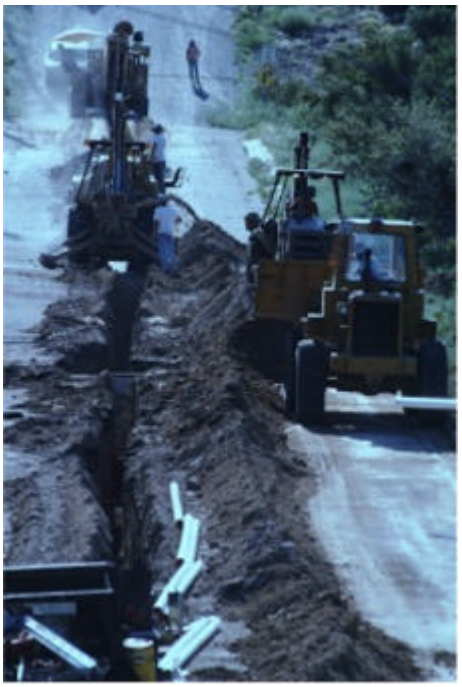
From customer call to telco network

Project Brief: Service provisioning

Where network operators are competing for customers, lead time from customer order to provision of service is often the critical differentiator.



BUSINESS OBJECTIVE

IPL's client, a well established UK telecommunications network operator, needed to complete its automatic service provisioning capability, in order to meet new competition in the very open UK telecommunications market.

The telco needed a system to take service orders from its call centre and implement them in its network, as far as possible in real time while the customer is on the 'phone to the Customer Services representative.

The network operator's requirement was for a system which could work with its existing Marconi telephony switches, without being tied to any single equipment manufacturer, and which would have the flexibility to match the pace of change in the operator's business processes.

IPL'S SOLUTION

IPL offered a solution based on one of the several network management platforms with which IPL works.

The system handles service activation, change, or cessation requests for domestic and business PABX telephony services, both simple and bundled. It takes provisioning requests from the network operator's order handling system, and assembles them into related groups for implementation either immediately or at the required time of service change. The system implements the changes through craft-terminal dialogues with the switches in the network, verifies that the provisioning has succeeded, and confirms this to the customer facing staff.

IPL's solution also included the transfer of the intellectual property rights in the rule set to the network operator. This gave the telco not only the desired flexibility but the assurance that its competitors could not readily acquire the same facility.

MANAGING THE PROCESS

IPL began by developing a Rapid Application Development (RAD) prototype for user evaluation in the network operator's operational environment, and then deriving a definition of technical system requirements from that.

An IPL team in Bath developed the system from this technical definition, working within IPL's ISO 9001 (TickIT) Quality Management System.

When the software was ready, an ISDN link into the network operator's network enabled IPL to remotely integrate the system with the network operator's switches.

When IPL had delivered the system, IPL equipped the telco's staff with a complete onward development environment for the system, together with IPL training and all the design information.

THE OUTCOME

The system has met its initial goal: customer-facing staff can implement the majority of the network operator's telephony provisioning requests without manual intervention.

Going beyond that, the system also provisions advanced voice services equipment and does the fault and performance management for the switch network.

IPL's client expects to extend the system to include inter-working with other network elements, and with their business support systems.

FURTHER INFORMATION

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