

TELSTRACLEAR CASE STUDY

Christchurch Earthquake



Communication breakdown? Not with us.

KEY POINTS

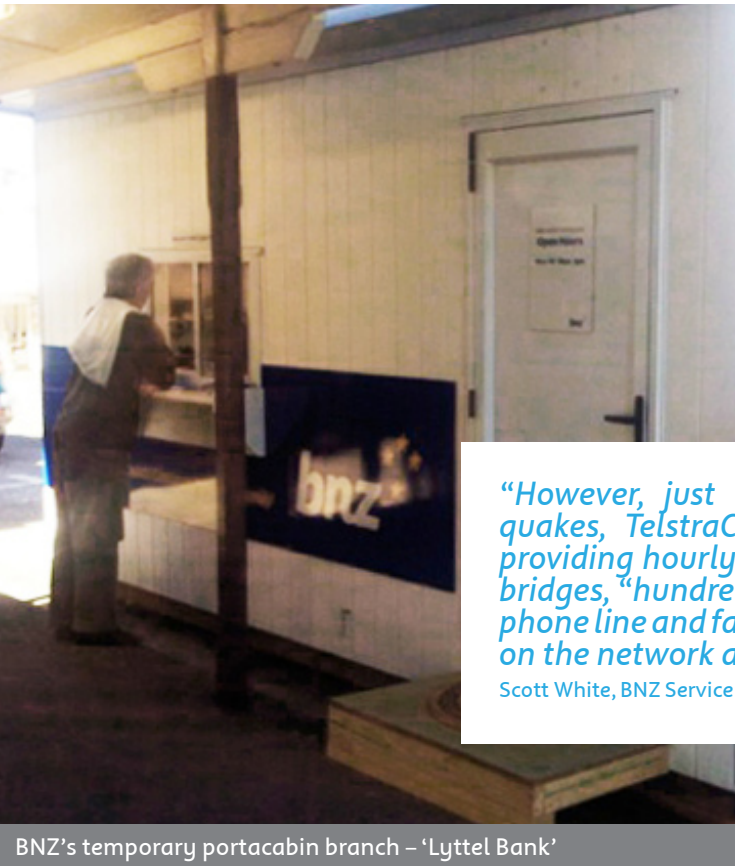
- TelstraClear was on board helping their clients within minutes of the quakes.
- Phone line diversions were put in place for clients very quickly, ensuring customers could still contact someone if they needed.
- Finding new premises was a problem for many businesses in Christchurch. TelstraClear used network maps to identify suitable temporary sites for clients with cable connections.
- Additional equipment needed to keep clients in business, such as phones, routers, headsets, switches and cables, were provided by TelstraClear.
- TelstraClear “moved heaven and earth” to get the required work done quickly, and get their clients back up and running.

The recent Christchurch earthquakes caused massive disruption to thousands of people across the Canterbury region. With the central city cordoned off, power outages and other infrastructure in various states of disrepair, it was near impossible to continue with business as usual. However, amid the devastation, TelstraClear has gone to some extraordinary lengths to keep its customers afloat.

Branches in portacabins

BNZ – TelstraClear’s biggest customer – had stores, corporate sites and cash machines caught up in the chaos following the big quakes in September last year and February this year. BNZ’s sites in the central city were inaccessible because of the cordon, and stores and cash machines in outer suburbs suffered damage. “As with every other business operating in Christchurch, the immediate impact was significant and disruptive,” says BNZ Service Portfolio Manager Scott White. “We lost multiple sites along with communications at the sites that people couldn’t get back into.” However, just minutes after

both quakes, TelstraClear was on board providing hourly updates, conference bridges, “hundreds and hundreds” of phone line and fax diversions, updates on the network and more. And they did a lot of this work free of charge. Scott says once BNZ identified which sites were safe, the challenge was to squeeze their people into smaller areas, “meaning network capacity wasn’t adequate”. He says this is where TelstraClear came into its own, “identifying ways to increase bandwidth, through wireless capability as well as technology innovation within its network.”



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Scott White, BNZ Service Portfolio Manager

Aimee Kowalczyk, TelstraClear’s Service Manager for BNZ, says that a lot of their job was to provide BNZ with “any information we could give them to help them understand existing issues or potential issues that could affect customers”. TelstraClear was also able to help out on a very practical level by sending down equipment like analogue phones, headsets, switches and routers. Aimee says they sent down about 100 digital, analogue and IP phones. But one of the biggest challenges for BNZ and TelstraClear has been how to set up temporary stores and “get services into a portacabin”. In Lyttelton, they’ve set up shop in a portacabin and their power supply comes from a house next door. They’ve called the temporary store ‘Lyttel Bank’. Plans are hastily underway to set up a BNZ store in two portacabins, nearby the damaged Palms Mall in Shirley, while the mall itself is being rebuilt.

BNZ’s temporary portacabin branch – ‘Lyttel Bank’



Keeping customers in the loop

Law firm **Wakefield Associates** need to be in constant communication with their clients across the country. The February quake left their building damaged – and inaccessible. When they called TelstraClear’s main business customer service centre the morning after the quake, within 20 minutes all their calls had been diverted. There were hearings set, which they had to attend, and clients to communicate with, so this was essential to the continuation of business despite the disaster. TelstraClear kept Wakefield Associates up to date with what was happening through all stages of the process. The phone system was re-wired, IP Gateway installed and a fibre optic cable was moved. Wakefield Associates now have restricted access to their building and thanks to the speedy diversion of calls, they didn’t lose any business as a result of the quake, and clients could get the reassurance they needed.



Outside broadcasting vans 'on air' at Addington Raceway

News doesn't stop

Mediaworks relies on TelstraClear for the majority of its essential telecommunications services, including Private IP, voice services and WAN. Both of Mediaworks' Christchurch sites were affected by the February quake: the television station at Kilmore had to be relocated immediately, and while they could operate out of their Victoria Street site for a short time, which houses all their radio stations, they were eventually forced to leave. It was a scramble to find new premises and rip out all their radio equipment – they couldn't put the news on hold.

As soon as TelstraClear got the call saying Mediaworks needed to evacuate Victoria Street, they used network maps to look for empty premises with suitable cable connections. Addington Raceway was a positive match, but it wasn't all smooth sailing. The fibre was 300 metres away and an extension had to be built, a task that would usually take six weeks to complete, TelstraClear Account Manager Nick Hatch says. "The order for the build to begin went out on Friday night, and by Monday night the job was done." It was a stressful time for both the MediaWorks IT team and TelstraClear, but because of the essential nature of the broadcast news service they were providing, TelstraClear moved heaven and earth to get it done. "There wasn't a lot of time to dwell," Nick says, "but it was an important piece of work for MediaWorks."



"The order for the build to begin went out on Friday night, and by Monday night the job was done."

Nick Hatch, TelstraClear Account Manager



The IT team had to re-establish the server room after having an hour to remove everything from Victoria Street.



Calls from the Christchurch call centre were diverted to LifeLine Auckland

Support where it was needed most

Being able to divert calls was an immediate requirement for **LifeLine** Christchurch. LifeLine provides a phone counselling service, not just for people in the Canterbury region, but nationally too. Although their own premises were structurally sound, LifeLine Christchurch had to relocate as damage to surrounding buildings put them at risk. How they could continue to operate raised some interesting logistical questions.

That's where TelstraClear stepped in. In less than 24 hours after the February earthquake, all calls to the LifeLine National Helpline destined for Christchurch, and those made directly to the LifeLine Christchurch counselling service, were very quickly diverted to other LifeLine centres. This was done by applying a series of changes to the way in which calls are automatically routed across the TelstraClear Tollfree platform. With the Auckland centre handling bigger call volumes, extra volunteers were called in to help. Linda Taylor, Head of Marketing at LifeLine Auckland, says TelstraClear were able to liaise with one of their suppliers for the donation of extra headsets. Linda says TelstraClear responded very quickly to their needs. "They were proactive in getting in touch with us and seeing what else was needed."

TelstraClear even went the extra mile, helping out when LifeLine was given free advertising space in the Christchurch Press. TelstraClear assisted with the writing and design of an advertisement to promote the fact that their phone counselling and support services were still operational, despite their Christchurch call centre being out of action. The Business Marketing team worked with LifeLine Christchurch to produce the ad from start to finish, including design, in just a couple of days.



LifeLine ad which TelstraClear's Business Marketing team helped to create

"They were proactive in getting in touch with us and seeing what else was needed."

Linda Taylor, Head of Marketing at LifeLine Auckland



LifeLine Auckland call centre



Antarctic Centre, where Grant Thornton's offices had to be relocated to

Solutions on the go

Accounting firm **Grant Thornton**'s offices were alongside Cathedral Square, and with the central city cordoned off, there was an immediate need to find a communications solution. TelstraClear provides Grant Thornton with its fixed voice and mobile services. Lance Ford, TelstraClear Account Manager, says they were able to divert all incoming calls to their Auckland office, ensuring customers were still able to get in touch with staff. Aaron Wairepo, Grant Thornton's IT Manager, says TelstraClear helped them out "quickly" and calls were able to be diverted in the first day or two after the earthquake. As happened with BNZ, TelstraClear didn't charge Grant Thornton for most of the work undertaken.

Aaron says that all staff now have cellphones attached to the company account, and laptops complete with data cards. This means all staff have the ability to work from anywhere – it's unlikely that Grant Thornton will be back in their CBD office any time soon. After a couple of false starts, Grant Thornton was able to find temporary office space at the Antarctic Centre, and discussions began with TelstraClear about how best to relocate their communications services. "They helped get all of our telco services up and running very, very quickly," Aaron says. Because the centre is on Christchurch Airport Authority land, any cabling Grant Thornton required had to be approved by the Civil Aviation Authority, making the mobile solution TelstraClear had already set up ideal. "We had staff working from home within a week, two weeks, of the earthquake, and

then within a month we had staff working out of an office," Aaron says. At the moment, Grant Thornton is talking to TelstraClear about how to minimise the need for staff to rely on their mobile phones at the Antarctic Centre site, getting them back to a more 'business as usual' model.

Conclusion

TelstraClear acted with a determined intention to achieve the best results for their business customers affected by the earthquake, regardless of their size or the size of their situation. This all happened whilst TelstraClear was experiencing disruption to their own business in their Christchurch offices and were quick to check their staff were all safe.

"They helped get all of our telco services up and running very, very quickly,"

Aaron Wairepo, Grant Thornton's IT Manager

Why TelstraClear?

Telecommunications is one of the world's fastest changing industries.

In New Zealand, TelstraClear has developed its own network and range of leading edge voice, data, internet and mobile solutions for New Zealand businesses. Many of the largest organisations in New Zealand rely on TelstraClear to provide their national and trans-Tasman communication solutions. For these organisations, and many more, TelstraClear has shown it is adept at understanding the complexity of their customers operation and designing relevant and reliable solutions.

Our relationship with New Zealand businesses is based around four fundamental core offerings:

1 SERVICE

We understand and respect the needs of your business.

2 TECHNOLOGY

A complete range of services that are scalable to your business's changing needs, and organisational complexity.

3 TRUST

A company that you can rely on to deliver on the most challenging requirements

4 VALUE

Market Competitive solutions designed for your business.

When we combine these four elements we develop long term relationships with our customers. We can then ensure that our customers have the right products and plans to support their success with their own customers.

We also support the communities that support us. As part of our corporate social responsibility programme we work with children and young people, to help them develop the confidence they need to succeed and ensure a brighter future for all New Zealanders.

With TelstraClear, you are joining forces with one of the most dynamic communications companies in New Zealand that is backed by Australasia's largest and most progressive telecommunications company, Telstra Australia.

We have the right technology, the right people and the right attitude.