



# Leading European MNO embarks on its 4G journey

Mentor helps leading European MNO accelerate their 4G network rollout.



# The challenge

**In 2013 a leading European Network Operator, with millions of customers in multiple countries embarked on its 4G journey.**

Designing and building a network from the ground up on a countrywide basis for the first time. It served 17 million inhabitants and had to be future-proof and support the country's needs.

They had an enormous task ahead - to design and build a brand new 4G network from scratch.

Unlike most 4G rollouts, the company was not working with any of its existing infrastructure from the previous 'Gs'.

Early into the program the MNO acknowledged it had limited experience in this area – little technical capability and almost zero rollout experience.

Late delivery of the network and the related business transformation - a shift from MVNO to MNO - would lead to financial targets and market forecasts being missed, resulting in Shareholder dissatisfaction and a potential drop in share price.

Investors were already showing concerns at the lack of pace.

There was also recognition of the need for a better customer experience - not just a new network - within the European market.

Renowned as a trusted connectivity provider with customer experience front-of-mind, the company began searching for a highly qualified execution specialist that could:

1. Get the program on track
2. Take responsibility for the rollout
3. Deliver the market launch strategy

The MNO chose UK based Telco consultancy, Mentor, as its Partner.

## At a glance

1. First 4G only network in the world delivering 95%+ national coverage
2. Voted one of the world's best 4G networks
3. 40% of revenue loss recovered
4. Transformation from fixed telecoms to mobile and fixed

# The solution

## Speed and delivery

The first thing Mentor did was to conduct a thorough review of the client's ability to build the 4G network, using a structured review process based on the [MentorBlueprint™](#).



After gathering initial program insights from the CEO, Group CTO and program leadership team, Mentor brought in a small team of experts who specialised in mobile technology, radio planning and network deployment along with supplier management and marketing to review the company's program execution capability.

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They spent the first period analysing and processing data, making initial recommendations that they thought were achievable and in the timescales that it could be delivered, and from there built a plan”.

Former CEO

The healthcheck played an instrumental role in laying the groundwork for fostering a good relationship with, and integration into, the local team. Throughout the process, it was vital Mentor demonstrated empathy, understanding and program execution capability – to reassure the internal team that Mentor were not a threat – but were there to help.

Under Mentor's direction, a highly qualified and focused delivery team was built that could rely on Mentor's technical experts being on-hand to quickly identify and help resolve any issues.

## Mentor's Healthcheck services

We have three solutions designed to give you an objective assessment of your program. Each provides clarity on the health of your program – identifying risks to be unblocked and opportunities to exploit. All are based on, [The MentorBlueprint™](#), our proven program execution methodology.

- **Program Assurance and Risk Assessment:** You want to make sure your program is set up correctly from the start and potential risks are managed. [Learn more](#)
- **Program Pulse Check:** Your program execution is under-way, but you want to make sure it's on the right track by checking its status on a regular basis. [Learn more](#)
- **Program recovery:** Your executive team has lost confidence in the program delivery team – the program is delayed and over budget. [Learn more](#)



## Team misalignment

The healthcheck identified a number of program governance and management gaps that were preventing a speedy and effective rollout.

### Alignment and organisation

The rollout was being run from Sweden, with an inexperienced program manager. This resulted in misalignment between the in-country delivery team, local management team and the remote technical team.

A failure to understand the problems and the reluctance of the Swedish team to confront reality meant the local 4G team were working in a silo – disconnected from the market objectives.

The local 4G management team had been drafted in from their fixed telecoms roles. Issues arose between the new mobile team and the old fixed telecoms team - the two teams failing to work together, focussing on different objectives and plans.

### Planning

By far, the biggest issue was the initial deployment plan which took no account of the market or business case requirements – either in relation to geography, or timescales.

Furthermore, misalignment of the radio plan and delivery of fibre backhaul meant that both delivery teams were working to different playbooks.

### Resources

Mentor also identified that, although enthusiastic, the local team did not have the necessary skills or experience to plan and manage a rollout. This required co-ordination across a number of complex areas – from mobile network design, radio planning, site acquisition to infrastructure build, management of equipment suppliers and commissioning and integration activities.



### Suppliers

Complex relationships existed with the key supplier – who, once the 4G service was launched, would become a direct competitor. Whilst an agreement was in place to use the supplier’s infrastructure initially, the conflicting objectives of both parties led to a breakdown of this vital supplier relationship.

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The longer-term outcome of this program will prove beneficial in many ways; they will be able to provide the country’s first 4G network with delivery certainty.”

**Mike Hosie, Partner, Mentor**

## Barriers to delivery

- Mistrust between local and group teams
- Rollout months behind plan
- Rollout plan was not linked to the business plan
- Unsatisfactory program governance
- Shortcuts were taken to make the numbers look better
- The 4G team were working in a silo, unclear about the market objectives
- Unclear management accountabilities and weak supplier management
- Skills and experience gap

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One of the things I particularly liked about working with Mentor was that they became part of the team very quickly. The program director from Mentor reported directly to me and sat as part of my leadership team. He helped and advised across all aspects of the business but was very clearly accountable for this program.”

Former CEO



# What does success look like?

**Working closely with the in-country leadership team and providing mentoring to local managers, Mentor proposed new integrated plans that were challenging, but achievable in the timescales.**

A phased network delivery plan was built with the priorities being to re-set and bring the rollout objectives in line with the business objectives, and then, renegotiate the supplier arrangements in support.

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It was an amazing mobile network that had been created by the team, they did an exceptional job.”

Former CEO

The successful program recovery was based on the following key initiatives:

1. Redesigned and implemented a new mobile network organisation, capable of delivering the program at scale and speed

2. Established one organisation with a common set of objectives including colleagues in fixed (fibre) network function; measurement of progress through rollout process led to better forecasting and reporting along with improved accountability
3. Overhauled technical roll-out, go-to market processes and measurement made for effective network rollout and identification of bottlenecks early, leading to improvements
4. Re-negotiated commercial contracts which led to improved relationship and commercial arrangements with key suppliers and improved management of build contractors led to improved quality in commissioning of sites
5. Developed and launched a new customer management system
6. Defined handset and SIM proposition strategies

**The phased roll-out plan meant that an accelerated urban launch was achieved 12 months ahead of schedule, and the full network launch three months early and revenue losses recovered.**

# Is your business-critical program going well?

If you're about to set up a program - or think your existing program might need a reset, email us at [enquiries@mentoreurope.com](mailto:enquiries@mentoreurope.com). Find out how the Mentor healthcheck services can quickly give you a more comprehensive view of your program.

## Why Mentor

Mentor has three solid decades of experience in running difficult, business-critical programs in the UK and European telecoms markets. Breaking new ground by helping to create some of the first wave of Alt.net deployments, Mentor has worked behind the scenes with most of the UK's infrastructure players.

With our strong industry relationships and independence – combined with deep design, operational and commercial experience – we will work with you and your team to provide the people, resources and expertise to get your business-critical program over the line – with certainty.

We call it the Mentor Way. Results. Guaranteed.



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