

MAINTEL SELECTS AGILITAS TO STREAMLINE THEIR TECHNOLOGY HARDWARE LOGISTICS OPERATION

Leading UK IT services provider selected Agilitas' specialist SMART logistics and inventory management to support its growth strategy, maximise stock effectiveness and enhance customer experiences through the outsource of 65,000 technology devices.



Background

Maintel is a cloud connectivity and security managed services company, with a heritage in communications they help customers in both public and private sectors improve their business through digital transformation. The company supports customers in making their people more effective and productive with digital workplace technology. Maintel helps them to acquire, develop and retain their own customers with customer experience technology and ensures that they can always connect to their applications and their data through secure connectivity.

Maintel has built on four decades of experience helping customers to communicate and now delivers that expertise through its ICON Cloud & Managed Services Platform. With its ICON Service, its customers have access to enterprise class, highly available, highly secure and highly capable communications, collaboration, connectivity and customer experience services, backed by Maintel's UK-based 24/7 managed services team. With little to no automation in place across its logistics model, Maintel collaborated with Agilitas to provide a flexible and well-integrated inventory management service that will enable the company to grow and enhance speed of delivery at scale in-line with their ambitious growth plans.

Challenges facing Maintel

- Maximising the effectiveness of technology stock
- Ability to scale in line with evolving customer base
- Deliver enhanced SLA to customers
- Inventory management for large-scale project rollouts
- Increased warehouse automation

Solution delivered by Agilitas

- Outsource of 65,000 technology devices within 3 months
- Leverage & optimise inventory to deliver an enhanced customer service
- Nationwide storage and distribution of all stock close to end clients' sites
- Maximum 'uptime' regardless of technology or geographic location
- Flexible operational and commercial model to meet Maintel's needs

“The level of insight into stock patterns has given us a handle on things like never before.”

Gillian Bailey, Operations Director, Maintel



Success Story

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Challenges

Prior to the partnership, Maintel operated its own in-house logistics function based in the North West of England, managed alongside a supporting relationship with a logistics organisation which provided stores located around the country. Maintel had its own inventory and utilised a number of facilities that formed the infrastructure for delivering maintenance services to its customers, as well as providing the logistics for project roll-outs.

As a provider of Cloud and Managed Communication services rather than a specialist logistics organisation, Maintel's small team experienced challenges when maximising the effectiveness of its stock beyond housing it, dispatching it and repairing it. The team acknowledged the opportunity to better manage logistics and inventory beyond these basic functions and recognised the need to partner with a specialist, best-of-breed logistics organisation with a focus on technology hardware to help them navigate its growing customer base.

Its existing infrastructure did not provide the level of flexibility the business needed for an evolving customer base. Maintel therefore required a technology hardware logistics partner that could scale-up in-line with its increasing sales levels, a feat that would always prove difficult with a small in-house team, little to no warehouse automation and the lack of an in-house stock system that was capable of scaling with the business. As a result, the objectives of its search for a long-term technology hardware logistics partner were two-fold. Firstly, a fast response within service-level agreements (SLA) to fault calls requiring replacement parts and secondly, a managed warehouse and distribution service to underpin its pre-stage and projects processes. Its business model and portfolio were also rapidly changing and Maintel quickly faced difficulties when linking stock to its internal transition or product onboarding process. During this period, which led to a review of its warehouse facilities, Maintel took actions to find a partner to take on the end-to-end responsibility for Inventory Management and Hardware Support Services.

“Agilitas are an easy supplier to work with - innovative, transparent and commercially astute to help get us a win win”

Gillian Bailey
Operations Director
Maintel

Solution

In order to find the right solution for its team and customers, Maintel underwent a tender process with a number of key suppliers. Maintel quickly recognised that Agilitas is an expert in Inventory Management and would be able to seamlessly leverage and optimise the inventory in order to provide an enhanced service to its customers. This, combined with the Agilitas team's can-do approach in the RFP stage solidified the partnership and in March 2021, Maintel began utilising Agilitas' advanced Inventory-as-a-Service solution, InventoryAssure+ to its support customers, as well as the nationwide storage and distribution of all project stock.

This suite of flexible inventory support options provides comprehensive service levels that ensure maximum 'uptime' regardless of technology or geographic location. This resulted in an outsource of its entire hardware infrastructure of over 65,000 technology devices, enabled by Agilitas designing a solution to deliver the service to Maintel in a scalable operating and commercial model. Agilitas' as-a-service model meant that its services were able to be flexed to meet Maintel's exact requirements both at an operational and a commercial level.

“We started to work with Agilitas just over 12 months ago and in that time, we have worked together to transform the way Maintel delivers its logistics services to the end user. The services we take from Agilitas are the full InventoryAssure for our support customers and warehouse and distribution for our all project stock. Agilitas are an 'easy' supplier to work with – innovative, transparent and commercially astute to help us get to a 'win-win' (new business for Agilitas and a competitively priced outsource solution for Maintel).” - Gillian Bailey, Operations Director, Maintel

Maintel and Agilitas agreed the timelines for the commencement of services in line with the need for Maintel to exit its Haydock facility on 31st March 2021. This presented some challenges which meant both teams needed to be well aligned and make progress through the transition plan on a daily basis. Maintel and Agilitas teams worked closely together and with Maintel subcontractors to ensure implementation was delivered transparently.

A joint action plan managed by a dedicated Agilitas Service Manager to oversee the transition and a planned series of calls to review progress of the various actions, ensured this process was managed successfully to schedule. This communication strategy enabled both operational teams to ensure that specific orders or requests were progressed without delay or end-user impact. “The transition to Agilitas was well planned, managed and executed and even when we had the inevitable teething problems in early life they came to the table with realistic solutions and a 'can-do' attitude. Our customers have undoubtedly benefited from this partnership – we were 'OK' at logistics prior to the outsource but we lacked automation and a general logistics know-how. However, now that we are working with Agilitas we can see what a real logistics organisation can do in terms of systems, processes, spares profiling and logistics best practice.” - Gillian Bailey, Operations Director, Maintel

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Looking Ahead

As the partnership evolves, Maintel is seeing early signs of strong progression and success. Transferring inventory management and stock ownership to Agilitas and the responsibility to manage the contract for an initial five years has provided Maintel with an SLA-based service that it can rely on. The team is now benefitting from a clear link between transition and stock, which is ensuring it can support all customers from day one.

Maintel now has a fully flexible service that supports customers and a commercial model that enables it to control costs in line with revenue and scale according to its evolving business model and customer requirements. The partnership has also delivered Maintel a pricing model that can be utilised to retain existing contracts and acquire new customers - a model that is already proving effective following a series of new contract wins.

Beyond the contracted services, Maintel has recognised Agilitas' enthusiasm and ability to support the company with new customer opportunities, helping it to pass on economies of scale to increase its competitive market position and further its operational capability to deliver complex logistics requirements. Maintel and Agilitas will continue to support each other in the market and give end customers the benefit of a collaborative solution, based on best of breed capabilities.

"The level of insight into stock patterns has given us a handle on things like never before. As a service provider, it was important to me that we didn't have any overlap or confidentiality challenges - Agilitas as a true channel partner makes this easy, they just know what we are looking for and they help us present logistics and pre-stage commercial offerings to new customers, making us really competitive." - Gillian Bailey, Operations Director, Maintel

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