



Attenda

Always On Managed Services

RYOGENS Case Study

RYOGENS secure web-based system supports better sharing of information between agencies

In 2004, the Government recognised in its Green Paper, Every Child Matters, that better sharing of information and integration, co-operation and trust between statutory agencies would improve the outcome for vulnerable children.

RYOGENS was initiated as a collaborative project between Warwickshire, Tower Hamlets, West Berkshire, Coventry and Redcar & Cleveland local authorities, funded in its first two years by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister as part of its national strategy for local e-Government. It had plans to expand nationally to bring in many more local authorities.

The RYOGENS national project needed a hosting provider who had a proven track record, offered a first class service, was price competitive and would give the technical solution credibility. Underpinning this welcomed development was the security of the system.

Attenda played a crucial role in the initial design of a system that was secure and would be trusted by practitioners.



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Implementing the Attenda solution

The RYOGENS application was developed by Esprit Limited in a project led by Deloitte, while the secure architecture for the web-based system was designed by Attenda.

Following completion of the final phase of e-Government National Project funding, in March 2005, the IPR for RYOGENS was transferred to Esprit. Attenda and Esprit continue to manage and support the wider ShareCare RYOGENS solution on behalf of its local authority users.

Practitioners – social workers, teachers, the police and doctors use RYOGENS to record non-statutory concerns they have about children and young people that they come in contact with. RYOGENS stores this personal and sensitive information about the children in a central database.



“The project has proven that Attenda can take on operational responsibility for our critical systems, enabling us to focus on strategic and value-added activities with the confidence that our systems are taken care of.”

Jim Burton, Managing Director,
Esprit Limited

RYOGENS is a centralised system that is accessible over the Internet using secure SSL connections. Attenda recommended using a core infrastructure that is shared across participating authorities, making it scalable and also affordable for prospective local authorities. Furthermore, the RYOGENS Partnership invested in security technology and built in levels of redundancy in the solution.

The infrastructure consists of two web servers, authentication servers, a dedicated application server for each local authority and two clustered database servers for high level resilience. The servers are physically separate from other Attenda client solutions and sit behind a pair of dedicated managed firewalls. The backup solution is also dedicated, an essential requirement given the sensitive nature of the data stored. The application uses special security software for authentication and controlling access to the application and its system resources. Esprit and RYOGENS administrators in each local authority access the system over site-to-site VPNs.

As Jim Burton, Managing Director, Esprit explains, “Sophisticated access controls govern who has access to the information and how much they can see.” He continues, “If enough concerns are built up against a child and reach a threshold, the system generates an alert which is sent to the RYOGENS management function.”

Attenda provides a managed service for the infrastructures up to and including the operating system and database. Monitoring and Management experts watch over the hardware components in the servers and network devices, the application and database services and other indicators of system health.

Before system go-live, Attenda conducted its own tests of the environment including security penetration tests and the worked with the RYOGENS Partnership to eliminate the critical vulnerabilities identified. The authorities then conducted two further penetration tests from independent agencies, to provide the necessary additional reassurance that the environment was well protected.

Realising the business benefits

RYOGENS is an important project for the Childrens' Agenda and is also relevant to all information sharing and multiple-agency initiatives which combine technical solutions and culture change to improve services to vulnerable groups.

Security is not just about technology. Attenda's own ITIL based processes enforce strict security policies and procedures. The people using the application and the processes they follow, particularly the registration process to obtain a user name and password are critical.

Attenda demonstrated a willingness to engage with the project, ability to understand the business needs and through its flexibility to respond to special requirements and meet urgent project deadlines.

As the project was deployed, Attenda became an indispensable partner when it came down to designing and testing the security of the environment. Since the system has been live, the high quality of Attenda's monitoring and management means that the RYOGENS Programme Board never has to discuss issues with the hosting arrangement.

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