

TITLE OF THE CASE STUDY:

Name of the organisation:

Telenor Bulgaria EAD

Country and sector of the organisation:

BULGARIA, telecommunications

Type of organisation:

- Private organization

Size of the organisation:

- large

Brief description of the organisation:

Telenor Bulgaria EAD is a leading telecommunications company with over 3.2 million active users in Bulgaria. As of the end of September 2017, the company's services are available to 99.64% of the population and 89.80% of the country's territory, and Telenor's 4G network covers 90.81% of the country's population. Telenor Bulgaria is part of the Norwegian Telenor Group, which operates in 12 countries in Europe and Asia and has 176 million subscribers.

Short description of the case study (500 characters)

The pandemic affected everyone in the world, not only professionally but also personally. Very quickly, our society had to perceive the digital living environment as the new normal and this model of communication became the basic one and not complementary.

In Telenor, the processes of digitalization had their development even before the corona crisis. They have had the advantage of being a few steps ahead and the challenge for them was not so big, but a test of their development and the willingness of the whole team to adapt to different situations. Most of the employees continue to work from home, and others - to be "on the front line". Telenor managed to continue to offer their customers the most important thing in times of crisis : reliable and continuous and fast communication.

Key words:

Telecommunications, communication, service, pandemic, measures, digitalization, remote, network

BEST PRACTICE PROFILE

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Even before the state of emergency, declared on 13th of March 2020 in Bulgaria, a detailed crisis plan for business continuity has been created, which included various measures. For the majority of the employees, the transition to remote work was a quick and easy process that did not add additional stress to the situation. The main reason for this is that they already have the established habits and technical support for working from home. Everyone at the headquarters works with laptops and is familiar with our policies for working from home. Most of the employees of the customer service team were divided into four teams working in two separate buildings, so that they do not have physical contact with each other, and many of them can now do it from home.

Of course, not all of the employees could work from home. For example, store employees, as well as network maintenance specialists, cannot work remotely, so there were strict hygiene measures and protocols to reduce the risk of infection, such as working with personal protective equipment, restrictions on the number of customers served at the same time, and rules for a minimum distance between them, etc.

In all of the offices and shops the atmosphere is in accordance with the situation, the managers are providing everything necessary for good hygiene and safety of both employees and customers. The office space itself is also cleaned regularly, there is an air purification equipment installed, the temperature of each employee and customer is measured when entering the building in the morning, or the shop.

Every employee who feels the need to speak to a psychologist, can do it through online sessions, which are strictly confidential. They have also started a weekly survey among employees, to measure how they feel and what are their attitudes regarding the situation. Managers have created a special section of the internal portal with safety rules and valuable advices on how to play sports at home, what concerts and events employees could enjoy online, how to study more easily, advices on games between parents and kids, etc. Managers of Telenor even held an online puppet show for the children of their employees, which was attended by over 200 children.

RATIONALE

The main challenge that managers have faced was the purely human aspects of this unpredictable and confusing situation. Thanks to many years of preparation, Telenor managed to deal with it more easily, as the company didn't have the need to clarify and digitalize processes, as most of them were already digitalized before the pandemic.

The employees themselves donated more than BGN 4,000 (around 2000 EUR) in support of needy families as part of Telenor internal donation campaign during the Easter holidays. At Telenor, there is a very strong team spirit, regardless of the circumstances and challenges.

The main motive was to keep employees in good physical and mental health, as leaders knew that hard times were coming. Some of the workers have been seriously affected by the virus, some of them unfortunately have lost a friend/a parent or other relative, so it was more than necessary to show empathy and to focus on human aspects during this crisis.

GOALS

One of Telenor's main goals is to be as transparent as possible and to share reliable information in a timely manner, as happened during the state of emergency, but in fact it continues today, as it seems that the COVID-19 pandemic is still present in our everyday life. It was very important for the leaders to maintain the psychological balance of employees in this complicated period, especially in the beginning when we were all locked in our homes. That's why Telenor digitized the sessions with their corporate psychologist and dedicated several special videos to the COVID-19 crisis and its subsequent effects - self-isolation and work from home. The whole staff tried to continue to be together and to feel as part of a team, even while working from home. One of the main goals of Telenor is to show people that they are and will always be managers' top priority.

IMPACT

Remote work requires specific flexibility in the use of different solutions. At Telenor, the state of emergency has simply accelerated the already started processes for digitalization. For example, they have digitalized HR relations in the company, as employees can now send and sign electronically issued documents to the employment contract, such as agreements, job descriptions, etc. Electronic signatures are also used for signing a number of documents for institutions and, where possible, contracts with suppliers and partners. Managers have introduced "MyTelenor" application, business customer service portal and e-shop - so that their business and private customers have access to all communication services without having to visit a store. In terms of results and productivity, the company monitors a number of key performance indicators - both digital and financial, as well as quality indicators of customer and employee satisfaction. Of course, there are some activities that were negatively impacted : like roaming services or prepaid services during the tourist season - but this is a result of travel restrictions imposed by the crisis and not due to the new way of working – remotely.

LESSONS LEARNED

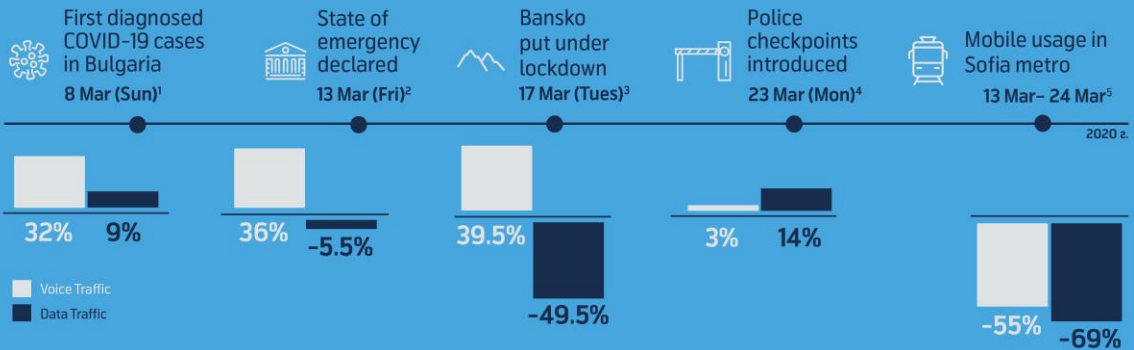
They have learned a lot of lessons due to COVID-19. Mrs Galina Chuleva, HR director, says : "Suddenly, in just a few months, we have changed. For better or worse, we are currently living in a new world that we are building and developing together. The main thing I can highlight as learned is that a company must always be extremely flexible and adaptable to its environment and processes. We have proven that Telenor is like that, but there is always room for development. What has helped us move forward successfully in the face of unprecedented is that we have guided and remained committed to our core mission - to provide connectivity to people and businesses when they need it most - and to strengthen contact and feedback from our customers, employees and partners to adapt faster and more successfully."

MATERIAL



Telenor shop and showroom at Ring Mall of Sofia, Bulgaria

extraordinary situation, exceptional network



13 Mar Highest voice traffic in 2020

23 Mar All time high data traffic in Telenor history

100+ locations Telenor improves network in over 100 locations between 13 Mar and 11 Apr 2020

¹Compared to the average of previous four Sundays; ²Compared to the average of previous four Fridays; ³Compared to the average of previous four Tuesdays; ⁴Compared to the average of previous four Sundays; ⁵Compared the previous 7 days; ⁶Compared to the period 1-12 Mar 2020

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