



Taking the Danish B2B sector by storm

The Danish telecoms industry is one of the most competitive in Europe. To succeed in this market, providers need to be not only creative, but also very focused.

In 2003, DeTele, Dansk Erhvervs-Telefoni, was formed to deliver fixed-line telecom services to the Danish business market. DeTele is/was a sister company to Webpartner A/S, a well-established Internet service provider. In order to support its overall strategy, DeTele chose CDRator's Rator platform as its CRM and billing system. In 2008, DeTele changed name to Firstcom A/S.

Clear focus on SME market

Firstcom's key objective is to concentrate almost entirely on small and medium-sized enterprise (SME) customers, by offering a portfolio of products ranging from national and international calls with a prefix number, to all-in-one solutions for high-volume customers. Here, Firstcom assumes responsibility not only for calls but also for line rentals, switch equipment, support and maintenance.

Firstcom also works with the wholesale sector, where it has partnerships with service contractors who target, for example, residential areas. Here, Firstcom acts as a switching and billing partner. In Gadehavegaard in Copenhagen, for example, Firstcom provides calls and billing for 700 residents in collaboration with a service contractor.



*Firstcom's CEO **Mikkel Munksgaard**. Before joining Firstcom, he had a variety of jobs in the telecom industry, the most recent as pricing manager for a large international telecommunications provider.*

Adopting a lean business model

Firstcom's CEO, Mikkel Munksgaard, explains the challenges facing the telecoms market in Denmark and the company's key areas of focus: "Despite the fact that Denmark is a small country, the Danish consumer is able to choose from a wide range of service providers for both fixed-line and mobile voice services.

"This is why the Danish market is probably the most competitive in the world. So, as a service provider you have to adapt very quickly to any changes in the market, be focused, and be very cost conscious."



He adds "Our strategy is to target SME customers only, and to utilize the human and technical resources we have in our sister company, Webpartner. So we are building Firstcom as a brand without the hassle and cost of setting up a completely new business. This way, we can stay lean as a service provider, and that's what is needed to be profitable in a tough market like Denmark."

High expectations for CRM and billing system

To support its lean business strategy, Firstcom needed to find a suitable CRM and billing system. As an experienced user of several such systems, Mikkel Munksgaard was in no doubt about what he was looking for:

"Besides competitive call rates, we wanted to offer value-added features to our customers, to maintain streamlined and effective customer service, and be able to adapt to changing needs – both internally and externally. A focal point of this strategy is the CRM and billing system. It needs to be very flexible, adaptable and scalable and, of course, competitive in terms of investment and running costs."

Rapid implementation, lower staff costs, streamlined service process

After evaluating several CRM and billing systems on the market, Firstcom decided to opt for CDRator's Rator system. Mikkel Munksgaard says: "Rator fully met our expectations in terms of features and cost. We were impressed with CDRator's understanding of our business objectives, and the fact that they promised a very short implementation time. They kept the promise, and we were up and running with the first live customers less than three months after sign off." One of the features that Firstcom offers is a web interface that allows customers to view call destinations, durations and the cost of calls. Using this feature, customers can also import data into an Excel spreadsheet, helping them to budget and forecast call costs in detail.

One of the many benefits of such a tool is that Firstcom's customer service receives fewer calls which, in turn, reduces staff costs compared with other more traditional service providers. In the event that a customer does call customer service, the service representative is able to handle all processes using Rator as the single source of information. This again helps Firstcom to provide superior service levels to its customers, reducing churn.

VoIP is the way forward for Firstcom

Mikkel Munksgaard explains the company's strategy for the future: "VoIP is changing the telecommunications industry. New players are emerging, some of the old are disappearing – the only given thing is that we as a business have to adapt."

He continues, "The technology is putting more pressure on the call rates, so again, flexibility, scalability, and time to market are key to staying competitive and profitable. We began offering VoIP services to our customers at the end of 2004."

Rator plays key role in Firstcom's future strategy

And for Firstcom, the Rator system is now part of the company's business strategy: "We will continue to use, adapt and expand Rator as a focal point of our business, and we have worked closely with CDRator regarding the VoIP project. When it came to VoIP, the new functionality we needed for CRM and billing purposes was ready for use in the Rator system," concludes Mikkel Munksgaard.

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