



Vodafone UK demonstrates continued organizational excellence with one of the first international certificates recognizing best practice business continuity management

“Unaddressed risks and unexpected disruption can result in severe consequences for the bottom line and the reputation of an organization. In a competitive market place identifying critical suppliers and their associated risks, assessing current business practices and planning contingency measures is more critical than ever. Business Continuity Management provides a framework to ensure the continuity of critical functions which can be the difference between a business surviving or failing. This best practice approach is clearly demonstrated by Vodafone UK.”

Dr David Hitchen, Global Scheme Manager BCMS

Customer objectives

- To demonstrate a corporate commitment to business continuity management (BCM) and assure its customers that it is in the best position to provide consistently reliable services whatever the circumstances
- To demonstrate BCM best practice processes and continual improvement to customers and stakeholders
- To demonstrate that Vodafone can fulfil customers' contractual requirements for robust BCM arrangements.

Customer results

- Differentiation of services and competitive advantage
- Ability to meet legal and civil contingencies requirements and contractual business continuity requirements
- Enhanced customer relations and improvements in supply chain resilience
- Provide customers with a reliable and best in class service.

Why certification?

As a business, Vodafone needs to be able to assure its customers that it can provide a consistently reliable service. This is particularly important given that many of Vodafone's products and services have become such an important part of everyday life – both at work and at home.

Vodafone UK has a long history of active engagement in standards and regards itself as a leader in best practice business continuity management (BCM). BCM has always been an integral part of the Vodafone culture and is integrated into everything the organization does. Vodafone UK has been on a journey with BSI from the early days of Publicly Available Specification (PAS) 56 in 2003. Following this the organization became the first mobile telecommunications provider in the world to achieve certification to the original BCM standard, BS 25999, and is now one of the first organizations in the UK to achieve certification to the new international standard, ISO 22301.

Implementation

Vodafone UK's existing certification to BS 25999 provided the business with a head start when it came to pursuing certification to the new ISO 22301, however Vodafone had to also demonstrate that it met the rigorous requirements of the new standard.

The new standard required Vodafone to demonstrate the integration of BCM and risk into its other policies and procedures within its UK operations. The ISO imposes demanding requirements in terms of setting of objectives, KPIs (Key Performance Indicators) and metrics. Vodafone also had to demonstrate its BCM planning took into account legal and regulatory compliance; showed a comprehensive understanding of stakeholder needs and demonstrate

that it had procedures in place to ensure suppliers have appropriate business continuity arrangements. Despite these additional requirements Vodafone was pleased to learn that the BSI assessor considered its existing practices for evaluating the BC capabilities of suppliers to be an example of best practice.

The project spanned nine months from first sight of the Final Draft International Standard (FDIS) to their undertaking the formal audit. The audit was overseen by Vodafone's business continuity manager, Roger McLoughlin, who project managed the work to ensure Vodafone's Business Continuity Management System (BCMS) was fully integrated with their other systems to meet the new requirements. No additional resource was required since Vodafone considered the changes to their systems as 'business as usual' and integral to the ongoing maintenance of their BCMS and continual improvement.

In order to achieve compliance with the new standard, Vodafone had to adapt the design of a number of its policies and procedures. Unexpectedly, Vodafone found that some aspects of the re-design that required a level of time investment in actual fact delivered real business benefits, and were incorporated into on-going BCMS performance management.

Vodafone found the process relatively straightforward as it already had all of the fundamental BCM elements in place. However, as some of the new requirements were strategic in nature (objectives and KPIs), forward planning was needed to ensure there was sufficient time to review, approve and implement the necessary changes, and provide evidence that the requirements had been met.

BSI completed an informal review of Vodafone's systems ahead of the formal audit to help the company prepare and identify areas that needed focus. With the help of the BSI assessment team, Vodafone easily overcame these challenges. Roger McLoughlin, business continuity manager for Vodafone UK said: "As ISO 22301 is a new standard, and Vodafone was the first UK organization to undergo certification with BSI, we appreciated BSI's support in understanding the new requirements, the intention of the standard, and the objective evidence required to demonstrate compliance."

Benefits of working with BSI

Vodafone UK has a long history of working with BSI, and again chose to work with BSI on the transition to the new international standard. As a result the company has realised its short term objectives to meet the requirements of the new standard, and to be the first in the UK to seek independent third party certification. Vodafone hopes to continue to improve its BCMS over the coming years, and achieve even greater system maturity.

Certification with BSI helps Vodafone to communicate its BCM capability to major customers and support them in their own BCM planning. The new international standard has been a welcome arrival for Vodafone, and the organization sees it as another way in which it is able to communicate its BCM capability to its customers.

As the world's first mobile operator to achieve ISO 22301 certification Vodafone UK continues to set the standard for BCM. This award says a great deal about Vodafone UK and its efforts to provide customers with the most consistently reliable service, whatever the circumstances.

Contact us to find out how BSI can help your business make excellence a habit.



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