



O<sub>2</sub>  
business

# Staying connected

Stories of how UK businesses  
are using technology to help  
them flex in challenging times

*Telefonica*

# This eBook is a celebration of business resilience and flexibility

Full of ideas and inspiration to underpin how businesses can flex in tough situations, these stories are brought to you through the eyes of Account Managers. They reflect the personal and dedicated relationship we have with our customers.

We hope you find it useful



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## Jamie's story

# Education: connecting vulnerable children

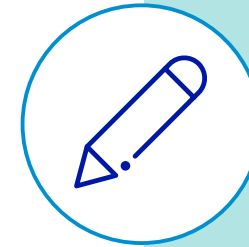
As soon as lockdown kicked in, it was clear education was going to be affected. Suddenly, every school, college and university in the country was in uncharted waters. And what about those disadvantaged pupils for whom school is a lifeline? They couldn't be left to fall behind.

That thought really stuck in my mind, particularly since I work with a number of schools. One primary school I spoke to were really worried about how they were going to respond to the situation.

After speaking to the School Head, I was able to get a grip on what they needed. The key element was to help those pupils without home broadband, so it was essential we got them up and running. We provided them with basic smartphones, dongles and data bundles (23 in total). That way they could stay in touch with the school, and just as importantly, their friends (we knew loneliness was a big factor). A lot of schoolwork now is online and app-based, so a phone was perfect for keeping on top of their studies.

"In these kinds of situations, we know organisations want the flexibility to react to outside occurrences, and I think we helped provide that here."

The budget was tight but fortunately I was able to source lower spec 12 month sim only smartphones, so the school can cancel with just 30 days notice. In these kinds of situations, we know organisations want the flexibility to react to outside occurrences, and I think we helped provide that here. It's really satisfying knowing I played my part getting these kids through some tough times.



Jamie  
Cumpper



Account  
Manager



Been with O<sub>2</sub>  
for 12 years

## Company profile



Education  
sector



Formed in  
1954



150  
employees




Been an O<sub>2</sub>  
customer for  
three years

Colin  
Mutch



 Account  
Manager

 Been with O<sub>2</sub>  
for 13 years

## Colin's story

# Care: facilitating community elderly support

**One of my customers, a charity specialising in elderly support in the community, called to explain how lockdown was leaving older people isolated. My Grandad lives alone and he found himself in exactly that situation.**

We're quite close but we weren't allowed to see each other. So meant a lot to me personally that we devised a clear plan and got this right.

After speaking with their management team, it was clear flexibility had to be at the heart of the solution. Like most charities, they knew their finances were going to be hard hit by COVID-19 and they were keen to avoid any extra long-term contractual commitments.

“... they were keen to avoid any extra long-term contractual commitments. They wanted the freedom to scale up and down as the situation required.”

They wanted the freedom to scale up and down as the situation required.

We worked out that they had 18 people in desperate need of social contact. I was able to source 18 Samsung tablets at a very reasonable price. Support workers could give them to the older people and communicate with them daily, as well as show them how to video call friends and family. All on 30 day sim only connections with a 2GB limit, so no ongoing commitment.

I was so pleased with the project, I knew I'd helped make a big difference for these 18 people. It was really rewarding work.

## Company profile



Care  
sector



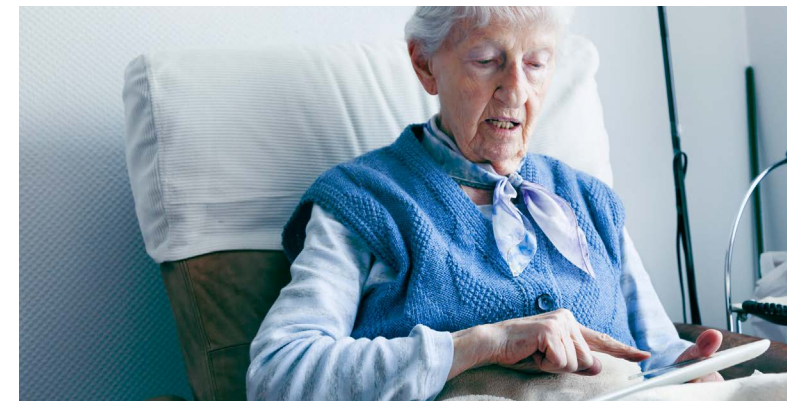
Formed in  
2003



16  
employees



Been an O<sub>2</sub>  
customer for  
six years



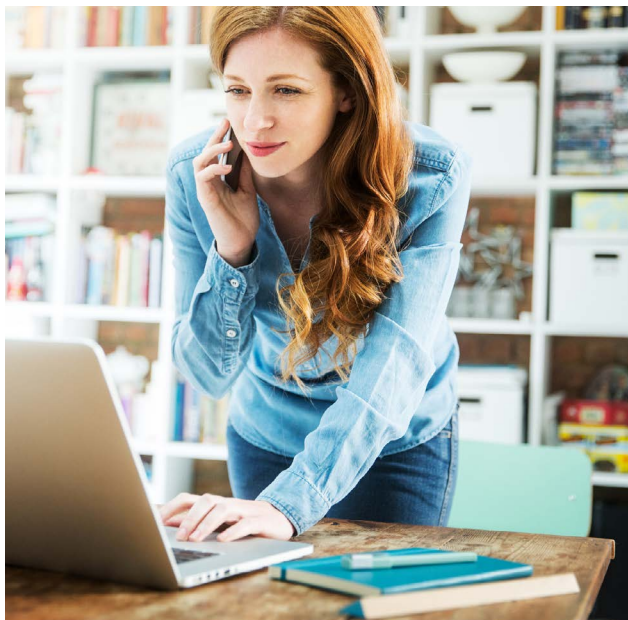


## Gareth's story

# Retail: data dilemmas

Although the idea of the digital workplaces and having the ability to work from anywhere makes total sense, plenty of customers thought they lacked the framework to suddenly switch to working from home, overnight.

But, they did it. It was incredible to see how many successfully made the move from being completely office-based, to completely work-from-anywhere with so little preparation time. In some cases we saw the deployment of large-scale transformation projects (which usually take years), in just a few days. I think this level of resilience and flexibility shocked many business owners themselves – they didn't believe their businesses could handle such radical change!



“By switching from a shared data tariff to an individual tariff, each employee gets the data they need.”


Data usage was a common issue. Suddenly the entire team is WFH, and not everyone has home broadband – so those people are whipping through their mobile data in no time. Lockdown happened so quickly, no-one saw that particular problem coming.


And of course, many customers weren't keen on overcommitting to too much data for too long, because we had no visibility on how long the situation might last.

It was a conversation I had many, many times, especially in the early days of lockdown. Basically, customers wanted flexibility. Lots of them had individuals on shared tariffs. By switching from a shared data tariff to an individual tariff, each employee gets the data they need (30 day rolling contracts were very popular). A really simple fix, but one that meant business didn't have to stop.



**Gareth Williams**

 Account Manager

 Been with O<sub>2</sub> for 24 years

## Company profile

 Retail sector

 Formed in 2011


 19 employees

 Been an O<sub>2</sub> customer for eight years

Melvin  
Netherwood



 Account  
Manager

 Been with O<sub>2</sub>  
for 22 years

## Melvin's story

# Trades: helping a plumbing firm pivot

**Lockdown threw so many curveballs. All those general day-to day problems got put on hold. This was particularly acute in the trades – during the initial lockdown, tradespeople weren't allowed into customer properties, so business just stopped. But once restrictions were lifted, they had a backlog of work to wade through.**

I look after a plumbing firm, and their challenge was to work through that backlog as efficiently as possible. They were drowning in work – great news normally, tougher to handle in 'the new normal'. I recommended giving the team smartphones and tablets to use out on the road, meaning they could take pictures and videos and send them back to the office to get costings, estimates and advice speedily and efficiently.

We were able to kit them out with a range of tablets, smartphones plus laptops for the guys in the back office. They were really happy with this solution – we were able to get them up and running with no money upfront, all thanks to their hardware credit.

We build a hardware fund into our O<sub>2</sub> business customer contracts that allows them to buy or upgrade devices. It's a lifeline for many.

Devices on their own are no good, so we gave them all dongles on one-month contracts providing total flexibility. They also took a Pop Up Office for their own 4G mobile hotspot too, so they could get up to 10 devices connected to the internet – handy for the bigger jobs. Having had a major leak myself early on during lockdown, I knew how important it was to help plumbers get back to business as soon as possible.

*"We were able to get them up and running with no money upfront, all thanks to the Hardware Fund."*

## Company profile



Trades/plumbing  
sector



Formed in  
2009



22  
employees



Been an O<sub>2</sub>  
customer for  
one year

## Mike's story

# HR: providing the foundations of flexibility

I spent a lot of time helping an HR consultancy stay on its feet during lockdown. Like so many other clients they needed to pivot to home working super quickly. But this customer was a bit different because they specialise in providing support for start-ups. Business is hard enough as it is, let alone when you're new to the game and something like COVID-19 hits. I felt it was important to help these guys as much as possible, so they could help their customers.

They moved fast and got in touch just before lockdown started. To begin with, we put them on 30 day sim only tariffs. They could treat them like a rolling contract giving the flexibility they needed as they were a bit worried about what the future held for them. I had handsets delivered directly to employees in 24 hours, rather than to the office address – one less thing for the customer to worry about.

As a business used to desktops, it was clear laptops were needed. Funds were tight but fortunately the hardware fund covered off 18 brand new laptops. Now they can work wherever they like.

O<sub>2</sub> Business builds into their customer contracts a hardware fund that allows customers to buy or upgrade devices over the term of the contract.


I've heard that management are thinking about closing the office to reduce costs because it gives them some wiggle room for the future. They think they can make a go of it remotely. I think they've got a good shot. Hopefully they'll continue to go on and succeed, and I like to think I did my bit in that.

"I had handsets delivered directly to employees in 24 hours, rather than to the office address – one less thing for the customer to worry about."



**Mike Russell**

 Account Manager

 Been with O<sub>2</sub> for 15 years

## Company profile



HR sector



Formed in 2007



95 employees




Been an O<sub>2</sub> customer for three years

Gary  
Fletcher



 Account  
Manager

 Been with O<sub>2</sub>  
for seven years

## Gary's story

# Construction: preparing for the boom

The building industry got hit hard by COVID-19, but now we're in a housing boom (something else no-one saw coming!). So construction firms are looking to make up for lost time, but they need to work differently on-site because of social distancing measures and COVID regulations.

Because the current situation regarding COVID is quite fluid – we don't exactly know where we're going to be in four weeks, let alone four years – permanent solutions don't have the appeal they once did. So our Pop Up Office is dead easy to set up, and the team can connect up to 10 iPads on the same site using the 4G mobile hotspot. That matters on a big development.

It's on a flexible contract so no big commitment for them, and it's easy to track who's where and when, meeting the COVID regulations. Obviously there are plenty of new rules on-site, so Pop Up Office definitely does its bit keeping the show on the road.

It's really great being able to help clients like this, and you really feel like you're making a tricky situation that much easier for them, allowing businesses to pivot and giving them the resilience to cope with tricky times.



“Our Pop Up Office is dead easy to set up, and the team can connect up to 10 iPads on the same site using the 4G mobile hotspot. That matters on a big development.”

## Company profile



Construction  
sector



Formed in  
2018



150  
employees

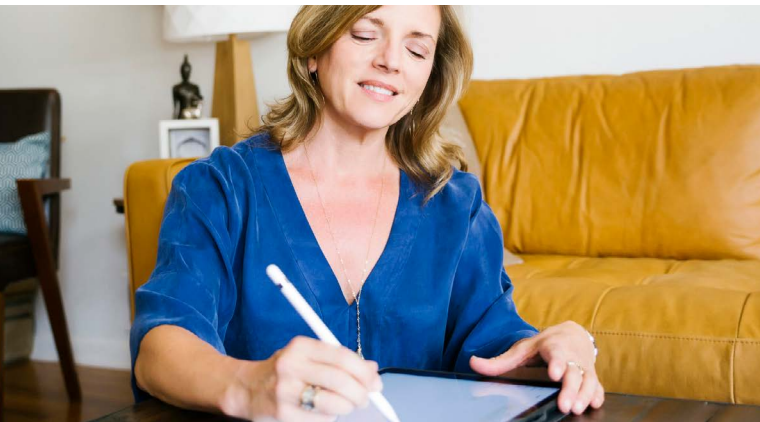


Been an O<sub>2</sub>  
customer for  
two years



## Sarah's story

# Charity: security solutions for first-time WFH



I worked with a client in the charity sector during lockdown who not only faced the difficulties you'd expect during lockdown i.e donations drying up – but also something you do see from time to time with smaller organisations. Put simply, a long-term employee left, and took all the log-in info with them. It was all in one person's head.

It's pretty common but it left them extremely vulnerable from a security perspective and because this is a charity dealing with vulnerable people, data needs to be handled sensitively.

So we helped them reset the passwords and gave them access to their devices again.

But they soon realised they couldn't risk it happening again, so I told them about Sophos. Designed for small and medium-sized business customers, Sophos provide security solutions for mobile devices, computers, servers, and email. And customers can manage everything easily from Sophos Central, a cloud-based security platform. No more relying on the expertise of one person.


They made the switch within a few days and it freed up the whole team to work from home, whilst still having the power to access sensitive data – something they couldn't have possibly considered before.

“Customers can manage everything easily from Sophos Central, a cloud-based security platform. No more relying on the expertise of one person.”



Sarah  
McPoland

 Account  
Manager

 Been with O<sub>2</sub>  
for seven years

## Company profile

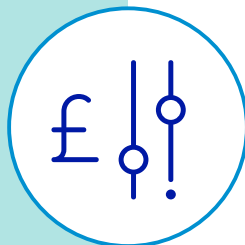
 Charity  
sector

 Formed in  
2011


 Nine  
employees

 Been an O<sub>2</sub>  
customer for  
five years

Chris  
Dainith



 Account  
Manager

 Been with O<sub>2</sub>  
for 16 years

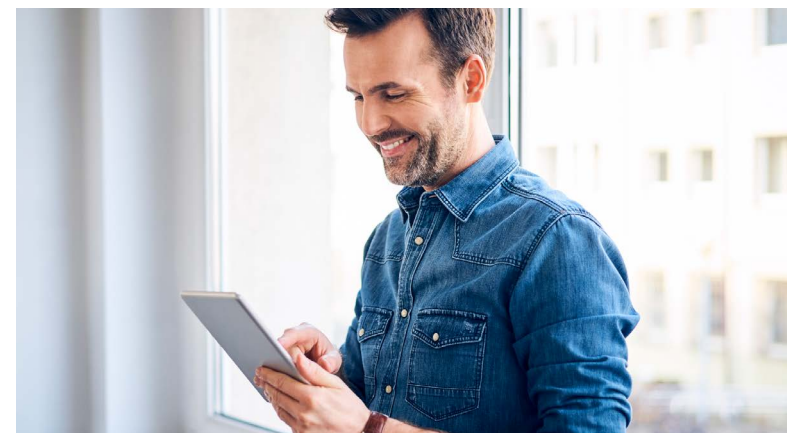
## Chris's story

# Finance: compliance against the clock

When lockdown kicked in, it happened virtually overnight. So, we had a flood of customers looking to make the switch to remote working in record-breaking time. And you can completely understand why – they wanted to protect their businesses and make sure they had the resilience to handle whatever the world throws at them.

I work with a mid-sized operator in the financial sector, and they left the office very, very close to lockdown. There wasn't much of a WFH culture which meant there wasn't a lot of time... but I'm pleased to say we managed a pretty successful transition.

Connectivity is everything to these guys. So I sourced 112 fully connected smartphones – of varying spec – in 24 hours. Most of them were on 30 day sim only deals, just to add that flexibility given the uncertain market. And because the financial sector is heavily regulated, they also picked up a mobile recording function so they can capture all calls and text while staying compliant. Plus I rustled up 102 laptops – again, of varying spec – and tapped into the Hardware Fund to make it affordable, minus the hefty deposit.



When I spoke to them recently, business seemed to be going well. They've well and truly shaken off any reservations they had about remote working, to the point they're not sure why they didn't do it sooner!

“Connectivity is everything to these guys. So I sourced 112 fully connected smartphones – of varying spec – in 24 hours.”

## Company profile



Finance  
sector



Formed in  
2012



120  
employees



Been an O<sub>2</sub>  
customer for  
five years

## Summary

# Ready to embrace resilience?

We hope this collection of stories illustrates how businesses are adapting in a challenging climate – businesses just like yours.

At O<sub>2</sub> we've got your back. Automatically roll your excess data over to the next month with Data Rollover.<sup>1</sup> Flex your data up or down with our flexible tariffs.<sup>2</sup> Pick a contract length that suits you, from short-term to three years. And that's just for starters.

Mobile connectivity has really come into its own in 2020, and that's our area of expertise. Your market and your needs can change quickly – now more than ever. But with the right solutions, you can stay resilient through it all. That's why we're always on hand to help your business flex, with mobile connectivity that can keep you adapting through every new challenge.

**So, if you want to embrace resilience like the businesses in this eBook, get in touch today**

<sup>1</sup> For new or upgrading customers only. Available on selected tariffs of 6GB of data or above, excluding 2GB triple data, 3GB double data and unlimited data tariffs. Up to 100% of unused data from standard monthly data allowance can be rolled over into the following month. Eligible data rolls over for one month only. Any data that cannot be rolled over will expire. Any unused data will not rollover if you decide to change to an alternative tariff. Directly purchasing private sector customers with 500 or more employees and directly purchasing public sector organisations are not eligible.

<sup>2</sup> For new or upgrading customers only. For Small Biz and Business Essentials tariffs, tariff can be changed to a non-promotional tariff of the same type that has either a lower, higher or the same amount of data as tariff selected at commencement. For Business, Small Biz SIM Only, Small Biz Data Only and Mobile Broadband SIM Only tariffs, tariff can be changed to a non-promotional tariff of the same type with either the same or a higher amount of data as tariff selected at commencement. A change in tariff can be made 30 days from the date of connection or upgrade, each billing month. Directly purchasing private sector customers with 500 or more employees and directly purchasing public sector organisations are not eligible.

Subject to availability, status, credit check and general terms for business customers apply. Terms apply, see [o2.co.uk/terms](https://o2.co.uk/terms)



*Telefonica*

**To find out how we can help your business:**

Talk to us now on **0800 588 4210**

Or visit **[www.o2.co.uk/business](http://www.o2.co.uk/business)**

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