



Communications case study

Community Fibre saves 12,000 hours per year with automation



A rapid, three-week implementation of Microsoft Power Platform contributes to an 85% reduction in process handling times and a 25% improvement in cash flow.

The challenge

Founded in 2013, Community Fibre Limited (CFL) is on a mission to bring faster, more affordable broadband to the residents and businesses of London. Today, the company is London's best quality broadband provider, made possible by its unique approach of installing and operating its own 100% full fiber network. CFL uses the UK's reliable and sustainable broadband technology available, running fiber optic cables directly to customers' homes and businesses for improved speed, reliability and efficiency.

CFL has experienced rapid growth. With the current capacity to reach more than 1.3 million homes and 185,000 businesses (March 2024) the company wanted internal processes to be as innovative and efficient as its broadband offerings. CFL reached out to Cognizant to explore how automating core processes could increase productivity and free up employees from tedious, manual tasks.

At a glance

Industry
Communications

Location
United Kingdom

Challenge
Transform operational efficiency through the implementation of Microsoft Power Platform for process automation and low-code application development.

Success highlights

- Implementation and enablement of Microsoft Power Platform in three weeks
- **25%** improvement in cashflow through automated payment collection processes
- **85%** reduction in average process handling time, equating to 12,000 hours saved in the first year

Our approach

CFL wanted to focus on three areas where it saw the most potential for impact: lead reporting and actionable insights, billing and payment processes, and business development. After evaluating CFL's business goals, Cognizant recommended Microsoft Power Platform as the best path forward.

Power Automate and Power Automate Desktop were the primary solutions we used to enable automations. Due to the high number of variations within processes, we also introduced Process Advisor for value-added task and process mining purposes.

In total, Cognizant automated 13 processes and 29 variants across key business areas:

Lead reporting: We created automated processes to deliver reports that provide visibility into everything from how many knocks each salesperson is completing, to the items in abandoned shopping carts, to forecasting of premises coverage across 32 London boroughs. Pulling data directly from multiple databases, stakeholders automatically receive this information daily to help them make better decisions around development of marketing outreach offers.

Billing: CFL wanted to automatically generate invoices across its B2B, B2C, and reseller accounts—each of which has different rules for discounting and payment structure. It also wanted to improve on-time payments through automation to help customers set up direct debit payments.

Invoicing: For failures around invoicing—such as bounced emails, canceled or changed credit cards or failed direct debit mandates—new automations also ensure that appropriate actions around customer notifications and account suspensions are taken without requiring manual intervention, which assists CFL with better control over revenue leakage.

Business development: CFL wanted automation to help deal with the high volumes of emails it receives from its many partner relationships. For example, the company in charge of maintaining ducts and poles where CFL's fiber optic cables run sends thousands of emails every day to report on the status of individual network updates. Cognizant created an automated process to smartly categorize each message, raising those with high importance to the network operations team and allowing business development activities to scale more easily and meet the needs of the business.



“ The Cognizant team was instrumental in guiding us through this transformation and helped us get Power Platform established in record time. This automation project has driven our biggest efficiency gains to date, and we look forward to seeing further progress in the years to come.”

Chris Williams, CIO, Community Fibre

Business outcomes

With Cognizant's help and with strong internal executive support, CFL had Power Platform enabled within just three weeks. In addition to the efficiencies gained from process automation, CFL is also realizing a return on its Power Platform investment in various ways, including:

Citizen development: One CFL employee learned to create apps with Power Apps and developed a health and safety solution that is now in use across the company. To date, CFL citizen developers have created 564 Power Automate flows, 64 Power Automate Desktop flows and 11 Power Apps.

Governance: Cognizant helped CFL to establish a center of excellence (COE) that provides a framework for ensuring compliance with internal security requirements and regulations like the Global Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). A single platform that supports automation, low-code development, process mining and more eliminates issues of fragmentation and reduces governance complexity.

Microsoft 365 integration: Power Platform allows CFL to further streamline its operations through native integration with Microsoft 365, along with other Microsoft Cloud solutions like Dynamics 365. CFL is working with Cognizant to transition its ERP system to Dynamics 365 Finance and Supply Chain Management, which will deliver further value as CFL scales up its Microsoft-centric IT ecosystem.

A foundation for future operational efficiencies

CFL has achieved significant productivity gains through its Power Platform implementation, including an 85% reduction in average process handling time, translating to 12,000 hours saved in just the first year. A single update to billing processes also helped CFL improve cash flow by more than 25% by increasing the number of payments taken by direct debit. Power Platform has not only enabled CFL to implement the automations it needs today, but also provides a scalable foundation to meet future automation and low-code development requirements.

About Community Fibre

Community Fibre is London's best quality broadband, providing fast, affordable, sustainable connections for everyone. Using the UK's best broadband technology, it is bringing Gigafast broadband at unbeatable prices to the capital, helping Londoners do more and be more.. For more information, visit communityfibre.co.uk



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