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Ogi forges connected partnership with Indigo, from network design to NOC support

Indigo has become an end-to-end partner for Ogi, supporting the delivery of a full fibre rollout across south Wales, providing much-needed experience to the fast-scaling telco business in Wales.

ABOUT OGI

In 2021, Ogi propelled onto the alternative network (altnet) operator market with a multi-million-pound first phase programme to become largest home-grown fibre-to-the-premises (FTTP) provider in Wales. The telco has grown ten-fold since then, employing around 200 staff and supporting hundreds of local jobs through its supply chain.

Supporting the scalability of the rollout, Ogi choose Indigo as a partner, initially for survey and design work in a number of urban areas, eventually supporting Network Operation Centre (NOC) services to provide 24/7 support.

"What I like about Indigo is that it's a true partnership. They're driven in the same ways as we are – it's the idea that good can always be better."

Doug Williams
Director of Engineering & Network Operations, Ogi

THE CHALLENGE

With a geographically dispersed population, Wales was lagging behind much of Great Britain in the adoption of high-speed broadband. Established operators favoured the lucrative cities and larger suburbs about the market towns and commuter villages that had seen growth during the pandemic. In came Ogi, with a privately-backed plan to bring ultrafast and ultra-reliable connectivity via a new dedicated network, revolutionizing the heartlands of Wales. These thriving communities, now emerging as the epicenter of modern Wales post-pandemic, eagerly embraced the promise of Ogi's ambitious vision.

Indigo was brought onboard as the rollout gathered pace. Its experience quickly became apparent in the survey phase, when Steve Cooper, Ogi's Chief Delivery Officer, was looking for synergy between High and Low-Level Design (HLD/LLD). "There's no point in having a great plan produced at desktop level if it doesn't work when you come to deliver it," he said. "Indigo dug deep and provided much needed clarity, which meant we could ramp up quickly while guaranteeing a high-quality design."

Separately, Doug Williams, Ogi's Director of Engineering & Network Operations, was looking to address a growing requirement for 24/7 service desk support. "We have fully automated alerting for critical network alarms, however as our network and customer base grows, without an eye on the network 24/7, the risk of missing something, ultimately leading to delayed services restoration was there. There was a real risk of damaging customer trust in us," he explained.

Rather than a significant recruitment to run multiple shifts, and extending internal capabilities to cover out-of-hours and weekend incidents, Ogi outsourced to a third-party. Indigo seemed like a good fit, particularly as the company had designed the network that Ogi was now looking to support.

THE SOLUTION

Indigo brought its years of experience to every part of the design process, from site survey walkouts with delivery partners to planning fibre-to-the-cabinet street equipment and submitting the design plans. Its designs played an important role in establishing good working relationships with stakeholders, setting timetables and getting all parties on side from the outset.

Steve Cooper values Indigo's practical, no-nonsense approach that made working together seamless. He had particular praise for Indigo's delivery team, for establishing a good working relationship with Ogi's counterparts. "It's been a been a big part of the success," he said.

A healthy dialogue is maintained before and after each phase to make sure lessons are learned, enabling the two companies to work even better together on the next project. "We always look forward to seeing what recommendations both teams comes back with on how we and Indigo can improve the process. It has helped form the basis of our long-term relationship," he said.

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When it came to incident management, Doug Williams believed it was important to have an internal team providing customer support during the working day, but full 24/7 service was not practical during Ogi's infancy. It called for more scale and a different solution to ensure business continuity. The Indigo NOC in Magor, south Wales, met both requirements.

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THE RESULT

Indigo has helped Ogi deliver its plans during its first phase, both in terms of FTTP rollout and scalable NOC support to keep customers connected.

The practicalities of outsourcing 24/7 support raised questions about which management system Indigo would use for network monitoring – its own or Ogi's. Doug Williams was delighted to see Indigo leverage Ogi's use of opensource with Indigo's classic Network Monitoring systems . "When they plugged their system into ours, we knew that they would have visibility into things we were missing. And that's how it turned out, they added more value from the outset," he said.

This sums up the nature of the relationship, according to Doug. "What I like about Indigo is that it's a true partnership. This hasn't really been about outsourcing or managing services for Ogi, it's more about bringing Indigo in as a true extension of the team."

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