Enghouse Networks

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Customer Success Story

A More Reliable VAS Offering From Enghouse

When you're a telecommunications service provider, you rely on your solutions partners for continuity of service. You buy infrastructure as a long-term investment, intending to update and upgrade it as technology progresses. But what happens when a vendor discontinues a product entirely? Do you adopt a different technology? Do you find another partner? And how do you ensure an easy transition for your customers and other end users?

That was our situation at Almadar Aljadid. Established in 1995 in Tripoli as the first mobile operator in North Africa, we are the only wireless provider in Libya. Almadar Aljadid offers business, enterprise, institutional, government, and consumer wireless products and services 24/7 across our digital channels to five million subscribers. Our vision is to transform the lifestyle of Libya's digital citizens and enable their personal and professional success.

I run our SMSC unit and have weathered a series of ups and downs with various vendors since joining Almadar Aljadid in 2013. Our most recent upheaval found us scrambling to find a new VAS vendor when our previous supplier's SMSC gateway reached end of life.

Support Levels Had Plummeted

We started the search on the back foot because our vendor didn't tell us upfront that they were discontinuing the product. I kept reaching out to them to ask about their next-generation gateway, but I could never get a straight answer. I decided to go to the next MWC19 (Mobile World Congress) conference to see what was happening in the communications world. At the conference, I spoke directly to our supplier and learned they had stopped investing in the platform two years earlier—and weren't working on a replacement.

> ### If a mobile provider can't meet existing service levels, they can't grow.

It was the final straw. Over the years, our supplier's service and support levels had plummeted. Resolving a support ticket often took a week or more. That left our SMS customers with reduced service—or without service at all—for days. It was impossible to promise reliable messaging or new features to our users.

We couldn't grow if we couldn't meet our existing service levels. We needed a new solution, and fast.

A Gateway to Handle 2,000 Scripts

Instead of despairing at the situation, I took it as an opportunity to find a new VAS vendor and a replacement SMSC gateway that would allow Almadar Aljadid to further expand our portfolio of value-added services (VAS). Despite my positive mindset, it was a daunting undertaking.

When I started here in 2013, we were working with a basic gateway with limited functionality and very little VAS. We moved to a highly-customizable gateway with expanded features in 2015. Over the next five years, we increased our VAS offerings, which complicated message routing. We wrote 2,000 scripts to route SMS traffic to its intended recipients, so

we needed a gateway that could handle elaborate rules and a high degree of customization.

We started by looking at Huawei and spent five months building and testing a solution based on their SMS gateway. It was very reliable but far too basic for our needs. It offered everything we already had but no room to grow. We repeated the process with ZTE and arrived at the same conclusion. They presented an excellent solution, but it couldn't meet our long-term needs.

> **When a provider teaches teams what they need to become self-sufficient, they can resolve issues faster and more efficiently.**

In June 2021, we had our first meeting with Enghouse Networks. I was impressed with their presentation and their answers to our questions, and they told us that they built JavaScript support into the system. I asked for a solution document and reviewed it repeatedly to ensure Enghouse could live up to our expectations. When I was satisfied I hadn't missed anything, we ordered the Enghouse VAS-in-One consolidation solution.

Moving Ahead with Our VAS Transformation

Our marketers dream big and come to us with endless ideas for new customizations, message routing options, and VAS products. We were straining to implement their vision with our previous gateway.

Enghouse ViO is a full-featured suite that offers the services we need. It is a 5G-compliant messaging platform and a private-cloud compatible solution with NFV capabilities. It provides advanced network applications, including geotagging, and a JavaScript-compliant SMS firewall that allows us to migrate most of our existing security rules. Enghouse ViO is far more powerful than our previous gateway, and we have only used its basic functionalities to respond to requests for new services and routing options. Its basic level of service matches the more advanced services of other providers.

Using Enghouse ViO, we could move ahead with the VAS transformation as envisioned by our marketing department. Now, the commercial department can control campaigns and advertise to specific audiences. We haven't seen this feature from any other operators, and it has a direct impact on our bottom line.

Rolling Out an Advanced SMS Firewall and Broadcast Manager

We are using Enghouse Broadcast Manager for advertising support and their geo-targeting tools to route messages to specific customers based on their location, service plan, and subscriber profile.

For now, we are only sending out service notifications and special offers to targeted groups of subscribers. However, we hope to push out ads from shops and other third parties via Broadcast Manager as part of a future commercial product. We're also working on one-time password (OTP) messages for Facebook, WhatsApp, and banking applications. We have barely scratched the surface of what we can do with Enghouse ViO, but I'm looking forward to everything we can achieve.

Enghouse Is a Breath of Fresh Air

Enghouse has proven to be an excellent technical and financial partner. Libya has increased transactions with the rest of the world over the past decade, but transferring money into and out of the country is still a challenge. Instead of seeing it as an obstacle, Enghouse saw it as an opportunity and got to work immediately after signing the PO, doing several months of work before they saw a return on their investment.

Enghouse support is a breath of fresh air after the disappointing service we experienced at the hands of our previous VAS provider. Enghouse provides 24/7/365 assistance. As the head of our SMSC unit, I can call Enghouse at any hour of the day—even on holidays—and get an immediate response. When we were rolling out our new infrastructure, Enghouse's head of training gave me his personal number to ensure everything went smoothly.

We saw this level of service even at our earliest meetings. The minute we signed the contract, I told Enghouse I didn't want any service interruptions because Almadar Aljadid had experienced too many days of downtime with our previous provider. Enghouse promised zero downtime for our subscribers. So far, they've been true to their word, and our VAS and SMS services remain stable and reliable.

The Road to Becoming Self-Sufficient

In the beginning, we experienced a few issues with Broadcast Manager, and Enghouse engineers offered immediate support. They rebooted the system and then showed us how to restart Broadcast Manager ourselves. They were extremely patient when walking us through the steps to do everything independently. That wasn't the case with our previous vendor, who took forever to resolve an issue and never gave us the training we needed to become self-sufficient.

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In 2022 we plan to launch a call signature service that sends an Arabic Flash SMS with a busy greeting to anyone who calls or texts a subscriber when they're otherwise engaged. Enghouse integrated the service, performed the ATP tests, and handed it to us before the cutover as a test environment. My team feels increasingly comfortable managing the platform, and that confidence will continue to grow, knowing we have additional support if necessary.

Enghouse has given Almadar Aljadid the flexibility and capacity to roll out sophisticated new VAS products and raise our service standards to international levels. We wouldn't have gotten this level of attention from a vendor that just wanted to make a sale. Instead, we've gained a partner that has helped us improve our services to subscribers and become more competitive.

To learn more about our Enghouse mobile VAS-in-One solution, **please visit here.**

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