

CUSTOMER STORIES

DELIVERING THE ART OF THE POSSIBLE



“ We are passionate about customer service. That’s what our business is about – and we see the same in BT Wholesale.”

Mary Rowen,
Operations Director, Convergence Group



BT Wholesale is working hand-in-hand with Convergence Group to enable customer excellence and also support the outsourced services provider’s ambitious growth strategy.

In a complex and crowded telecoms marketplace, Convergence Group is building a distinctive market presence as provider of outsourced B2B communications. The key to the offer is simplicity: a single contract that gives the customer everything they need.

“Customers who are looking for a service provider who does things differently. They don’t want to think about the complexity that sits behind their communications. They need resilience. They need connectivity. And they want everything to work – and that’s our job. We deliver the art of the possible for our customers,” explains the company’s Operations Director, Mary Rowen.

Doing things differently

A newcomer to telecoms when she joined Convergence Group in 2012, Mary Rowen understood that delivering simple outsourced offers would be a complex challenge. It would require comprehensive business transformation. Mary commented “I didn’t just want to patch things up – I knew I would need to rebuild our systems from the ground up.”

For one, Convergence Group was dealing with around 20 connectivity providers – and each of those providers had its own business processes.

Managing inventory was a major headache. Without accurate and timely data it was impossible to deliver the service and value expected by customers. “We don’t talk about days and weeks, we talk about hours and minutes. We need access to up-to-the minute information from carriers,” explains Mary Rowen.

Convergence Group needed a connectivity provider who would provide the products and support it needed to grow its offer portfolio, with the latest and best network technologies. BT Wholesale fitted the bill; “We only deal with companies that want to be on our journey to excellent customer service. That’s what we expect and what we get from BT Wholesale.”

Transforming with BT Wholesale

BT Wholesale was already working with Convergence Group as one of the company’s network providers. Now, with the focus on transformation, BT Wholesale introduced a new account management team set on winning preferred supplier status.

The first priority for BT Wholesale was to gain a deep understanding of Convergence Group’s growth objectives, and learn how it could align with them. The account team worked closely with Convergence Group to streamline operations and improve interfaces between the companies. Ann-Marie Taggart, BT Wholesale’s Account Manager, says her team had one simple goal. “We wanted to make it as easy as possible for Convergence Group to do business with BT Wholesale.”

An intensive programme saw BT Wholesale carry out training for sales and pre-sales teams across Convergence Group, introduce faster escalations and provide APIs for pricing that fed directly into Convergence Group’s portal.

Mary Rowen comments: “Unlike most providers, BT Wholesale challenged us. They brought us their expertise but they also asked questions about how we could improve our systems. We’ve had a few heated discussions along the way – but that’s part and parcel of a relationship.”

Upgrading with Ethernet

All that hard work on operations laid the foundations for a new relationship, underpinned by a £31 million framework agreement. Together, Convergence Group and BT Wholesale would cooperate to create differentiated offers, stimulate new business and target growth. At the heart of the relationship is BT Wholesale Ethernet: the core technology to cost-effective, secure and high-speed connectivity demanded by today’s B2B customers. BT Wholesale works with Convergence Group’s sales teams to create competitively priced Ethernet propositions, supported by initiatives like free installation, attractive 50 and 100Mb offers, and flexibility on ECC (Excess Construction Charges).

“We can only deal with partners that want to be on our journey to excellent customer service. That’s what we expect and what we get from BT Wholesale.”

Mary Rowen,
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BT Wholesale is delivering a range of Ethernet products - including dedicated fibre, copper EFM (Ethernet in the First Mile) and next-generation fibre GEA (Generic Ethernet Access) – that means Convergence Group can give its customers the best combination of Ethernet performance and price for their business needs.

By using BT Wholesale’s Ethernet ELAN, it is simple for Convergence Group to design, implement and maintain networks across multiple locations. ELAN is a variant of Etherflow Connection for 21C Ethernet which enables any to any connectivity (VPLS). Essentially, it creates a LAN (Local Area Network) that Convergence Group can extend to wherever it’s needed by customers. On one single circuit, across multiple locations, ELAN lets Convergence Group offer a complete portfolio of communication services in a cost-effective, flexible and secure way.

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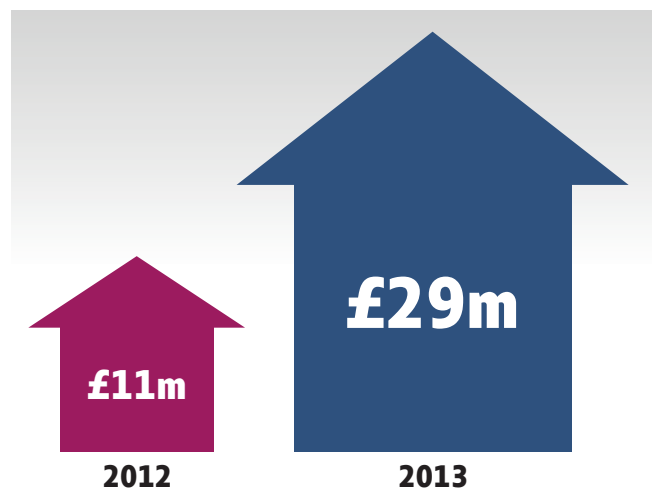
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Today the cloud plays a growing role in the outsourced services story: providing secure, resilient connections to the cloud is vital. Convergence Group benefits from BT Wholesale’s relationship with Cisco on cloud managed services. By participating in the CMSP (Cloud Managed Services Programme), Convergence Group can take advantage of superior discounts on CPE (Customer Premises Equipment) and managed services.

Cooperating for growth

By working together so closely with Convergence Group, BT Wholesale has gained a deep understanding about the company’s business drivers. At the same time, Convergence Group’s sales teams have got to know BT Wholesale’s Service Level Agreements inside-out, ensuring their customers get the most out of BT’s high performing network.

The health and success of the relationship can be seen in the numbers. By working hand-in-hand with their peers at Convergence Group, the BT Wholesale team has doubled its C-SAT (Customer Satisfaction) score in just over a year. Customer renewals are rising steadily and revenues in Mary Rowen’s Operations directorate have grown from £11 million in 2012 to £29 million in the last financial year.



The next step to service excellence

Mary Rowen believes Convergence Group – with BT Wholesale – can work even harder to find growth and head off the competitive challenge from new arrivals in the outsourced services space.

Convergence Group is launching a new online portal to deliver comprehensive real-time status on every customer. “We are playing a long game. No one else is talking about customer service, full integration and automation. This system is not just built for today. It’s built for ten years from now,” explains Mary Rowen.

BT Wholesale has supported the development of the portal, providing inventory data, B2B gateways, APIs (Application Programming Interfaces) and crunching through legacy data inherited from outsource wins.

With the portal in place, Mary can re-deploy her people from low value tasks like chasing inventory information and put them in front of the customer. “Automating eighty five per cent of our transactions will free up our people to have real conversations with the customer. That human touch is the key to customer service.”

It’s the next step on Convergence Group’s quest for customer excellence: a journey towards growth that now sees Convergence Group on track to bid for public sector opportunities via the UK government’s PSN (Public Services Network) programme. “We are passionate about customer service. That’s what our business is about – and we see the same in BT Wholesale.”

Automating 85% of transactions



Frees up sales force to have real conversations with customers



Solution overview

BT Wholesale provides a broad portfolio of products, supported by unprecedented expertise and competitive promotions, to help Convergence Group deliver its outsourced offer.

- **BT Wholesale Ethernet:** with connectivity right across the UK, our solution means unrivalled geographical coverage and cost effective, secure high-speed connectivity, which supports bandwidth options from 0.2Mbps to 10Gbps. With our Fibre, EFM and GEA and Wholesale Ethernet ELAN solutions, Convergence Group can offer customers across the UK exactly the right combination of performance and price.
- **BT Wholesale Broadband:** completing the connectivity offer, BT Wholesale Broadband gives Convergence Group more ways to serve customers with lower volume and back-up requirements. Convergence Group can take advantage of solutions ranging from ADSL through to high-speed fibre services including Fibre to the Premises (FTTP).
- **Cisco:** Convergence Group participates in Cisco and BT Wholesale’s CMSP (Customer Managed Services Programme) initiative, meaning they can take advantage of superior discounts on CPE and managed services, as well as delivering service excellence.
- **Openreach EAD (Ethernet Access Direct) and WLR (Wholesale Line Rental):** BT Wholesale’s account team provides downstream management on Openreach Ethernet point-to-point, leveraging their insight on Convergence Group’s business needs and network.

BT wholesale

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