

# Why The Tower Of London's Using Its Head NOT Losing Its Head When It Comes To Delivering A 21st Century Visitor Experience...

## Advanced 21st Century Communications concealed within some of the UK's most historic

When William the Conqueror started the building of the Tower of London in 1070, the impact of global warming and our carbon footprint were not even a theory to be reckoned with. Neither did he realise that in the 21st Century the Tower would be a major attraction visited by 2.5 million tourists and visitors each year, eager to touch and see nearly a thousand years of British Royal History.

Fortunately, the Tower along with four of the greatest royal palaces ever built are cared for by a very forward thinking team of people, working for the independent charity responsible for their upkeep, Historic Royal Palaces (HRP).

The age and uniqueness of the assets under their care also prove to be one of their biggest liabilities when maintaining and running a 21st Century business.

As a major organisation within the leisure industry, HRP are responsible for hugely popular

tourist attractions such as the Tower of London, Hampton Court Palace, Kensington Palace, The Banqueting House, Kew Palace and Queen Charlotte's Cottage.

One of the keys to reducing the environmental impact of handling millions of visitors, and taking into account the 'green' issues not even thought

about by William, was how their communications systems could be modernised.

In particular their telephone communication systems were seriously outdated, with eight different telephone systems employed across each of the six

locations, which were run as separate sites.

With thousands of visitors trying to book tickets or check opening times, archaic response times meant many calls were lost before they could be answered.



In order to achieve their goals HRP's "Knight in Shining Armour" turned out to be Actimax, an Essex based Telecommunications Company, who are experts in the communications arena.

Whilst installing an Alcatel telephone system into a building with 15 feet thick walls presented problems for Actimax, it has now firmly established this 11th Century building as a beacon of 21st Century business.

The aim for HRP was to improve service to their visitors, solve their seating capacity problems, save time and improve their carbon footprint.

The system along with an array of supporting products now allows the team at HRP to utilise interactive technology that they have long been offering their visitors, both in person and on-line.

Video and Audio conferencing have solved several issues for them, including the hundreds of miles previously travelled on our motorways to attend face-to-face meetings.

Technology has now linked all of the sites together as one, to enable instant transfer of information - something that Richard the Lionheart would have appreciated when his Brother John tried to seize control of the Tower in 1190, whilst he was away on Crusade!



Although the vast buildings, completed in about 1350, were as we see them today, their layout is not conducive to modern office working and the seating capacities HRP require. This was solved by the use of "hot desking" technologies usually associated with financial institutions and sales environments.

The organisation now enjoys a state of the art communication system, which is unique in the country and also accommodates its future plans for improvement and expansion.

It was important that the results were delivered with no disruption to the smooth running of the sites, and more importantly, with no adverse effects to the visitor experience. The last guests

held at the Tower were London's East End gangsters Ronnie and Reggie Kray in 1952, and the Actimax engineers did not want to be the next!

"HRP asked Actimax to help update our systems & make working at multiple

sites easier for our team. Staff are now happily 'freeseating' with their new telephone numbers from site to site. This means that staff have just one 'office' telephone number & one voicemail to manage." - Barbara Crow IS Projects Manager – HRP

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