



RENEWITY

RMA & SERVICE MANAGEMENT



RenewityRMA reduced the number of queries and direct emails by more than 60%, freeing up more than one day a week of Operations staff time.

Background

Cambridge Broadband Networks Limited (CBNL) develops and manufactures point-to-multipoint wireless backhaul and access solutions, serving telecommunication customers in over 30 countries. Its headquarters are in Cambridge, UK. Its VectaStar platform has established the company as the clear market leader in point-to-multipoint microwave. VectaStar networks are now deployed by service providers in over 50 countries for mobile backhaul, small cell backhaul, enterprise access and ISP networks. Its customers comprise over 100 service providers, including seven of the world's top ten mobile operators.

Challenges

To help manage product and system repairs—RMAs—in 2009/2010 CBNL developed an RMA management system based on the Sage 200 CRM system. The work was done in conjunction with CBNL's Sage support company and involved adding custom Javascript software code and SQL queries, setting up a complex bespoke workflow and user interface configuration. The system ran on a server at CBNL and was used by in-house CBNL staff and accessed remotely by repair center staff in the UK and China.

In 2016, CBNL made a decision to replace the Sage-based system that had been superseded several times and required an expensive and extensive re-design. Furthermore, the system had some significant shortcomings:

1. It was never fast, but had become unacceptably slow because of ever-increasing data, aging software, and remote access.
2. It could only handle RMAs one item at a time, with each item having to be entered individually, not in bulk. If a customer had many items it took days to enter the data—in some cases, up to 3 days. The customer, CBNL, and the repair center were bogged down with paperwork, system emails, etc. To implement a bulk RMA upload facility would have required an expensive custom code or a separate utility package.
3. No customer portal. If customers wanted to request RMAs, or enquire about progress, they had to contact CBNL personally, which took many hours of Support and Operations staff time. CBNL planned to implement a portal, but needed considerable detailed design work that was expensive and time consuming.
4. The system did not have suitable checks and balances to ensure integrity of data entry, especially at the repair level where it would have been extremely difficult to implement in the Sage system.

CBNL knew that it needed an effective RMA management system. If CBNL implemented a manual (spreadsheet) RMA management system—as it had before adopting Sage in 2010—it would suffer from poor quality information, errors, and use up valuable time: CBNL estimated it would need an additional 0.5 to 1 full-time equivalent person to manage RMAs manually.



Solution

In Q1 2016, CBNL undertook a survey of suitable repairs management systems. It quickly chose Renewity's RMA & Service Management Automation Solution, RenewityRMA, as it was the most complete and professional stand-alone RMA system on the market.

It was also helpful that the Renewity staff "spoke the same language" regarding RMAs: no need to explain at length what processing RMAs typically need, how they are typically managed, what steps are required, what process controls are needed, and so on. This saved time and let CBNL focus on its specific requirements rather than on generic requirements.

In mid-April 2016, CBNL learned about and configured Renewity's RMA & Service Management Automation Solution, RenewityRMA. It mapped workflows onto the Renewity process stages, setting up appropriate fields and screen layouts and the required reports, working with the Renewity team on importing CBNL's database of shipped equipment into the serial number lookup tables, and testing and iterating the system with internal users and with simulated external customers.

After training CBNL staff at headquarters and at its repair center in China, Renewity's RMA & Service Management Automation solution went live July 2016. The customer portal went live three months later after ensuring data integrity and an understanding of established processes and procedures.

Results

Benefits resulting from implementing Renewity's RMA & Service Management Automation solution have streamlined and expedited CBNL's RMA management process:

1. The Customer Portal immediately worked out-of-the-box and it is estimated that more than 80% of customers are now using the portal. This has reduced the number of queries and direct emails by more than 60%, freeing up more than one day a week of Operations staff time and giving much improved information and increased satisfaction to customers.
2. The ability to raise many items on one RMA, which was specifically requested by CBNL's repair center, has been achieved. Managing complex RMAs is much easier and less bureaucratic. Customers had complained about the volume of paperwork they received, making it difficult to respond. They can now follow the process, resulting in reduced turnaround times as many items can be changed in the time it took to change just one.
3. Importing RMA requests from a spreadsheet rather than typing them in one by one has met the CBNL's repair center request. Adding RMAs in bulk is much easier and faster, especially considering those customers who save their RMAs and then want them all processed at once. Uploading by bulk has reduced turnaround times—from hours and days to enter hundreds of RMA requests into the system, to just a few minutes processing time.
4. CBNL now has a faster operation, especially when querying and/or importing new items to the serial number lookup table and when running reports, which can be done in seconds with Renewity's automation solution. The Sage-based system took much longer.

5. Cloud operations deliver easier and more secure access especially remotely from colleagues in the field and the repair center staff in China.
6. More robust operations with no crashes, unlike the Sage system that had recently suffered from many.
7. The faster system speed, improved workflow, and customer visibility of data has encouraged the CBNL repair center to keep the system up-to-date so it is more confident of the integrity of the data and reports from the system.
8. Because the Renewity automation solution is a designed-for-purpose, configurable RMA system, as opposed to a special instance of a CRM system, it has eliminated the need for CBNL to add a lot of custom code to achieve what it requires. It is largely a standard system that is robust, future-proof, and can be more easily supported internally by CBNL with Renewity's assistance.
9. More detailed and helpful records of the history of each RMA, showing who changed what and when.
10. The understanding by Renewity staff of what processing an RMA typically needs was a great time-saver.

Each of these benefits add up to an overall positive effect on the ROI CBNL achieved with Renewity's RMA & Service Management Automation solution.

When making the switch to Renewity, there were three items of significance that CBNL wanted:

- Customer portal
- Functionality upgrades – Speed, reliability, and multiunit handling capability
- Data integrity enhancements

These were all easily achieved with Renewity's RMA & Service Management Automation solution, RenewityRMA.

Testimonial

The CBNL system administrator has a high level of expertise on all aspects of the CBNL RMA system (globally) and was able to utilize the configurability of Renewity RMA to great effect.