



**The European Commission Mutual Learning Programme
for Public Employment Services**

DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion

**JOBCENTRE PLUS (JCP): UK PES ISSUES
PAPER**

Input to Peer Review on Integrated multi-channelling:
combining e-services with personalised services in a
customer-oriented and efficient way

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1. MULTI-CHANNELLING: OVERALL APPROACH AND STAGE OF DEVELOPMENT

1.1. *What is the PES's overall strategy and mission in relation to multi-channelling, and in particular, in relation to online services and other related channels?*

Goals and funding for Jobcentre Plus are decided annually by the Department for Work and Pensions and the Treasury, and set forth in the Jobcentre Plus business plan. The Jobcentre Plus delivery plan for 2011/12 sets out a commitment to improve services to individuals and employers, by ways including:

- developing, increasing and promoting our digital services beginning with automated service delivery of Jobseeker's Allowance claims;
- introducing digital champions in our jobcentres who will help customers to apply for jobs and to make and manage benefit claims online;
- introducing an online benefits enquiry service for seven working age benefits;
- increasing the use of reminder text message alerts to customers who have adviser appointments;

See <http://www.dwp.gov.uk/docs/jcp-delivery-plan-2011-2012.pdf> for more details.

The overall strategy is to put digital at the centre of our multi-channel services so they are more coherent and comprehensive, with customers and employers offered functions that allow them to manage their journey more effectively and enable the business to deliver stronger back-to-work interventions:

- Automated job-matching, better job-search facilities, advice on skills and CV creation will transform our labour market services.
- Benefit enquiries, calculations, claim tracking and closure, appointment booking and changes of circumstances will give customers a sense of control and personal responsibility and increase efficiency for the business. Most claims for Jobseeker's Allowance will be made online and processing will be largely automated.

Digital will grow and meet the majority of customer needs, including offering richer, more interactive content, better links to other organisations and information sources relevant to individual customers:

- Face-to-face will be strengthened as advisers receive more comprehensive, up-to-date information on customer activity and have more time to advise.
- Telephony will support digital, meeting the needs of customers who cannot use digital or who need support while in a digital channel.
- Reliance on paper and post will reduce whilst improving customer service and increasing operational efficiency.

What was the rationale for introducing multi-channelling?

The aim of the multi-channelling strategy is to transform the customer and employer journey by putting digital services at the heart of the business, providing:

- Increased **efficiency** through: automated processing and lower cost channels; removal of paper; automatic mapping to other relevant online services and information; reduction in waste contacts and reduced fraud and error.
- Greater **customer satisfaction** through: user-centred service design; self service enquiries, updates, tracking and reminders; a seamless journey across different provision and advisory services; tailored interventions and richer digital content.
- Leaner, more **flexible delivery**: staff roles focused on high-value contact; better, timelier information on individual customer needs informing our interventions; a greater range of channels through which customers, staff, employers and providers can interact; and more detailed customer information to inform back-to-work discussions.

What degree of integration of the channels is expected and/or has been achieved?

Customer data will be captured and shared between systems so customers will only need to provide information once.

1.2. What services are currently offered by which channels?

Jobcentre Plus customers have access to a range of self-service options available at Jobcentre Plus offices and remotely via the Internet. There are over 7,000 Jobpoint touch-screen machines in Jobcentre Plus offices nationwide, which advertise job vacancies, and dedicated Customer Access Phones (also known as 'warm phones') in the offices which customers can use to speak to advisers about their benefits, or to find out more about job vacancies. Customers can search for jobs, get help with job applications, check eligibility for up to 27 benefits and apply for Jobseeker's Allowance online; these functions were previously delivered by the Jobcentre Plus website, but have now been incorporated into www.direct.gov.uk.

Job-seekers

	Registration of unemployed	De-registration of Unemployment records	Unemployment Benefit claims	Creation/update of Individual Action Plan	Information on suitable Job Vacancies etc.	Information and guidance (offered by employment advisors only)	Information on employment measures/schemes	Applications/referrals to/for employment programmes	Job/vacancy matching	Other services—please specify
Face-to-face/local office	Yes	Yes	Yes, but only for customers unable to make claim on phone.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Call centre	Yes but only to book a face to face appt.	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	
Internet/online	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	
Email/SMS	No	No	No	No	No	No	Yes	No	No	
Social media	No	No	No	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	

Employers

	Registration/ intake of Job Vacancy	Follow up of PES handling Job Vacancy	Establishment of contacts with jobseekers	Labour market information	Information on employment measures/schemes / subsidies	Data exchange on participant in LMP	Other services– please specify in the text
Face-to-face/local office	No	Yes	Yes (PES must facilitate)	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Call centre	Yes	Yes	Yes (PES must facilitate)	Yes	Yes	No	Small Business Recruitment Service, redundancy service (Rapid Response)
Internet/online	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	
Email/SMS	No	No	No	No	Yes	No	
Social media	No	No	No	No	Yes	No	Facebook pages

1.3. How are job-seekers expected to engage with the various channels and services?

A significant proportion of customers expect Jobcentre Plus to provide digital services and are ready and willing to use them. All customers can search for jobs, enquire about benefits and calculate what they might be entitled to and apply for Jobseeker's Allowance online. From spring 2012, customers will be able to track progress of their claim and to record changes of circumstances online. Jobseeker's Allowance (unemployment benefit) customers will be able to have a fully digital claim, other than mandatory face-to-face interventions.

We plan, from early 2012, to improve the experience of employers and jobseekers by:

- introducing automated job matching capabilities;
- modernising and streamlining the job vacancy advertising experience for employers;
- providing enhanced job search and skills information for advisers to help jobseekers back to work. Third party providers will also benefit from the enhanced service when working with their customers; and
- providing jobseekers with much easier access to a wider pool of both full and part-time jobs. They will be able to manage their own account on-line, at a time to suit them, post CVs, receive automatic on-line matches for jobs and apply directly for vacancies.

Over time, we will expect those customers who can do so to interact with us using digital services where available. For customers who cannot access digital services because of skills or access difficulties, we will work with partner organisations to support them to overcome these barriers. If despite this help, or because of particular needs, customers still cannot access digital channels, we will make reasonable adjustments, for example ensuring they can access our services over the telephone or face to face.

1.4. To what extent is the profiling and segmentation of job-seekers linked to and achieved through multi-channelling?

Jobcentre Plus will loosely segment customers to identify what support they need. This segmentation will be based on a 'customer profile' that takes into account a basket of indicators including their attitude to work, digital capability and social circumstance.

At an early stage in the customer's journey this tool will be used to assess any barriers that they have for accessing digital and will signpost them to support. This might be training courses to increase their general IT competency or learn specific skills, referral to locations where they can get access to a PC, or organisations that provide supported access.

1.5. How are employers expected to engage with the various channels and services?

Employers will be able to experience a 100% digital recruitment service including the offer of a virtual 'Human Resources' (HR) service for smaller employers or direct links into larger employers' own recruitment databases. Jobcentre Plus will continue to offer a small residual telephony channel for those employers who are unable to use digital channels. This service will also be used to support and encourage hesitant users.

Employers will directly place their job vacancies onto an online service and manage them through to closure if they wish to do so. In addition, there will be an option for larger employers with established HR systems to push their job vacancies to the service in one transaction.

Following agreement with Jobcentre Plus, the online recruitment service can harvest job vacancies directly from pre-approved job boards and other employers' websites.

The digital recruitment service will enhance our current job search facility for all jobseekers, which will in turn provide employers with quick access to thousands of people who are looking for work. It will also provide automatic, real-time, matching services for jobseekers and employers.

1.6. Does multi-channelling give rise to new services or just provide different channels for existing services?

Digital has enabled us to allow customers to check their entitlement for up to 27 working age benefits, including in- work benefits, in one place.

- Digital will enable us to deliver a new service for employers and jobseekers. TLMS will be a web based vacancy taking, filling and automated job matching service. Employers will be given information about which customers best meet their requirements or are a close match. Jobseekers will be sent an alert when they have been matched or can find out what skills they need to match other jobs where there is a skills gap. They can create a CV and also tailor their preferences to the suit the job they are looking for. Staff will have more time to focus on recruitment support and partnership working, and be able to help jobseekers improve their CVs.

2. NEW DEVELOPMENTS: USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

2.1. What types of social media have been used in PES?

The department has been considering different ways in which we can use social media to engage with our customers and partners.

We have a page on LinkedIn titled 'Job Coach' aimed at unemployed professionals. This platform is about facilitating discussion between members and creating peer support with regards to looking for work. The platform requires little management as it is self-managed through members raising questions and issues that are resolved through discussion and suggestions made by other group members, whose backgrounds and expertise include professionals, people in work and graduates.

DWP Comms has recently set up a Facebook campaign directed at reaching and communicating with young people. The objectives are to boost job searching in key geographical locations that are local to them - and provide support to that specific age group. The Facebook campaign is also another way of signposting young people to local sources of help and support to aid their job search. The pilot is being run in six locations across the country.

2.2. What are the plans (if any) to develop social media further?

Jobcentre Plus has previously used Twitter to communicate news about local job vacancies. We are now considering different ways in which to use Twitter at a local level. A pilot will commence late this summer to provide some insight into how local operational colleagues can use social media to target customers, employers and other stakeholders with tailored communications, and promote use of other digital services. For example: local news on our partners, training opportunities, job search tips, jobs fairs and raising awareness of other digital services that the customer can access.

3. IMPACT OF MULTI-CHANNELLING APPROACHES

3.1. *Are indicators being used to monitor the usage of the different channels in relation to the different services and types of user? If so, what are they?*

A simple, single measure has been introduced as a progress guide. It aims to show staff/customer telephony hours decreasing compared to digital contacts increasing. Further information at a more detailed project level will be available as each individual project goes live. These are in addition to our agreed Departmental Performance frame work. Also, quantitative and qualitative research has been undertaken on the current practice, future likelihood and willingness of users engaging via digital channels.

3.2. *What are the quantitative and qualitative results of this monitoring? Are there any other relevant results, for example, from specific evaluations?*

- Amongst Jobcentre Plus customers, 25% do not use the internet. This varies by benefit type (16% of Jobseeker's Allowance customers, 31% of Employment and Support Allowance customers, 36% of Income Support customers and 45% of Incapacity Benefit customers).¹
- There was a high level of awareness of Jobpoints (87%), the Jobcentre Plus website² (82%) and the Customer Access Phones (78%) among customers.³
- The Customer Satisfaction Survey 2009 found that, overall, 82% of Jobcentre Plus customers are aware of the Jobcentre Plus website, with 45% reporting using the service (87% to search for jobs).⁴
- Jobpoints (46%) and the website (45%) had been used by slightly less than half of all customers in the last 12 months, whereas only a quarter of customers had used the Customer Access Phones (25%) in this period.
- As would be expected there was higher use of the website by customers who have internet access at home (55%), although a quarter (25%) of customers who do not have internet access at home had still used this service in the last 12 months.⁵

¹ <http://www.dwp.gov.uk/docs/jcp-bt-eia-digital.pdf> p8

² Note that the features of the Jobcentre Plus website are now provided via www.direct.gov.uk

³ <http://research.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd5/rports2009-2010/rrep657.pdf> p79

⁴ <http://www.dwp.gov.uk/docs/jcp-bt-eia-digital.pdf> p8

⁵ <http://research.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd5/rports2009-2010/rrep657.pdf> p79/81

- The majority of customers who used the internet in the previous three months did this either at home (95%) or at work (41%). A few had used a public library (4%) or internet café (3%).⁶

3.3. How are the various channels promoted and how effective is this promotion?

We will promote the benefits of digital services internally to our staff and wider departmental colleagues through our communication and learning products. Our staff will be key to the task of supporting, encouraging and explaining to our customers the benefits of a digital and multi-channel approach. We will also work closely with partners locally, nationally and across government, and customer representative organisations.

Working with partners and building capacity of our people will also be key. By joining the Race Online 2012 Jobcentre Plus has demonstrated our commitment to bringing the benefits of digital access and skills to our customers. As a first step to delivering this pledge we have introduced the role of Digital Champion in every jobcentre.

3.4. What has been the impact of multi-channelling on staffing?

Leaner, more flexible delivery will mean: staff roles focus on high-value contact; better, timelier, information on individual customer need informing our interventions; a greater range of channels through which customers, staff, employers and providers can interact; and more detailed customer information to inform back-to-work discussions.

⁶ <http://www.dwp.gov.uk/docs/jcp-bt-eia-digital.pdf> p7

4. COMBINATION OF MULTI-CHANNELLING APPROACHES

4.1. What are the main challenges in introducing successful multi-channelling approaches and how have they been addressed?

Customers have concerns about security (government's ability to keep personal data safe; physical security in terms of privacy when self-serving in a public place; and their own ability to adhere to security procedures). They are also fearful of too much complexity and change, of risk to their benefit payments if they make a mistake. There is also a high level of inertia to changing behavioural patterns as well as a great range of different attitudes to employment and motivation to moving back to work. Understanding these needs is crucial to driving product development and usage. We will ensure that all new services are designed along the same principles: secure, accessible, empowering and efficient.

There also remains a considerable geographical and socio-demographic variation in internet access and usage; a digital divide between those who regularly access and use digital channels and those who may be regarded as digitally excluded who remain less likely to use digital channels.

Our Personal Advisers already explore digital skills with customers looking for jobs which require these skills, and will help customers to identify appropriate training as necessary. We are considering how we can do more to identify customers who do not have access to digital services as part of our interactions when they make a claim or when we see them for back to work support.

We will also support customers who do not have access to the internet by telling them about local sources of free internet access and training. By introducing the role of Digital Champion into every Jobcentre we expect to be able to work closely with local partners to make the best of local free or low cost internet access and training opportunities available and to ensure we have smooth arrangements in place to refer our customers to these opportunities.

4.2. What are the main (potential) pitfalls of multi-channelling approaches?

Need to identify customer groups who do not have the skills or resources to access digital channels and signpost them to sources of support or provide services through alternative channels.

4.3. How do you avoid the exclusion of certain groups if you offer increasingly digitalised services?

If after receiving support customers still cannot access services through digital channels, we will ensure they receive an equally good service through direct contact with Jobcentre Plus staff as follows:

- all current services will still be available through telephony and/or face to face channels and we will maintain the quality of service in these channels;
- we will make reasonable adjustments for customers who will, for example, continue to be able to request an interpreter or information in an alternate format;
- benefit claim arrangements for vulnerable customers will be maintained, including face-to-face appointments for the most vulnerable;
- it will still be possible to search for jobs on kiosks in Jobcentre Plus offices, and staff will continue to assist with jobsearch during appointments.

5. CONCLUSIONS

5.1. Conclusions on what works best in relation to your approach to multi-channelling?

Multi-channelling provides the opportunity to offer more coherent and comprehensive services, with customers and employers offered functions that allow them to manage their journey more effectively and enable the business to deliver stronger back-to-work interventions, with increased efficiency and flexibility.

5.2. Conclusions on the main obstacles/pitfalls relating to multi-channelling and how these can be overcome

We must ensure that groups of customers are not excluded by digitalisation, by providing support to use digital channels and continuing to offer traditional channels for those who need it.

5.3. Conclusion/comment on the key issues to be addressed by PES

Understanding customers' behaviours, motivations and barriers to using digital is fundamental to inform the design and delivery of our digital services. New services will be developed in line with principles rooted in customer insight into what is important for successful product design, as well as an understanding of what the business needs to increase efficiency by switching to digital.

6. QUESTIONS

6.1. *What would you most like to learn from other countries? Please outline the key areas of interest/questions.*

1. What access to online benefit services are provided in their premises?
2. What access to online job search is provided in their premises?
3. What access to online job applications is provided on their premises?
4. Do they provide wider internet access in their premises?
5. How does the PES use social media for engaging with customers and partners?
6. Have they been using social media to drive channel shift? If so, how?