



## Add-On Products customer case study



### Overview

**Industry:** Water supply and sewage services

**Customer profile:**

Wessex Water is a water supply and sewage utility serving South West England that supplies 1.3 million people with around 285 million liters of water a day.

**Challenge:**

As part of its pledge to the environment, Wessex Water sought to reduce emission levels and implement technology that would make working practices more efficient.

Add-On Products' UK partner Essential Computing assisted Wessex Water in the process by implementing solutions such as Resource Central to manage its office space usage and the ordering of additional services.

**End result:**

Thanks to the implementation of flexible working, Wessex Water has reduced travel activity. Receptionists at Wessex Water can now manage parking spaces for visitors and staff have the ability to check on room availability, both remotely and at the office. Resource Central has also streamlined the process for booking Skype for Business meetings in Surface Pro Hub-equipped rooms.

### Improving Collaboration and Reducing Travel with Video Conferencing & Meeting Room Software

**Wessex Water optimizes the usage of meeting room and video conferencing technology to lessen environmental impact.**

Wessex Water is a water supply and sewage utility serving South West England that supplies 1.3 million people with around 285 million liters of water a day. Located just outside of Bath, the Wessex Water HQ and operations center is known to be one of the greenest offices in Europe. It boasts a cutting-edge design and energy-efficient amenities, such as rain water flush toilets.

As part of its pledge to the environment, Wessex Water sought to reduce emission levels and implement technology that would make working practices more efficient. The company aimed to reduce travel by using videoconferencing technology and organizing meetings that required minimal travel. In order to accomplish this, they needed staff to be able to easily locate and book regional meeting rooms as well as schedule video conferencing calls.

Wessex Water started by using Microsoft Surface Hub, which is an interactive virtual whiteboard. They also implemented Microsoft Apps and a video conferencing facility.

James Eccles of Wessex Water said, "Apart from looking great, the main reason for using these devices was to reduce travel. Rather than everyone having to drive to our operations center north of Bath for meetings, we've rolled out Surface Hubs into about ten regional meeting rooms. This means staff can go to their nearest regional office for most meetings and it has reduced travel significantly."

Additionally, the company wanted to reduce the number of unused meeting rooms at their facility and encourage staff to efficiently manage meeting rooms to prevent them from going empty. Staff members frequently felt as if they were unable to find a free room to book, but whenever they walked around the building, they would see empty meeting rooms. The company sought a booking system that had auto-

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**James Eccels, Wessex Water**

cancellation and a real-time display of room status to prevent booking errors. They also wanted to be able to book a room on the fly if it was not being used.

### **Resource Central for Meeting Room and Resource Booking**

Wessex Water implemented Resource Central from Microsoft partner Add-On Products to enhance the room and resource scheduling capabilities of their Office 365 calendaring system. Staff members can now easily find available meeting rooms that have the Surface Pro Hub installed and book them along with other resources, such as catering and visitor parking. Resource Central integrates with touchscreens outside of key meeting rooms so that staff members could see whether a meeting room is free or not and book it on the spot.

### **Improved Room Utilization**

Since implementing Resource Central, Wessex Water has noted a significant improvement in space utilization.

Eccles said, “Since implementing our room booking system there’s definitely better utilization of rooms. If people don’t need them they are proactively released for someone else to use. And because you can see room capacity when you’re looking for a free room, people can now select a room that is more appropriate to their needs.”

### **Touchscreen Meeting Room Signs to Manage Room Access**

Meeting room signs allow managers and other staff to get an overview of the availability of meetings rooms. The touchscreen meeting room signs are flexible and platform-independent, so they can be used with Apple iOS, Microsoft Windows, Android, and dedicated screens. At Wessex Water, the screens have been customized with the Wessex logo and color scheme, imagery, visitor information, and safety messages.

The meeting room signs all integrate with Outlook, so they display up-to-date schedules. Wessex Water also takes advantage of an option to add booking privileges and restrictions. For example, the chairman’s meeting rooms cannot be booked but some rooms, such the incident rooms, can be booked by executive assistants and directors. Executive assistants also have the right to manage bookings and check into rooms on behalf of directors.

There are some caveats to booking meeting rooms with restricted access, however. Eccles said, “We display a warning message when staff book restricted rooms to make it clear that if the room is needed in an emergency, they will need to vacate immediately.”

## Resource Central

- » Saves time and frees up staff for other important tasks.
- » Integrates seamlessly with Microsoft Outlook® and Exchange.
- » Gives users an overview of all available meeting rooms and shared workspaces.
- » Easy to administer and use.
- » Displays important details about meeting rooms, including images and location.
- » Handles all changes and cancellations.

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**James Eccels, Wessex Water**

## Booking Additional Resources

Resource Central gives users the ability to book just about anything that might be required in a meeting, from catering, to seating, to visitor passes. Wessex Water has enabled staff to book a variety of resources at the same time that they book a meeting, including visitor parking spaces and catering.

Workflows are pre-configured so that service requests are automatically sent to their respective service providers. For example, the catering staff at Wessex Water receive all catering requests and are able to log into the Resource Central dashboard to review upcoming tasks and run weekly reports.

Staff members also have the ability to modify or cancel their service requests, which helps to prevent wasted resources. For instance, if the expected number of attendees at a meeting changes, staff members can update their catering requests accordingly.

## Booking Parking Spaces

Wessex Water encourages employees to cycle to their operations center or use public transportation. The organization even offers a free bus service with buses that are equipped with cycle racks. The buses shuttle employees from a nearby park and ride facility to the operations center.

While there are parking spaces available for visitors, there is a finite number of them. To ensure availability at the time of a scheduled meeting, meeting organizers must book these spaces for visitors using Resource Central. Prior to implementing Resource Central, parking was always a hassle.

Eccels said, “If you came here before implementation the visitor car park was always full, but now we get staff to request visitor parking spaces. This is enabling us to enforce our visitors only policy and our reception team like being able to see who should and shouldn't be there.”

## Driving User Adoption

Implementing new ways of working and managing space, such as hot desking and booking visitor parking, can be met with user adoption challenges. This is particularly true for any new tool that requires a change in attitude or work habits, or that requires users to share fewer resources between more people. Rolling out a new booking system is no exception. The implementation of Resource Central hasn't always been smooth sailing, but it has brought Wessex Water tangible benefits.

Eccles said, "It's taken a long time to get there. Once or twice a week I'll get people not being able to do certain things but it's usually down to user error and training issues. There's now information on our intranet on how to make room bookings."

Receptionists at Wessex Water can now manage parking spaces for visitors and staff have the ability to check on room availability, both remotely and at the office. Resource Central has also streamlined the process for booking Skype for Business meetings in Surface Pro Hub-equipped rooms. On the day of the meeting, staff just have to check into the room, sign into Skype, and share their screen with people already dialed in. Meeting room touchscreens have made it possible for personnel to quickly review meeting schedules and book meetings on the spot.

### **About Resource Central**

Add-On Products' room and resource booking solution, Resource Central, is available on-premises or hosted in Microsoft Azure for Microsoft Exchange, Office 365, and hybrid enterprises. Resource Central delivers an optimal user experience, along with enterprise-level scalability and performance.

One of the keys to Resource Central's success is Add-On Products' holistic implementation service, which kicks off with a workshop that addresses the needs of all stakeholders, including the IT team, facilities staff, end user representatives, designers, and HR. This ensures that the solution not only works optimally, but also is rolled out in a way that is sensitive to the needs of end users and facilitates the introduction of smarter working initiatives.

### **Further information**

Add-On Products  
Roms Hule 8  
DK-7100 Vejle

+45 7944 7000  
info@add-on.com  
www.add-on.com

### **About Resource Central**

Resource Central is a premier booking solution from Add-On Products that allows you to book resources, equipment, catering, and other services. Resource Central integrates with Microsoft Outlook® and the Exchange Server, simplifying the process of scheduling and organizing meetings.

### **About Add-On Products**

Add-On Products specializes in developing add-on functionality for Microsoft Outlook® and Exchange and digital signage software. More than 400,000 clients around the world rely on Add-On Products' solutions to serve their employees and customers.

### **Our Products:**

Resource Central | Room booking solution. Reserves resources and requests associated services in less than 2 minutes  
Ariadne | Digital signage software. Full-scale solution providing Wayfinding, meeting overviews, pictures, video, RSS feeds, etc.  
Digital Sign Service | Software for digital meeting room signs. Displays meeting booked in Outlook® on touch screens  
Exchange Central | Group calendar. Provides overview and scheduling of appointments  
WebTeam Central | Group calendar. Provides web-based overview and scheduling of appointments  
Mailbox Central | Email signature management. Improves email branding and campaigns