



Success story

Northamptonshire County Council Fire and Rescue Service

Industry

- Government

Solution

- OpenText Business Process Management software

Partner Support

- ask-4° Business Solutions Limited

Results



Accelerated implementation of process updates, with lower associated costs



Greatly improved security, audit and reporting to meet compliance requirements



Increased customer satisfaction due to reduced use of paper and fewer meetings through process automation and email



Northamptonshire County Council Fire and Rescue Service tackles process efficiency

OpenText Business Process Management efficiently and effectively provides greater process automation, audit and reporting, which reduces administration overhead

"Debrief is just one of many processes that have redesigned and improved using OpenText BPM software. The speed and ease with which we can gather and analyze feedback is helping us improve and learn lessons, which is ultimately saving lives."

Peter Meredith

Information and Communications Systems Manager
Northamptonshire County Council Fire and Rescue Service



Northamptonshire County Council Fire and Rescue Service employs around 650 staff, including more than 400 operational fire fighters, across 22 fire stations. The service has approximately 80 support staff, and along with the senior management team and senior officers, they provide emergency response throughout Northamptonshire and surrounding counties, as well as specialist response for national emergencies.

In common with all public sector organizations, the service was facing challenges of restricted budgets, a drive to better use assets, improving its health and safety procedures, increasing efficiency and modernizing the service. For more than 12 years, the service has been using the OpenText Business Process Management (BPM) platform to assist with a variety of processes. Following an incident such as a fire, road traffic accident, flooding etc., information and feedback is gathered from all those involved, to help understand what worked well and what didn't. Adhering to Health and Safety procedures is also an important element of the solution, as is reporting building defects, among others.

Streamline processes, embracing mobile and email

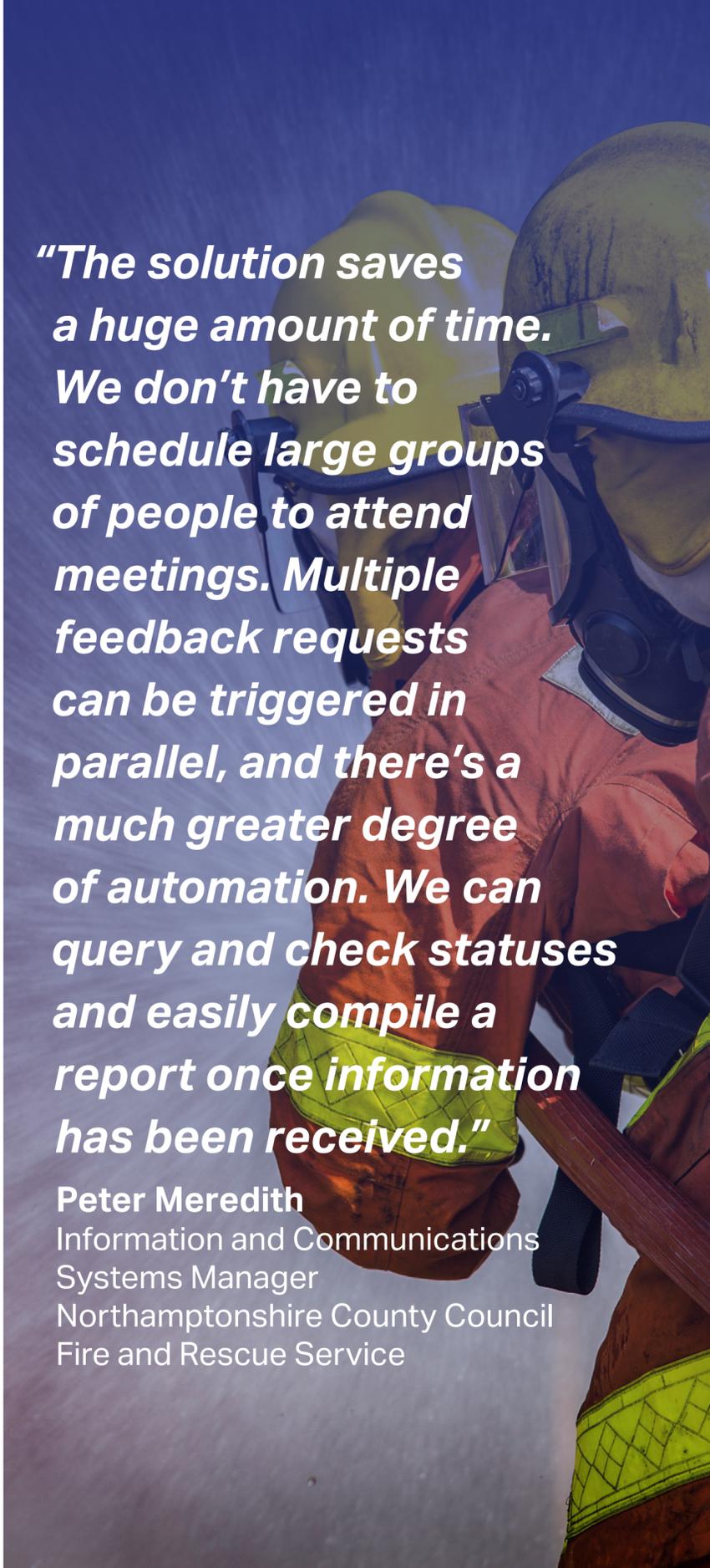
When the solution was first deployed, the use of IT throughout the service was not as widespread as it is today. For example, each fire station had just one PC back then. Today, every member of the service regularly accesses up to 10 core systems from a variety of locations and devices. The growth of email and mobile device use and the drive to reduce costs and increase efficiency, led Northamptonshire to review its OpenText BPM solutions to see what more could be done. This had to be balanced with upholding the very highest standards of service, as well as meeting Health and Safety requirements.

Peter Meredith, Information and Communications Systems manager at Northamptonshire County Council Fire and Rescue Service said, ***“Over the years that the solution has been in use, advances have been made in the solution’s capability, including greater use of email and mobile, which is attractive to us. In order to fully benefit from the latest developments, to modernize the user interface and to build upon the knowledge and experience we’d gained, we decided to look again and evaluate our options.”***

Having attended a number of industry events to evaluate the market, one OpenText partner stood out, ask-4° Business Solutions Limited. With extensive experience of designing, implementing and supporting OpenText Business Process Management implementations, discussions commenced on how ask-4° could help the service benefit from the very latest developments.

Saving lives with critical process improvements

ask-4° demonstrated solutions it had previously built using OpenText BPM software, including one of the most critical processes for the service, ‘Debrief.’ The Debrief process involves feedback being gathered from personnel who have attended an incident. This used to involve a meeting, removing staff from active operations and incurring travel costs. The process was completely redesigned using the OpenText BPM platform and now emails are generated from the solution when a new case is opened. Named individuals or functional groups are configured to receive notification when their input is required. They then simply and quickly complete the electronic forms that the solution generates. Wherever possible, fields in the forms are automatically prepopulated, such as respondent’s name and other details, incident information, saving time and improving accuracy.



“The solution saves a huge amount of time. We don’t have to schedule large groups of people to attend meetings. Multiple feedback requests can be triggered in parallel, and there’s a much greater degree of automation. We can query and check statuses and easily compile a report once information has been received.”

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With so many staff members, each of whom are continually undertaking training, managing user profiles within the solution used to be a significant, time-consuming task. The newly developed processes now use single sign on (SSO), using Active Directory Services. By doing so, when members of staff move to another location or role, the solution seamlessly addresses this, with requests for feedback channeled to the appropriate person or functional group.

“Debrief is just one of many processes that have redesigned and improved using OpenText BPM software. The speed and ease with which we can gather and analyze feedback, is helping us improve and learn lessons, which is ultimately saving lives,” said Meredith.

Improved security, speed of deployment and inter-agency operation

The modern fire service has a far wider remit than ever. With inter-agency cooperation at an unprecedented level and set to rise, the range of incidents not only includes fires but also water rescue and flooding, high rope rescue, first response first-aid, chemical incidents, building collapses, road traffic accidents and more.

“We need to gather feedback from other agencies, such as the police. The solution now allows us to do this in a timely manner, ensuring their input is included in our reports. Security is paramount in such cases and the solution is also providing the necessary protection that we require. Something that was never truly achievable in the past,” said Meredith.

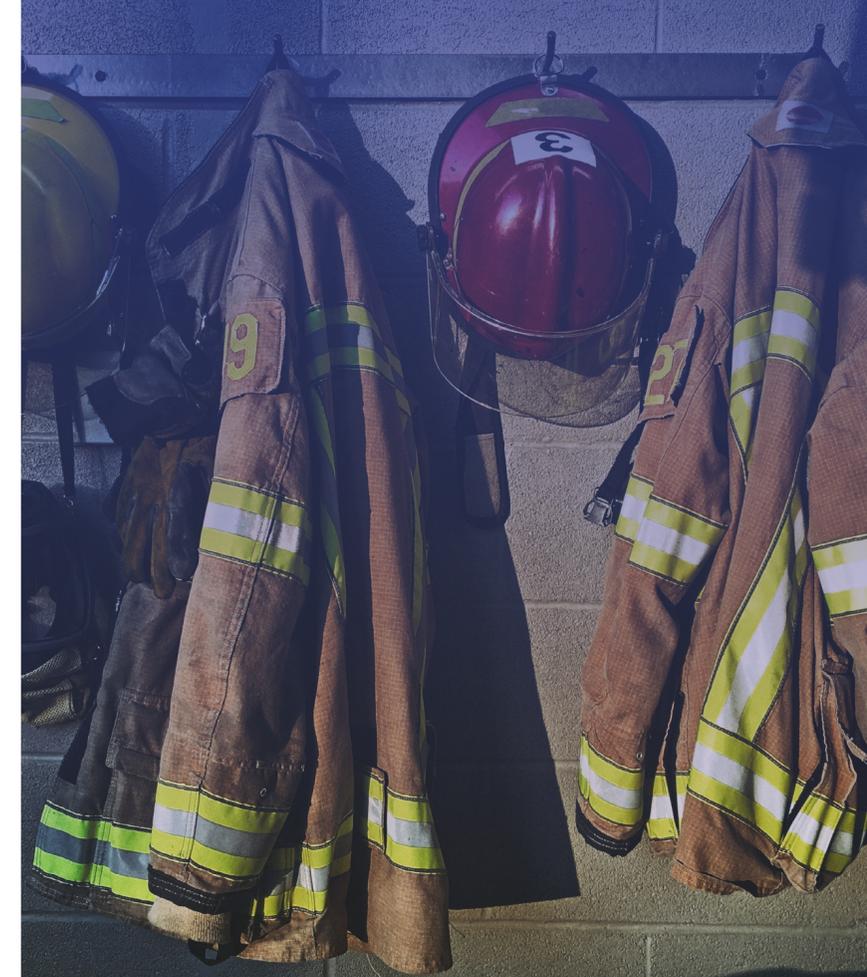
Against a backdrop of continually changing compliance requirements, whether for Data Protection, Freedom of Information, or most significantly, Health and Safety, the flexibility and speed and ease of modifying processes is also unprecedented.

“The problem with standard, off the shelf systems, is they tend to be rigid, costly and time-consuming should changes to functionality be required. We no longer have that challenge. Updates are now fast to deploy, with much lower cost,” said Meredith.

Using the OpenText BPM platform along with services from ask-4[®] Business Solutions Limited, the service has redesigned its key processes, each bringing greater levels of efficiency, ease of use, greater security and improved reporting. With numerous real estate assets, the solution is used to report and track building defects, triggering work requests to the estates team. New starters with the service can be assured that every last detail of their onboarding is taken care of and nothing is overlooked. The process for training requests, Freedom of Information requests and IT tickets is also benefitting from the improvements made to the OpenText solutions.

About ask-4[®] Business Solutions Limited

ask-4[®] Business Solutions Limited is an accredited OpenText partner that specialize in Business Process Management (BPM). With decades of experience in BPM, consulting, systems integration, training, support and development, we pride ourselves on delivering cost effective business process solutions with first-class service.



About OpenText

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