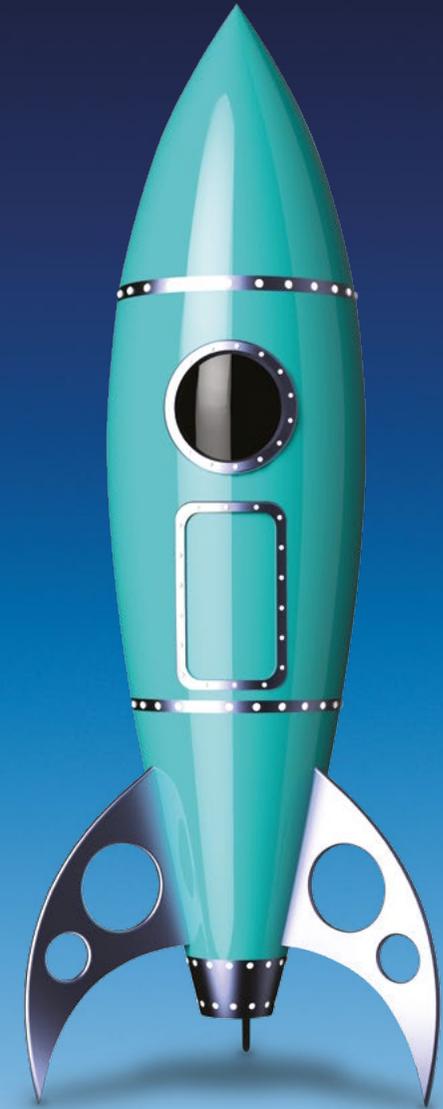# Discover unconstrained IT

More freedom to put your people first.

Imagine delivering unconstrained IT that sets your employees and your customers free. Imagine an affordable, achievable way for IT to let people work and transact how, where and when they want.

Three leading O2 specialists describe how you can make these ambitions a reality, including:

> A new vision for digital transformation

> How O2 created a platform to deliver unconstrained IT

> The benefits of unconstrained IT in our own business and beyond

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Consistent experiences anywhere: the new normal

It all sounds so easy. Technology has transformed our lives. We can work, shop, socialise and be entertained wherever and whenever we want. All in a few taps and swipes on a beautifully compact and powerful mobile device. And it's happening right now, isn't it?

Well, yes and no. All these things are achievable. But as every IT professional knows, actually delivering them is less than straightforward. Simply checking your bank balance requires hundreds of processes to work perfectly – from app to network to server and back again. In the blink of an eye.

People just expect this stuff to work: and they'll look elsewhere if it doesn't. But if you're a large, established organisation with engrained working practices and complex legacy infrastructure, this kind of transformation can feel… well, not always achievable.

But now for the good news. At O2, we believe delivering these consistent experiences boils down to a few basic things.

It's about people – and focusing on how people want to work, not simply about what's technologically possible.

It's about simplicity – and creating fewer, more manageable IT platforms from which to deliver all those awesome digital experiences.

It's about solid foundations – and remembering that apps and mobile experiences are only ever as good as the network that delivers them.

And it's all delivered by unconstrained IT. By converging your fixed, mobile and wifi networks onto one simple platform, you can deliver those seamless and satisfying interactions your customers, your employees and your leadership teams expect.

At O2, these principles have underpinned our own evolution, and helped us create the kind of technology that's an enabler – not a blocker – of transformation.

A new vision for digital transformation

Rob Davies, Head of Digital Sales, O2 Business.

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Two ways of looking at change

When people talk to me about digital transformation, it's sometimes in very broad terms. Cloud. Social. Seamless mobility. Flexibility. Analytics. But when I drill down into what people actually want to achieve, I often find the impetus for digital transformation comes from two main directions, both of which have very specific needs.

Leadership strategy

Quite naturally, the leadership team sets the direction for the organisation. And in a world where digital is driving the agenda, almost every board wants similar things. Organisations want to evolve to keep pace with the market. In the public sector, they want to deliver what the people they serve demand. This means they want their employees and their customers to be able to interact more flexibly.

And they want this flexibility to add value to the organisation, through convenient and enjoyable experiences that keep every stakeholder happy and loyal.

The wider organisation will be right behind this agenda, albeit at a more operational level. They want faster ways to drive productivity, improve collaboration and speed decision-making. Anything that makes their job easier. They want to offer a better customer experience. Businesses want to sell more goods or services, and outshine the competition. Public sector organisations want to protect, support and serve citizens while operating within the tightest of budgets.

IT operations and delivery

The second impetus for digital transformation comes from IT. IT leaders realise they need to deliver services faster. They need to accelerate app development and testing times without creating security risks or compromising the quality of user experiences. And IT needs to confidently deliver services to internal customers so the organisation can realise its strategic goals. This could mean almost anything. A public sector body moving to an online self-service model. A business launching 50 new websites overnight across a new territory. Or simply moving employees away from a traditional desk-based corporate culture.

And unfortunately, the stakes for IT are high if things don't go to plan. Only 16% of users would try a buggy new app[1] more than once, for example. So it's imperative to get it right from day one.

1 https://techcrunch.com/2013/03/12/users-have-low-tolerance-for-buggy-apps-only-16-will-try-a-failing-app-more-than-twice/

Finding the balance

In my experience, these two forces often meet at the network level. The leadership team and the wider organisation just want stuff to work. They care about the user experience, not the network that delivers it. But for IT, there are tough questions to answer. You can't just change a business process within the organisation or put a new app out there without adequate capacity planning. Deployments can – and do – fail because the relevant network isn't up to the task. And if a problem is reported once the service goes live, how quickly can you diagnose and correct it, whether it's on your fixed, wifi or mobile network? Or if the problem is on the device? Or the app? If you encourage your teams to work from home on a Friday, can your VPN cope with the spike in demand? The more IT suppliers you have in place, the tougher, more costly and time-consuming these issues can become.

Ultimately, IT needs to deliver an end-to-end user experience that 'just works.' And that means the IT department needs tight control of the security and performance of the services it delivers. Achieving this demands visibility and management of every link in a complex chain spanning devices, connectivity, the infrastructure platform, applications and services that users consume.

Simplifying your connectivity, infrastructure and management platforms changes the game, and lets you focus on which apps to serve – not on whether they'll perform. A simplified, consolidated approach enables you to guarantee both end user experiences and service level agreements. In fact, this converged approach means IT can shift from component-based SLAs to service-focused SLAs that are tailored to the needs of the business.

The way forward

At O2, my colleagues and I are passionate about driving customers to achieve this future state of IT, so that the organisation, their employees and their customers can enjoy the real benefits of digital transformation and brilliant, consistent user experiences.

The value of consolidation

Despite the cost and complexity of managing multiple suppliers, many organisations have yet to recognise the benefits of Unified Communications and Collaboration (UCC).

Awareness of these capabilities is modest (56%). Usage is low (20%)[2]. So there's an opportunity for organisations to gain the advantage by considering adoption ASAP.

How O2 created a platform to deliver unconstrained IT

Andy McEwan, Head of Connectivity, O2 Business.

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Breaking new ground in networking

I firmly believe that great achievements start with bold ambitions. So when we thought about how to make unconstrained IT a reality, we imagined the kind of network that would make life simpler and better for our people and our customers. And we were determined to create a platform that was up to the mobility challenges of today's 'always-on, want-it-now' world.

We wanted to support digital transformation by enabling IT to work, regardless of the underlying connectivity. We wanted to deliver the same quality of experience to anybody, on any device, any app from any place. And we wanted to do something no-one had done before: bringing the three pillars of networking together in one platform – mobile, fixed and wifi.

The result was O2 Gateway, which offers our customers a genuinely unique capability.

Realising the vision

Because we believe in designing technology around people, not in making people adapt to technology, O2 Gateway was guided by a 'people first' philosophy. Customers and colleagues told us they wanted to reduce the time, cost and complexity that comes with running and integrating multiple network services, so we enabled all of them to be managed through a single platform.

We understood why organisations were worried about the security vulnerabilities of the public internet, so we've given our customers the opportunity to access their corporate data across fixed, mobile and wifi, and to create a public and private wifi network in their office. And from a customer perspective, we appreciate why many organisations may not feel comfortable piecing a solution like the one I've described together. So we do it for you.

> "We were determined to create the network for the mobile future."

Forward thinking

I believe O2 Gateway makes the vision of unconstrained IT a reality. And that it's the perfect platform from which to deliver your apps and services. Or for liberating your people with boundaryless flexible working.

In fact, as we created O2 Gateway, it became more and more apparent how the inexorable momentum behind mobility and flexibility is a cultural as well as a technological issue. As the limitations of what's technically possible are eradicated, and IT becomes genuinely unconstrained, organisations will start to ask 'what should we do?' instead of 'what can we do?'

As the CIO of the future starts breaking down the traditional desk-based culture, he or she will need to give careful thought to what happens next.

At O2, we're thinking and acting progressively. And we believe we're striking a successful balance between technological and cultural innovation.

The benefits of unconstrained IT in our own business and beyond

Gavin Franks, Chief Operating Officer, O2 Business.

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How digital transformation benefits O2 every day
I'm proud of what we've achieved at O2 in creating a culture – supported by unconstrained IT – that gives people the freedom to achieve more by working more flexibly. But it hasn't happened by accident. By putting our 'people first' approach into practice in our own back garden, we've shown how designing tools around how people need to work – not making people fit around the constraints of technology – delivers benefits that can justifiably be called transformational. You can do the same.

Doing our homework
All the way back in 2012, we ran the UK's biggest ever flexible working pilot, when we asked the entire O2 UK team to work out of the office on one specific day. The insights and feedback from over 2,500 people who worked from home was incredibly positive. 88% of staff believed remote working made them equally or more productive than when they were the office. Our people saved thousands of hours of commuting time, and many chose to spend this working. And as we've sustained our commitment to flexible working following the pilot, we've continued to reap the rewards – like saving our own business over £3m as a direct result[3].

People, processes, technology
I know full well, though, that our vision for flexible working would have floundered without the technology to support it. And with a converged approach to the three core network services – fixed, mobile and wifi – you can make it happen too. Without three separate operational headaches to contend with. O2's IT team can roll out a service which stops you worrying about stuff like quality of service, smooth handovers between networks, or maintaining connectivity between suppliers.

Into the big wide world
With a completely wireless environment in place, you can extend digital transformation beyond your workforce and into the kind of digital innovations the leadership team and the wider organisation are so eager to see. I'll give you a few examples of things we've helped our customers achieve.

In one high street retailer we've transformed customer service. With the store's floor staff equipped with tablets and smart phones, they can check stock on the shop floor directly with the customer. It's stopped staff disappearing into the back of the store to access back-end systems. And it and increases the time assistants spend talking to customers, maximising opportunities to sell more goods,

like matching accessories. It's made the retailer's people more knowledgeable too, so they can answer product questions more easily.

At McDonalds, we delivered front-of-house transformation. One way we did this was to roll out an easy-to-use public wifi service for 1,200 restaurants, underpinned by a resilient managed infrastructure, with redundancy and helpdesk services. This seamless migration was completed in 90 days, and offers a safe public wifi service that makes it free and easy to connect, even for customers who are not on O2.

In another case, we're helping Manchester City fans enjoy matches even more, thanks to rolling out cutting-edge wifi across the club's 60,000 capacity Etihad stadium. They're the first Premier League football club to give fans unrivalled connectivity with download speeds of up to 30 megabytes. So fans can post and share the best bits during the match.

Hard metrics
If you're thinking these sound like 'soft factors' that are nice to have but that don't stack up into a persuasive business case, here are some hard savings and quantified benefits we've delivered to clients. 45% in infrastructure savings. A £1.4m cut in postage per annum. And we even stopped one customer missing 90,000 calls a month.

Bringing it all together

Think transformation, think consolidation.

If you think there's more you can do to unleash the power of your IT infrastructure, why not delve deeper into what O2 Gateway has to offer. It's the UK's first fully converged network, and is our approach to delivering unconstrained IT that spans WAN, internet connectivity, wifi, SIP trunking, cloud and Unified Communications.

With O2 Gateway at the heart of all your organisation's communications, you can:

Reduce costs
- Take multiple services over a single connection rather than requiring multiple connections for different services. This is more affordable than legacy network designs.

- Look at infrastructure optimisation: for example secondary back-up connections can be used to deliver public wifi so you can maximise the bandwidth you pay for.

Enhance security
- Enjoy a private connection to the network so your company data isn't transmitted over the internet.

- Let your employees connect directly and securely to the corporate network without the use of private VPNs.

Drive digital transformation
- With the expertise that helps you migrate from legacy networks to the future-proofed architecture of O2 Gateway.

- Benefit from a scalable and modular platform which allows organisations to quickly and easily add new services like cloud-based Unified Communications.

- Focus on performance of your services rather than the components of your network.

Deliver workforce mobility
- By providing secure 'anytime anywhere' access to corporate data across a range of devices.

Ensure a better user experience
- O2 Gateway gives IT managers better control over the network experience, as services are integrated into our core network rather than on a case-by-case basis, helping to improve reliability.

- As a result of owning the different network elements, we offer a single end-to-end SLA and act as single supplier, which allows you to consolidate.

What O2 offers that competitors don't

- Our lack of legacy base helps us to move more quickly, and to take a more innovative approach to delivering IT services.

- We offer a fully integrated platform without the hassle of multiple contracts and SLAs.

- With O2 Gateway, new services are delivered quickly on the network, helping you get new offers in the market faster, because your existing physical connection can deliver multiple services.

- O2 Gateway integrates 4G access, which you can use for resilience and rapid deployment.

- Our mobility heritage and experience is key to enabling workforce mobility.

- O2 is the UK's only CAS(T)-certified mobile and WAN provider, ensuring customers that their corporate traffic is handled according to the UK's most stringent security standards.

- O2 Gateway is award-winning: given the 'Networking Infrastructure' award at the Computing Vendor Excellence Awards 2016 and congratulated on our network's innovative nature and robust capability.

Stronger together
With a single integrated platform for your digital ambitions, you'll create the perfect platform for delivering innovative and exciting new services to your employees and customers or communities. So if your current approach is falling short of expectations, a chat with O2 could be well worth your while.

Independent accreditation

O2 is the UKs only CAS(T) certified mobile and WAN provider. It is also ISO27001 accredited.

At the 2016 Computer Vendor Excellence Awards, O2 Gateway was given the 'Networking Infrastructure' award for its robust capability, innovative nature, cloud interoperability and excellent use cases.

Talk to us to see how we can help you,
get in touch with us on **01235 433 507**
or find out more at **o2.co.uk/connectivity**

@o2businessuk

More for you.