



## **BT: BUSINESS TRANSFORMED**

### **Protect and grow**

In the late 1980s, British Telecom set out to change. It wanted to move from being a technology company to a communication company, from a state utility to a service business, and from British to global. Why? Though newly privatised, the company was still a deeply hated institution. Customers had to wait weeks to get a phone installed, and it was hard to find a payphone that worked. The company knew that, to protect its market share in the UK, and to grow abroad, it had to change.

### **Listening and talking**

Wolff Olins created a new positioning, and changed its name to the simpler and more international 'BT'. We designed a radically new visual identity showing a human figure (the 'piper') listening and talking, representing BT's purpose in the world and its responsiveness to customers. We implemented the identity – on time and on budget – on 60,000 payphones, 70,000 vehicles and 10 million items of stationery. And all this inspired a far-reaching programme of change, including a project that guaranteed that 90% of payphones at any one time would work.

### **Privatisation success**

The result was a transformation in how BT was seen, and how its staff felt about their organisation, which made BT the privatisation success story of the early 1990s. Two decades on, BT is now a global business, earning a third of its revenue outside the UK. Its brand has continued to evolve, and in 2003 BT adopted the 'connected world' symbol, originally designed by Wolff Olins for an internet business called BTopenworld.

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