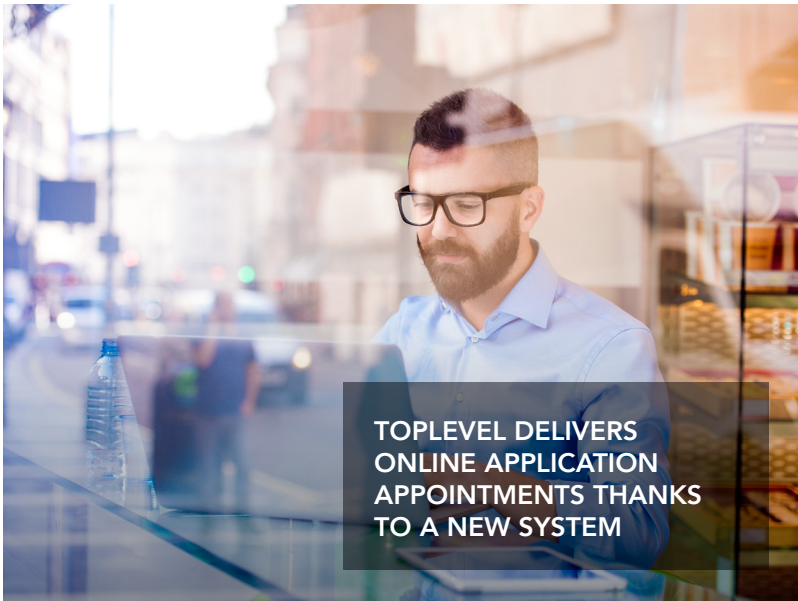




ONLINE APPOINTMENTS BOOKING SERVICE FOR PASSPORT APPLICANTS EXCEEDS ANNUAL TARGET IN FIRST MONTH



**TOPLEVEL DELIVERS
ONLINE APPLICATION
APPOINTMENTS THANKS
TO A NEW SYSTEM**

UK passport customers can now book their application appointment online thanks to a new system delivered and implemented by Toplevel to Her Majesty's Passport Office.

The online booking service means passport applicants who need a face-to-face appointment to get their passport more urgently are able to view, select, and pay for an appointment at one of seven locations throughout the UK.

THE CHALLENGE

Prior to the introduction of the online service, passport application appointments were only available to book during the operating hours of HM Passport Office's telephone advice service.

Calls to this service cost money to both the organisation and its customers, so there were clear benefits to offering an alternative method for customers to book their appointment.

Research by HM Passport Office suggested that up to 70 per cent of its customers who booked face-to-face appointments would use a web booking service if it was available. The service needed to be flexible enough to offer simultaneous appointments across multiple locations in the UK from which the user could view, select, and reserve.

Confirmation of a booking needed to be supplied to the customer via email, with reminders sent just before the appointment to reduce the number of missed appointments. HM Passport Office staff also needed to be able to allocate appointment slots and view management information so that appointment availability could be monitored.

Appointment fees, previously paid on attendance at the appointment, would also need to be collected online and which required integration with an e-payment provider. Also the system would be required to integrate with HM Passport Office's queue management system.



THE PROJECT

Toplevel was selected to deliver the digital appointment service using the Software as a Service (SaaS) model. Our ability to alter or introduce new digital service elements through the rapid reconfiguration offered by the secure Outreach platform meant that Toplevel's proposal was able to meet HM Passport Office's stringent requirements.

The initial design was a prototype of a ten page web wizard to handle passport application appointments. Toplevel were able to rapidly iterate the user interface for these wizards using Outreach Open Design Studio, in response to findings from user testing.

During some stages of the project, Toplevel co-located a team in London. This saw close collaboration between Toplevel staff, HM Passport Office staff and Home Office Digital staff, enabling key issues to be flagged and resolved quickly.

The project saw an initial soft go-live in July 2015, when the new service was used to take mediated bookings, before the public-facing digital booking system went live in February 2016.



BENEFITS

The channel shift to the online service has exceeded expectations. It was anticipated that 41 per cent of appointments would choose to use the online system at launch, increasing to 70 per cent by the end of the year. However this figure was surpassed during the first month, with 71 per cent of applicants choosing to book

online to take advantage of being able to access the service 24 hours a day.

By paying for the appointment at the time of booking, there has also been a drop in people not attending their appointments, meaning HM Passport Office can offer slots more quickly for its customers who need their passport urgently.

The online appointment service not only meets the current requirements, but also supports future change through an iterative digital interface that can be adapted and changed by HM Passport Office staff in to the future.

KEY RESULTS

- Excellent take-up. Online bookings exceeded projected uptake of 70 per cent by year end, with 71 per cent using the service within a month of launch reducing calls to the contact centre
- No-shows/missed appointments down 78 per cent since go-live
- Customers benefit from 24 hour access with visibility of appointments nationwide, and the ability to self-select according to preferred location/date/time

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The HM Passport Office digital booking system has shown what can be done if a process is designed well. It has put the user in the driving seat, while staff are able to access management information. This, together with a customer feedback channel, will enable further iterative changes to optimise the service in the future in keeping with the government’s Digital by Default mandate.”

JANE ROBERTS,
STRATEGY DIRECTOR, TOPLEVEL

TOPLEVEL – Secure online case management

Call us now or use the enquiry form on our website to discuss how we can help you deliver your next project.

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