

# Case Study

## About Severn Trent Water

Severn Trent Water is a member of the Severn Trent Group of companies. Severn Trent Water is the world's fourth largest privately-owned water company. Serving over 8 million customers across the heart of the UK, stretching from the Bristol Channel to the Humber, and from mid-Wales to the East Midlands.

Severn Trent Water Limited  
2297 Coventry Road  
Birmingham  
B26 3PU  
United Kingdom

Main switchboard:  
+44 (0)121 722 4000  
Web site: <http://www.stwater.co.uk>



### Background

Severn Trent Water Ltd made a business decision to implement 24 hour pro-active control of company network assets. This decision was taken after extensive evaluation set against a background of increasing customer and regulatory demands.

Historically the company had operated an emergency service, utilizing duty personnel operating from home in each county within the company operational area, with information disseminated from county-based control rooms monitored by a single person out-of-hours.

It was evident that this mode of operation was becoming increasingly unsustainable given the large geographical area covered West/ East from Machyynlleth in Wales to the Leicester/Northamptonshire border and North / South from Sheffield to the Bristol Channel. This area covers the industrial heartland of central England with the major conurbations of Birmingham and the West Midlands, Stoke-on-Trent, Leicester, Nottingham and Derby and several other major towns and cities.

### Problem

After the decision was taken a project team was tasked with shaping the new Network Management Centers. They produced a plan whereby two centers were envisaged one covering the western counties of Shropshire/Montgomeryshire, Staffordshire, the West Midlands conurbation, Worcestershire and Gloucestershire (based at Tettenhall in Wolverhampton): the other covering the eastern counties of Leicestershire, Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire and Warwickshire (based at Leicester).

Each center would operate as a mirror of the other with control and telemetry capabilities and being staffed on a 24/7/365 basis. Initially, the centers each had 45 staff, who were drawn from existing company personnel, but who had never worked shifts before. As an interim solution a Lotus 1-2-3 spreadsheet was devised which was used to allocate staff to shifts and to control and record individuals shift patterns.

Whilst this solution worked in the short term it soon became evident that in the longer term a more flexible solution was needed. The spreadsheet soon became over 10Mb in size and took up a large amount of LAN bandwidth. It was also not particularly robust, constantly crashing and losing data requiring restoring from days-old backups, which were not up to date.

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## Solution

A search was undertaken of rostering software using, primarily, the Internet as a source. Several options were evaluated and exhaustive testing undertaken including obtaining evaluation copies of software, which was trialed for practicality in the particular circumstances of the environment it was to be used in.

A large proportion of the software located was sourced from the southern hemisphere and in particular Australia, but a source was located in the U.K. Intellicate had a product called Schedule24 that appeared to offer a flexible solution.

A trial copy of the software, that allowed 30 days evaluation, was obtained and tested on a standalone workstation in the first instance. The software proved reliable and easy to use with only minor issues surfacing which were speedily dealt with by Intellicate customer support.

The next stage was to undertake a full-blown trial over the company LAN that required compatibility testing under Windows NT and packaging and distribution using SMS. Different users were given the trial software so as to encompass a full range of computing abilities.

The software proved easy to learn, flexible and again only minor compatibility issues were found, which were speedily dealt with by Intellicate.

The final stage was to formulate a business case for deployment of the software as a solution to the increasingly urgent problem of rostering effectively. This was further given urgency as the company had decided to move from a Lotus Smart Suite based business to a fully MS Office based business resulting in a need to convert the existing spreadsheet to Excel at great cost or to move to a standard packaged solution.

The business case decided that the best course of action was to implement a rostering package and that this was to be Schedule24 Professional. The trial had shown that this fitted the needs of the managers and staff, was flexible and robust. Support from Intellicate was excellent and they proved receptive to the company needs and suggestions for improvement of the product.

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## About Intellicate

Intellicate is the global leader in staff scheduling software. Offering small, medium and fortune 500 companies a revolutionary means of providing hassle-free staff sched-



uling. Intellicate provides the software and resources needed to create and deploy effective staff and workforce schedules in today's competitive market.

Intellicate's flagship product, Schedule24 Professional delivers greater functionality than more costly systems. Schedule24 Professional is ideal whether you're new to staff scheduling or a seasoned pro. No risk, no cost to discover new ways of working.

Intellicate, Ltd.

Daws House

33-35 Daws Lane

London, NW7 4SD

United Kingdom

Phone: +44 (0) 20 8906 6793

Fax: +44 (0) 20 8906 6611

Email: [info@intelliate.com](mailto:info@intelliate.com)

Web: <http://www.intelliate.com>



## Future

The concept of the control centers has proven to be sound so a decision has been made that, as well as 24 hour control of the clean water assets, the sewerage assets should have a similar level of pro-active control. This will result in an increase of some 30% in staffing levels on each shift over a 24 hour period. Again these staff will be drawn from existing employees who have never worked shifts before and will require a similar level of rota management. Fortunately, the solution is in place in the form of Schedule24 Professional.

Other areas of the business are also looking at increased 24 hour cover rather than the present emergency on-call situation. It is pleasing to see that they are also considering Schedule24 as a possible solution to their needs.

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