Scottish Public Pensions Agency (SPPA)

MyPensions Transformed at Scottish Public Pensions Agency

The SPPA partners with Pulsion Technology to develop a software solution to administer the pensions of the NHSS and Scottish Teachers Superannuation Scheme. The resulting solution 'MyPension' was regarded as a great success with its user community with high levels of user satisfaction.

The Scottish Public Pensions Agency (SPPA) is an agency of the Scottish Government. Its principal role is to administer the pensions of the National Health Service in Scotland (NHSS) and members of the Scottish Teachers' Superannuation Scheme (STSS). When the SPPA was looking at ways to streamline its business processes to become more efficient and cost effective, it chose Pulsion Technology as the IT development partner. This partnership not only resulted in the SPPA achieving a more streamlined business model but transformed the way in which members and pensioners viewed and managed their pensions.

Background

When the SPPA first met with Pulsion Technology, it was unsure as to what solution would make the maximum impact on the organisation. After taking the time to understand the SPPA's business model, strategy and key objectives, Pulsion proposed that the creation of a secure web based case management system where members and pensioners could access their information simply and securely would be the best approach, allowing the SPPA to stream-line processes for service delivery whilst reducing overheads both within the Agency and for Employers.

Aims and Objectives

The SPPA requested a two-phased approach to the creation of these services, firstly with the development of a member secure system followed by the creation of a pensioner system.

Member System (Phase one)

Before the member system was set up, 220,000 members received a paper annual benefit statement which provided them with information regarding their pension benefits. The benefit statements were generated by the pension administration system, printed and couriered to employers to dispatch to members.

Following the look and feel of the existing SPPA website, the main aim of the member system was to create a secure web based portal that members could access via an authenticated password system. After logging in, members would be able to view their current benefit statement online and build up a benefit statement history. This would drive down the costs for the SPPA and Employers.

Pensioner System (Phase Two)

Previous to the pensioner system, 140,000 pensioners received a standard two payslips, P60 and an annual percentage increase letter each year. These items were generated from the payroll system, printed and sent to the pensioner at their home address. The purpose of a pensioner system was to cut production costs and allow pensioners to manage their own documents online. Pensioners would be able to log into a secure web based portal, via an authenticated password system, and view their payslips, P60's and annual percentage letters online with the facility for a service history to be built up as time progressed. It was important that the new page was easy to use and understand and that the look and feel was congruent with the existing SPPA website.

The Results

Pulsion Technology created the MyPension system for both members and pensioners utilising ASP.NET technology. Having a system that allows users to view, download and print their pension details via a secure website has completely revolutionised how the SPPA operates as well as dramatically improving the customer experience. The SPPA are currently in the early stages of changing the way it provides information to the scheme members. It is hoped that as the number of people signed up to the online system increases so too will the savings for the SPPA.

Key Benefits for the SPPA

• Significant annual savings in postage/courier costs

• A new way for members and pensioners to contact the SPPA online

• High level of customer satisfaction

• A reduction in overheads

Further projects

Following the success of both the member system and the pensioner system, Pulsion Technology and the SPPA partnered again to develop the employer system.

The SPPA collects pension contributions from 1,150 participating employers for the Scottish Teachers and NHS Superannuation Schemes. Each employer advises the Agency of contributions due and pays on a monthly basis. Before the Employer system was developed, employers would send in contribution data in spreadsheets via email on a monthly basis. This was a time consuming, inefficient process which frequently caused errors and delays in processing, leading to inaccurate accounting records.

As with the member system and pensioner system before it, Pulsion developed a secure web based portal that employers could access via an authenticated password system. Employers could enter their contribution information via the portal
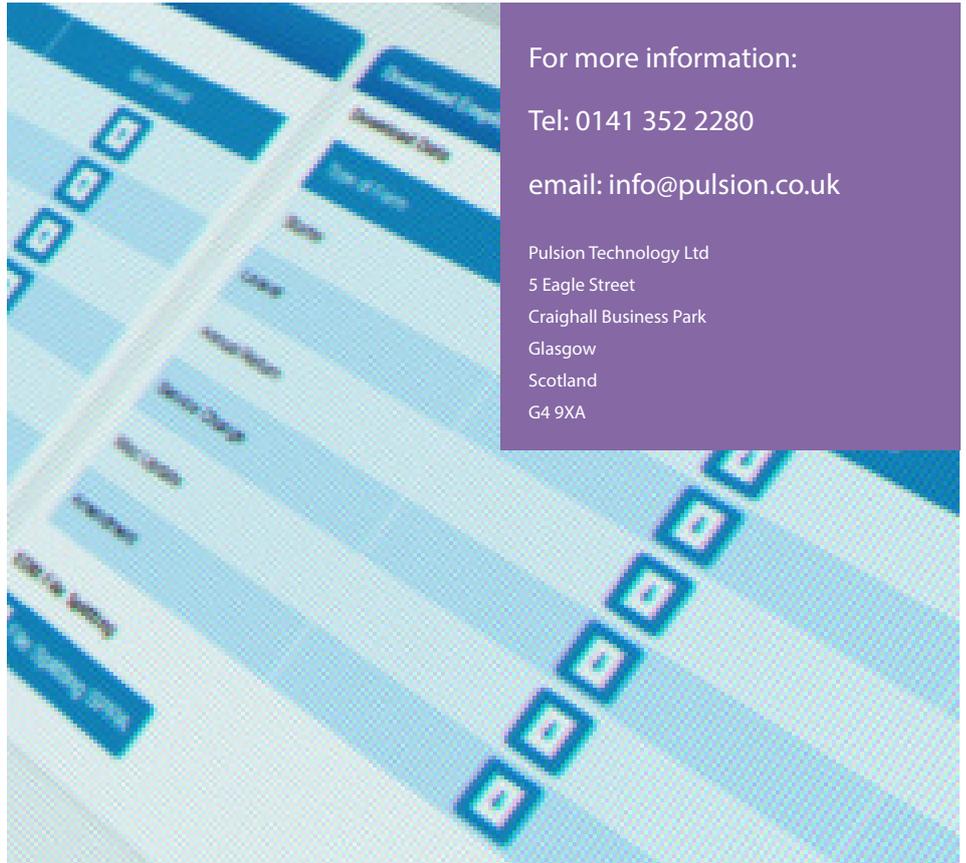
and the information would be transferred directly to the Agency's income collection system, reducing the risk of error and delay.

6 months on…

6 months after the employer system was deployed, the SPPA conducted a user satisfaction survey, inviting all employers using the system to participate, to determine their response to the new system and identify any potential concerns. The response rate was fantastic, with over half of employers who use the system participating in the survey. When asked about the registration process for the system, 87% of respondents rated it as "very easy" or "extremely easy". There was also really positive feedback with regards to the navigation of the system, with 85% saying that the site was either "very easy" or "extremely easy" to navigate. When survey participants were asked about their overall experience of the system, just over 95% of respondents stated that they were either "satisfied" or "very satisfied" with their experience.

One piece of feedback that was particularly pleasing for the SPPA was regarding the Agency Finance Team. When survey participants were asked if they required any support from the Agency Finance Team, just over 82% said that this support was not required. Reducing the number of support calls being handled by the Agency Finance Team had been one of the major reasons for developing the Employer Pension system, along with improving service delivery and all round user satisfaction.

Ian Waugh, Director of Finance at the SPPA summarises the project, "We found Pulsion staff very professional and the company easy to deal with throughout our project. Our intention was to create a user interface which our customers would find easy to use; the results of the customer survey carried out show that this is what was delivered. From a business perspective, the web service is proving excellent value for money and we look forward to continuing to work with Pulsion as the project develops".

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About Pulsion Technology

Pulsion Technology engages with its customers to deliver innovative products and digital solutions to help unlock efficiency within their business. Headquartered in Glasgow, we are a trusted provider to the public, private and third sector.

Our skills and capabilities focus on digital, mobile, consultancy and predicative analytics services. Our collaborative approach means we deliver products and solutions central to our client's business objectives; whether that is driving productivity, increasing revenue or reducing overhead costs.