



Press Release

Contact Limited

Contact is 'business as usual'

Contact, one of the UK's leading providers of hosted telecoms and IT services, has recently been under a surprise "test" of the business continuity benefits of its hosted solutions last week when a BT exchange was damaged in a fire near to its Midlands office in Stafford Park, Telford. Contact's Midlands office is based on the popular Stafford Park in the outskirts of Telford town centre. At approximately 3.30am on Saturday, 19th May, a fire in the local BT exchange caught fire, damaging around 1000 lines and affecting 500 local businesses, including Contact Ltd. Contact was alerted to the problems by its monitoring software, which automatically flagged up connectivity problems to its head office in London. As a BT partner, Contact was able to ascertain quite quickly the problems with the lines, although it was established that, like the other businesses in Stafford Park, normal service was unlikely to be resumed until around Wednesday the following week or possibly even later. This issue affects all BT services from this exchange, including all Telephone lines and all Data lines, meaning that businesses on the park would not be able to e-mail, phone or fax for the better part of a week. As Contact "takes its own medicine", all of its services are hosted services. This means that all of its services are in secure data centres outside of its office and are therefore not affected by local "disasters" such as this. Simply put, Contact was able to divert all of its DDI numbers to alternative numbers. The main telephone number was diverted to its head office, while Direct Dial Numbers were diverted to individuals mobile phones or to "soft phones", which are software phones that have the same features as your office phone, but can be run on any PC or Laptop.

In addition to this the company's e-mails were unaffected as all of its employees were able to log onto their company IT services through their laptops at home. Fax's continued to be received by individuals as e-mails in their e-mail inbox's. So, whilst approximately 500 businesses continue to suffer today, for Contact it's business as usual. Managing Director Dominic List commented "we have been instrumental in implementing both Hosted IT and Telecoms into many businesses and have always been keen to point out the Business Continuity benefits of this type of service. Like most businesses we had our disaster recovery plans in place, but didn't actually think that we would ever have them tested in a true live environment. We are glad to report back that hosted IT and Telecoms not only gives you time to recover from a disaster, but also allows you to continue as usual."

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