed corporate systems. "Without easy access to the data, and with the data often being entered without the correct business rules, it became evident we could never provide excellent customer service or make informed business decisions based on our data", Morrissey relates.

Meanwhile, the city council had other simultaneous challenges: inefficient, decentralised operations spread across several buildings, an outdated website that did not allow for online payments or self-service, and poor address data that led to unnecessary postage expense.

"We could not provide great customer service to our citizens, and this was time consuming and frustrating for staff", Morrissey explains.

Client profile

Brimbank City Council

www.brimbank.vic.gov.au

- One of the largest metropolitan councils in Australia
- Prides itself on cultural diversity, having embraced more than 156 nationalities from around the globe
- Services include waste collection, senior and child care, parks, pets, and disaster response

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– Helen Morrissey, Director of Corporate and Community Relations

With the consolidation of operations into a single building, it was time for a change. “We didn’t want the “old ways” following us into our lovely new building”, says Morrissey. “We had a great opportunity to start from day one with our “community-first” approach”.

Solution

The roots of change at Brimbank City Council began with gaining a greater understanding of how the community wanted to transact and interact with the council — as opposed to how the council would do it. “We were also mindful of costs and not wanting to replace good systems with bad”, Helen Morrissey says. “We decided to look towards our existing vendors to partner with us in delivering a community-first outcome”.

One of Brimbank’s long-time vendors was Precisely. After a rigorous review of what each vendor had to offer, as well as looking at a corporate enterprise system with another vendor that was deemed out of financial scope, Spectrum Single Customer View technology was deemed the superior choice. “The Precisely solution has been proven globally and was highly rated in 2016 by both Forrester and Gartner”, Morrissey adds. The fact that Brimbank considered Precisely a reliable, trusted technology partner was also important.

While the Spectrum Single Customer View solution has already proven successful at many commercial entities, Brimbank City Council is the first council in Australia to implement it. This speaks to Brimbank’s changing focus and commitment to customer service. The dedicated digital transformation team at Brimbank City Council was charged with ensuring that every piece of new technology had a positive customer service impact. And the Spectrum Single Customer View solution more than met the criteria.

The solution allows organisations to capitalise on the massive amounts of data they already have. By connecting siloes of inaccessible information and sharing it across the organisation, a fully integrated 360-degree view of each and every customer can be leveraged. With the Spectrum Single Customer View solution, public sector entities such as Brimbank City Council can better connect with the community, improve efficiency, reduce waste and gain insights that can help manage government services, analyse crime and offer a higher level of service to citizens.

Phase one completion

Implementation of the solution at Brimbank City Council has been a big project. The council had a total of nine separate systems with more than 50 corporate applications, each of which collected customer information in various forms. At project kickoff, the Precisely team began assisting Brimbank by profiling the existing data and defining business rules.

Phase one of the implementation has been completed. “The Spectrum solution has integrated three of our main corporate systems, providing data cleansing, data quality and analytics”, Morrissey explains. Phase two includes a further six corporate systems to create the single customer view.



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– Helen Morrissey, Director of Corporate and Community Relations

Benefits

To date, the Spectrum Single Customer View solution is already providing big benefits to Brimbank City Council, with many more expected once phase two is completed. The solution is the engine that drives the council's key business processes, which have evolved. "We are now able to demonstrate our agility within the community", Helen Morrissey states.

The council has implemented a new website that enables customer self-service, allowing citizens to schedule or request services such as waste collection, road maintenance, drainage or fence repairs, report lost pets or make online payments. A single login on the new website allows citizens to access information or request services across multiple departments, while data cleansing has provided address validation and other quantifiable business efficiencies.

In turn, with access to clean, reliable data, Brimbank City Council can now resolve problems in less time and with fewer resources and can provide better customer service. "The Spectrum solution has allowed us to be more responsive to customer needs, and greater customer satisfaction is already evident", Morrissey says. Plus, Brimbank City Council is now able to respond to government compliance mandates with trusted, high-quality data validated by the Spectrum Single Customer View solution.

A collaborative relationship

"We could not have done this on our own", Helen Morrissey states. The trusted relationship with Precisely as well as the service and support offered were an important part of the initial decision to implement the Spectrum Single Customer View solution at Brimbank City Council. And all along the way, Precisely has worked in partnership with the council, beginning with helping to write requirements, upskilling key personnel and now assisting with moving forward in phase two. "Precisely staff are efficient, caring, and professional. They understand our commitment to always improving our service to customers", Morrissey says. "In fact, every solution we use from Precisely, from mapping to spatial data collection to Spectrum Single Customer View, assists us in delivering precision and accuracy", she adds.

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For Brimbank City Council, the goal is to provide the best possible customer service. Today, the council is realising the benefits of a customer-centric evolution based on a single view of the customer that helps the council identify, locate and communicate with each citizen in a better way.

Technology used

- Spectrum Context Graph- Single Customer View
- Existing solutions:
 - MapInfo Pro
 - Spectrum Spatial
 - Confirm Strategic Asset Management
 - ConfirmConnect

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