



Arise

CLIENT CASE STUDY



npower is one of Britain's leading energy companies serving over 3.75 million residential and business customers with electricity and gas.

CLIENT CHALLENGES

Across the last 5 years, the UK Energy sector has become increasingly fragmented with the Big Six losing domestic market share to smaller, more agile, operators offering cheaper domestic tariffs. In a commoditised and binary market, service can often be the only differentiator and in 2014, npower built a long-term strategy to improve their customer experience, specifically targeting service levels across their contact centre estate, improving engagement with those customers and responding more effectively to customer complaints.

Whilst digital enhancements offering improved self-service options have broadly flattened historic seasonal fluctuations in customer contact demand, media features, and the regulatory price-capping initiative continue to generate un-planned peaks. These have been difficult to address effectively, using traditional brick and mortar contact centres, with service levels suffering as a result.

In response to these challenges, and acknowledging that they did not have the experience, internal expertise or resources required to develop and implement a large-scale homeworking solution, npower chose to procure outsourced services to deliver the flexibility and agility required to improve performance against key operational service level agreements (SLAs). Taking into account the historical demand patterns, the objectives set for the home-based resourcing solution were:

- Ability to react to intraday spikes in volume at certain times of the day for short periods e.g. early mornings/evenings and weekends
- Deal efficiently with short term increases in demand due to business-driven customer behaviour (e.g. fixed tariff ends, government price cap changes)
- Resource to spikes whilst minimising wastage (e.g. normally recruit for a four hour shift may only need two hours)
- Achieve SLAs to minimise media and regulator pressures, improve call wait times and increase customer satisfaction (CSAT)



WHY THE ARISE PLATFORM?

Following a competitive evaluation process facilitated by the procurement team of RWE (parent company), Arise was chosen as the preferred partner. The following were key influencing factors:

- By offering access to a distributed, and truly virtual, network of Service Partners, Arise would be able to engage a mature demographic with life experience and the ability to relate to the customer.
- The award-winning Limitless Learning, featured within the virtual learning experience, would allow agents on the platform to engage in an effective learning program, capturing the complexities of billing and supply within this heavily regulated environment.
- The unique capabilities of Arise's proprietary workforce scheduling system would promote desired flexibility through a bespoke servicing schedule, aggregating 30 minute increments of capacity chosen by Service Partners in order to perfectly blend their work and life balance, whilst also closely matching expected call volumes.
- Inbound voice contact management for domestic customer enquiries with queries ranging from meter reads to complex billing.
- Virtual learning delivery of the initial knowledge transfer for new agents, subsequently used to update agent knowledge on current products and procedures.

OUTCOMES

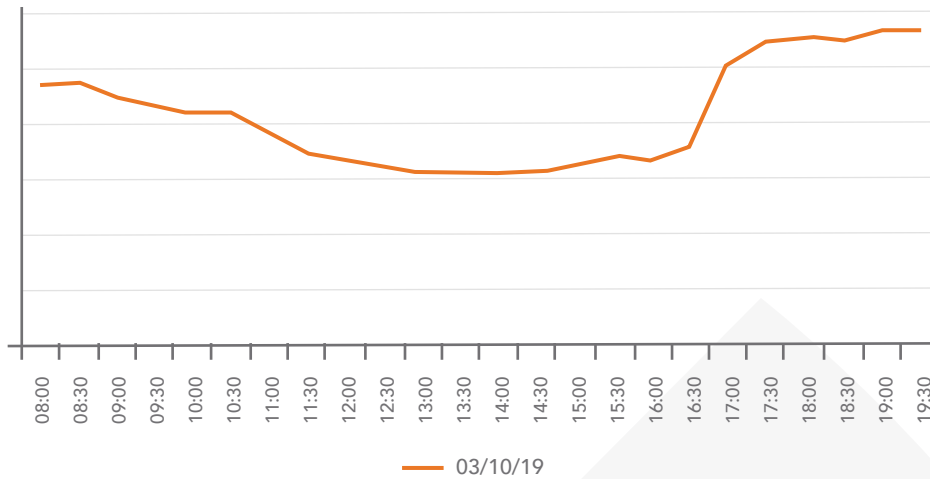
As a result of its efforts, Arise has delivered a successful programme, endorsed by the fact that scale has doubled through 2017 and the contract has been extended and renewed for a further three year term.

- Provision of up to 20% swing flex in capacity on a week on week basis
- Distress provision of emergency capacity to support extreme winter weather events
- Transformation of the existing physical classroom-based training curriculum into a learning journey delivered 100% virtually
- Delivery of an unconventional scheduling profile (see Fig. 1.1.) supporting the shoulders of the day and allowing greater flexibility across the estate
- Routine positioning as best-performing partner for Customer Satisfaction and First Call Resolution (see Fig 1.2)
- Increased critical complaint closure measure by 23%, and the highest performing partner
- Consistent compliance and quality, with minimum variation in calibrated scoring check
- Delivery of annual CO₂ emissions savings of 107 tons, when compared with a traditional customer contact centre of a similar scale*
- Removal of approximately 470,000 commuter miles*

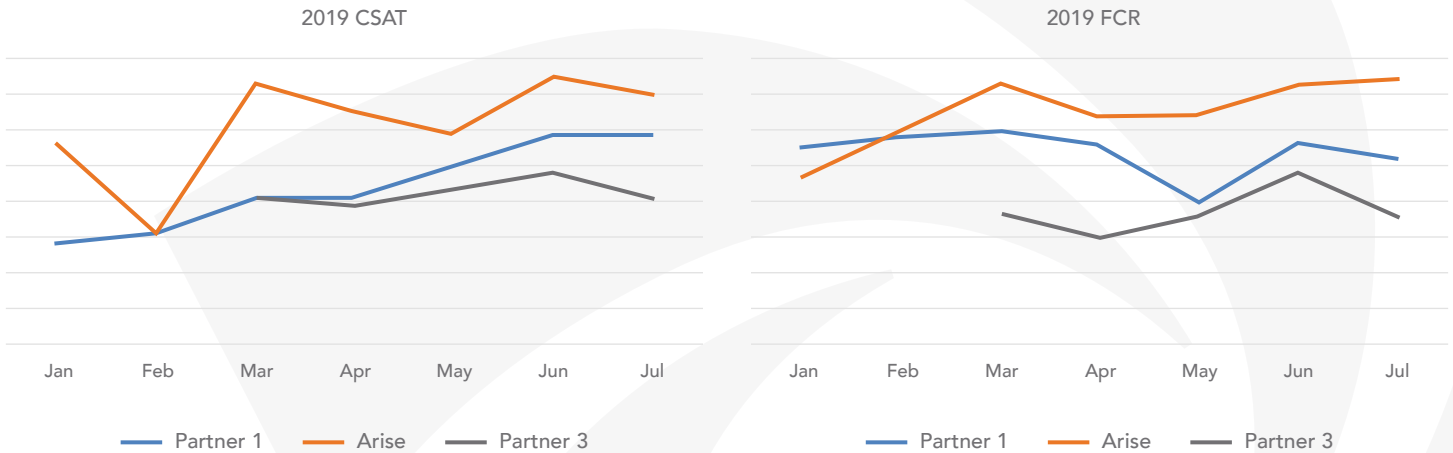
**When assessing typical emissions from assumed commuter range of 9400 miles per year on equivalent FTE – source glumac.com*



1.1 INTRADAY CAPACITY PROFILE EXAMPLE



1.2 PARTNER COMPARISONS ON FCR AND CSAT



OUTLOOK

After a recent three year contract renewal the relationship between npower and Arise continues to go from strength to strength. There is a true collaborative spirit, and partnerial approach to ensure that optimum results and benefits are achieved.

We continue to collaborate to look at new ways in which the many benefits of using the Arise Platform can be maximised across the estate. These include scale and scope as well as consideration of alternate customer channels.