



Customer success story

“The cost per pound is expected to come down even further to 1.5p over two years, plus our collection rates have improved all round as our staff now have more time to chase harder-to-collect fines.”

Peter Norish, IT Manager, West Yorkshire Magistrates Court



Ministry of JUSTICE

EckohPAY cuts the cost of collecting fines by 95%, improving departmental efficiency.

PROFILE: Industry: Government Employees: 77,000

Cases handled: 1.5m

BUSINESS

A ministerial department of the British Government responsible for human rights law and information rights law across the UK. It aims to reduce re-offending and protect the public, providing access to justice, and uphold people’s civil liberties.

CHALLENGE

To increase the number of fines paid to reduce the outstanding volume while also providing a more convenient, yet safe, way to pay.

SOLUTION

EckohPAY for automated, Self-Service payments and PCI DSS compliance.

BENEFIT

1. PCI DSS compliance achieved
2. Enabled customers to pay at a time that suits them
3. Callers connect without needing to wait in a queue.

The background

The West Yorkshire Magistrates' Courts service is one of 42 area Magistrates' Courts Committees in the UK. It serves a number of diverse and busy metropolitan districts and delivering its services through eight court sites located across the region.

The Courts' Committee looked at EckohPAY as a solution, under increasing pressure to secure the payment of all issued fines.

Despite a range of payment options, 40% of fines owed by residents of the district were still not being paid or collected.



The value

Since the service was introduced in June 2004, more than 300,000 transactions have been completed, collecting over £20 million, with over 30% of fines regularly paid out of normal office hours.

The solution costs can be as low as 1p per pound collected compared to the old system that cost up to 20p per pound. The solution has successfully delivered:

- 24x7 availability
- A PCI DSS compliant payment solution
- Over 30% of fines paid outside business hours)
- Frees up contact centre agents to focus on proactive payment enforcement
- Confident management of traffic peaks
- Callers connect directly with no queuing.

The challenge

The Courts' Committee is under increasing pressure to secure the payment of issued fines. Residents of the district were able to make payments at any one of the eight courts' payment counters, via telephone to the centralised Collection and Enforcement Centre (after its opening in 2003) and the fixed penalty office. Despite these options, up to 40% of fines were still not being paid or collected. Closer investigation revealed the reasons why:

- Staff with other responsibilities having to take phone calls for fine payments
- Legacy telecoms systems requiring callers to navigate various departments and options, often only to receive no reply or a busy tone
- Disparate and resource-intensive IT systems
- No support for out-of-hours collection

The solution

The Courts' Committee wanted to provide a better service to all those people willing to pay their fines on time, and in full, but with the minimum fuss. An automated payments system was required, allowing citizens to pay fines quickly and easily by telephone. The Eckoh solution, called EckohPAY, allows callers to simply dial the number on their case paperwork and an automated voice guides them through a PCI DSS compliant payment process.

They enter their case number, the amount they are going to pay and their credit/debit card details using their telephone keypad. The service verifies payment details, processes the transaction and provides the caller with a reference number. Eckoh's scalable platform ensures callers receive an immediate response with no queuing. Credit and debit card transactions are processed using BT's Buynet service, an online payment facility that features high levels of security and encryption and meets all the necessary Government requirements for transactions.