

gem



## Contact quality for global growth

Talented people add exceptional value to customer contact

Committed to delivering superior customer contact strategies, gem helps companies maximise communications with their customers. With operations in Belfast and Londonderry, Northern Ireland, gem provides outsourced multi-channel and multi-lingual contact centre services to global corporations, including Microsoft, Cisco

Systems, The UK Countryside Agency and Expedia, across a range of vertical sectors. They outsource customer interaction services to gem, ranging from complex enquiry handling to consultative selling, using telephone, email, web chat and SMS.

**"About 40% of our employees are involved in multi-lingual services,**

**providing capability in around 20 different languages. We have excellent relationships with the two universities in Northern Ireland which produce 600 linguistic graduates every year and there's also a surprisingly large and growing pool of foreign nationals to avail of."**

Philip Cassidy,  
Chief Executive Officer, gem

Northern Ireland  
fresh talent at work



INVESTOR CASE STUDY

MARCH 2006



### The Challenge

The rapid growth in internet and email usage created a new way for organisations to interact with customers. Widespread adoption of the technology coupled with an evolving 24-hour society and greater consumer expectations about flexibility and access meant that the traditional call centre model had become outdated.

### The Solution

A Northern Ireland owned company, gem was formed in December 1999 to take advantage of this fast developing business opportunity. The company quickly found a supply of young people in Belfast with the skills the business required and established a state of the art, 24/7 contact centre based on Northern Ireland's world-class telecommunications infrastructure.

Under a strong leadership, gem has developed a unique service offering, which has established the company as a key player in the global contact centre market. The award winning company has quickly grown to almost 500 employees over the past five years.

### The Benefits: Quality People Add Value

Philip Cassidy, gem's Chief Executive Officer, says: **"There are some key qualities in the local workforce. There's an exceptional customer focus which is very empathetic. That and the accent - which is universally popular - are very powerful assets for any contact centre. There's just something in the cultural make-up of Northern Ireland which makes it ideally suited for high-end, contact centre work."**

Quality people in Northern Ireland have enabled gem to add value continually to its services to clients worldwide and thereby set itself apart from competitors including those in lower cost regions.

**"We initially set ourselves apart from traditional call centres by specialising in the delivery of quality email management solutions. We focused on blending business process project management methodologies and email management technologies to bring the same efficiencies to email response that were already in existence for the voice channel,"** he adds.

Its talented workforce has enabled gem to broaden its portfolio of support services to include consultancy on business performance and to design integrated channel management strategies across telephone, email, SMS and web chat that meet the business objectives of its clients. These are provided in a range of European languages to international corporations.

As a result, gem excels in providing services beyond the usual contact centre's remit.

**"Our focus is very much upon our clients' business objectives: reducing costs, increasing revenues and improving quality. Consequently, a significant proportion of our business is spent helping clients design the best multi-channel contact solutions and ensuring that we resolve as many contacts as possible at the first enquiry,"** he says.

Invest Northern Ireland has also played its part, helping the company with training and recruitment requirements, business leads and assistance under its Business Improvement Agents scheme. This has also helped deliver new contracts.

# gem...

## KEY FACTS

The company employs 460 people in Northern Ireland.

75% of gem's workforce are educated to university level.

2 million contacts annually on behalf of clients in Government, IT, travel and retail.

Traditional voice contacts account for about 40% of the business, the remaining 60% being made up of email, voice recognition and, increasingly, web chat.

The company has won a series of awards including:  
2004 European Call Centre Awards, highly commended for Best Use of Technology;  
2004 Rising Star in Deloitte Tech Fast 50 Awards;  
2003 Best Outsourced Call Centre, Call Centre of the Year;  
2003 Investor In People Award;  
2002 Best multimedia contact centre.

