



Union Street makes WLR3 easy for 2 Circles Communications

With the migration of communication providers (CPs) to WLR3, 2 Circles Communications has been an early and enthusiastic adopter of the BT Openreach service as Andy Reid, Operations Director for the company explains. “BT Openreach approached us early in the development of WLR3 because of our competence in managing orders via WLR2. We saw the benefits of WLR3 immediately and wanted to deploy the solution as soon as possible.”



WLR3 (wholesale line rental 3) has been introduced by BT Openreach to provide a level playing field for CPs with BT Retail, through a policy of equivalence of access. Using WLR3 CPs can now order services, see site information, book engineer appointments, reserve numbers and manage faults with access to the same features as BT Retail, and hence can enhance the service offering and SLAs that they can provide to their customers.

To utilise WLR 3, communication providers must interface with the BT Openreach Equivalence Management Platform (EMP). This means that CPs need to either develop their own gateway or partner with a systems integrator who can provide a solution.

“We considered developing our own EMP interface, but we also consulted our billing platform supplier Union Street. It turned out that they were already working on a WLR3 solution that would integrate fully with their aBILLity billing platform providing us with some significant additional benefits”, Andy confirms.

Union Street worked with 2 Circles Communications and BT Openreach to ensure that its WLR3 Portal Solution worked correctly with the BT Openreach EMP. “Working with Union Street gave us the confidence to move to WLR3 as rapidly as possible. There were excellent three way communications between us, Union Street and BT Openreach, which ensured that any glitches in the system were rectified before we went live. Being actively involved in the development process certainly upped our expertise and competence levels.”

Union Street was able to provide 2 Circles Communications with a middleware utility that allowed them to access their whole customer history database for WLR3. “To use WLR3 for business customers requires full address details and the utility developed by Union Street allowed us to do this without having to re-enter the data, which carried a high risk of data entry errors.”

The seamless integration of the aBILLity billing platform with the WLR3 Portal Solution provides considerable business benefits. As Union Street’s WLR3 Portal uses the same user interface and database as the aBILLity billing platform, there is a single entry point for all provisioning and billing

requirements, therefore significantly reducing the volume of data entry and reducing errors across the whole process. Because the WLR3 process starts within the billing platform Union Street has been able to synchronise the provision of new services with the addition of the service charges to the client accounts.

Union Street's WLR3 solution will automatically add the appropriate charges at the point of provisioning and it uses the WLR3 messages to trigger the automatic update of the charging start dates. The result is a big saving of time and equally importantly, a reduction in errors, mis-billing and revenue loss. Union Street has added additional validation so that it is almost impossible to place an invalid order.

As a result, 2 Circles Communications has experienced a big reduction in the time taken to process orders compared to the old way of processing orders. To confirm this point Andy conducted an independent study to measure the speed of processing WLR3 assurance using the Union Street integrated solution verses the old WLR2 way of doing it, with separate data entry into the billing platform. "Our analysis shows that using the aBILLity billing platform with the integrated WLR3 solution has significant business benefits versus standard separate billing and WLR3 applications: data entry time is reduced by a phenomenal 60 percent; there is extra validation and data only has to be entered once. The result is increased accuracy, reduced errors and faster order processing."

Andy is keen to emphasise that partnering with a systems integrator that can provide WLR3 access does not mean that a CP is 'WLR3' ready. "I've seen a lot of 'WLR3 ready' statements made by various network providers, but until you have actually provisioned real customer orders using the system, you cannot honestly say that you're WLR3 ready. There needs to be greater caution about what is stated regarding WLR3, it's not the simple tick in the box exercise that some are making out. That's why we are fortunate to be working with Union Street."

Summing up Andy says, "The benefits are definitely there. WLR3 is a 24/7 system giving you direct control of the service provisioning for your customers. But to make it work you have got to have the right interface with the BT Openreach EMP. Union Street's WLR3 portal provides that for us and brings the considerable benefits of full integration with the aBILLity billing platform."



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