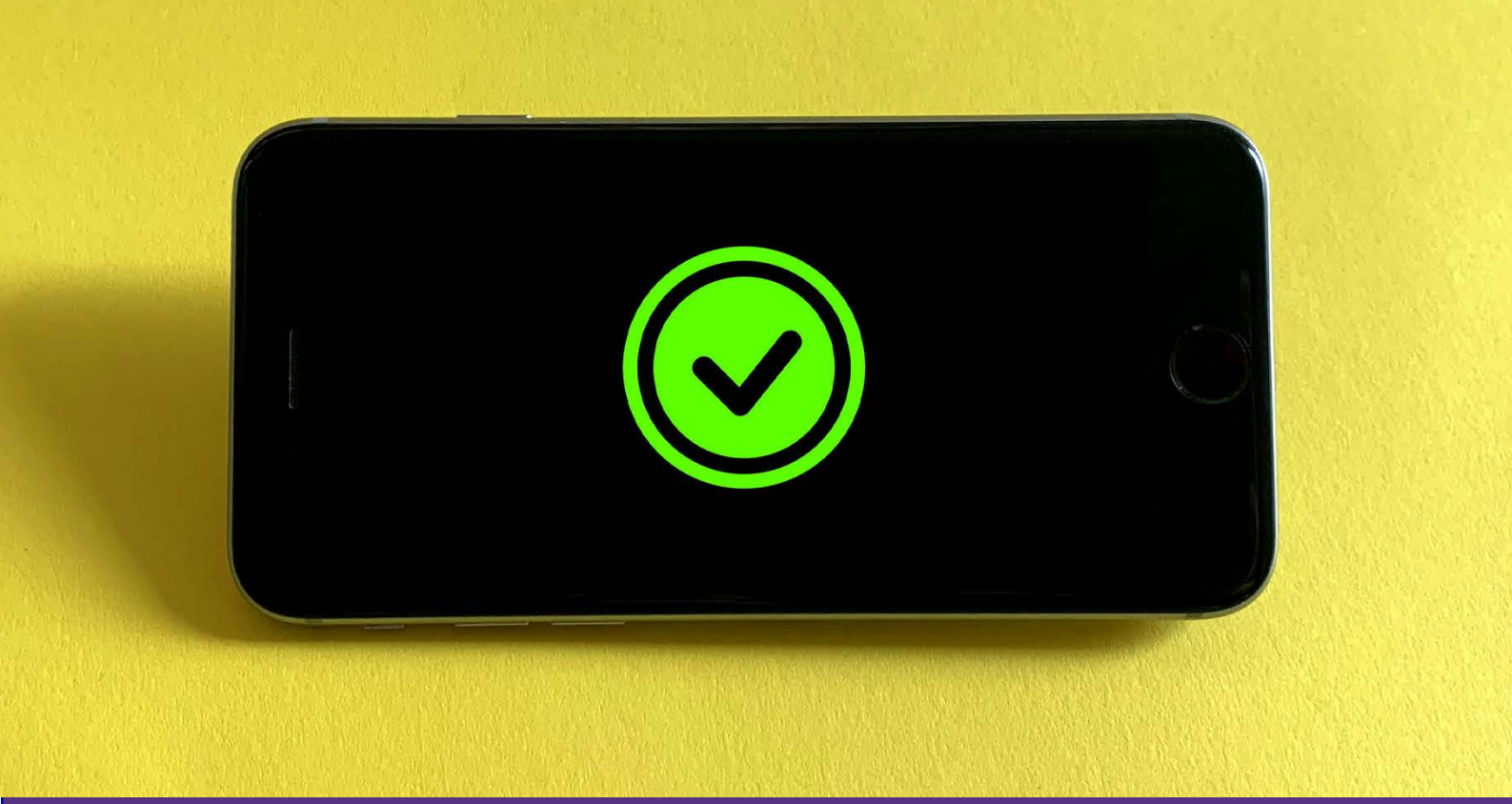

Installation and Technical Delivery:

Ensuring a Successful Rollout For Your Technology Products

“Going the extra mile…”

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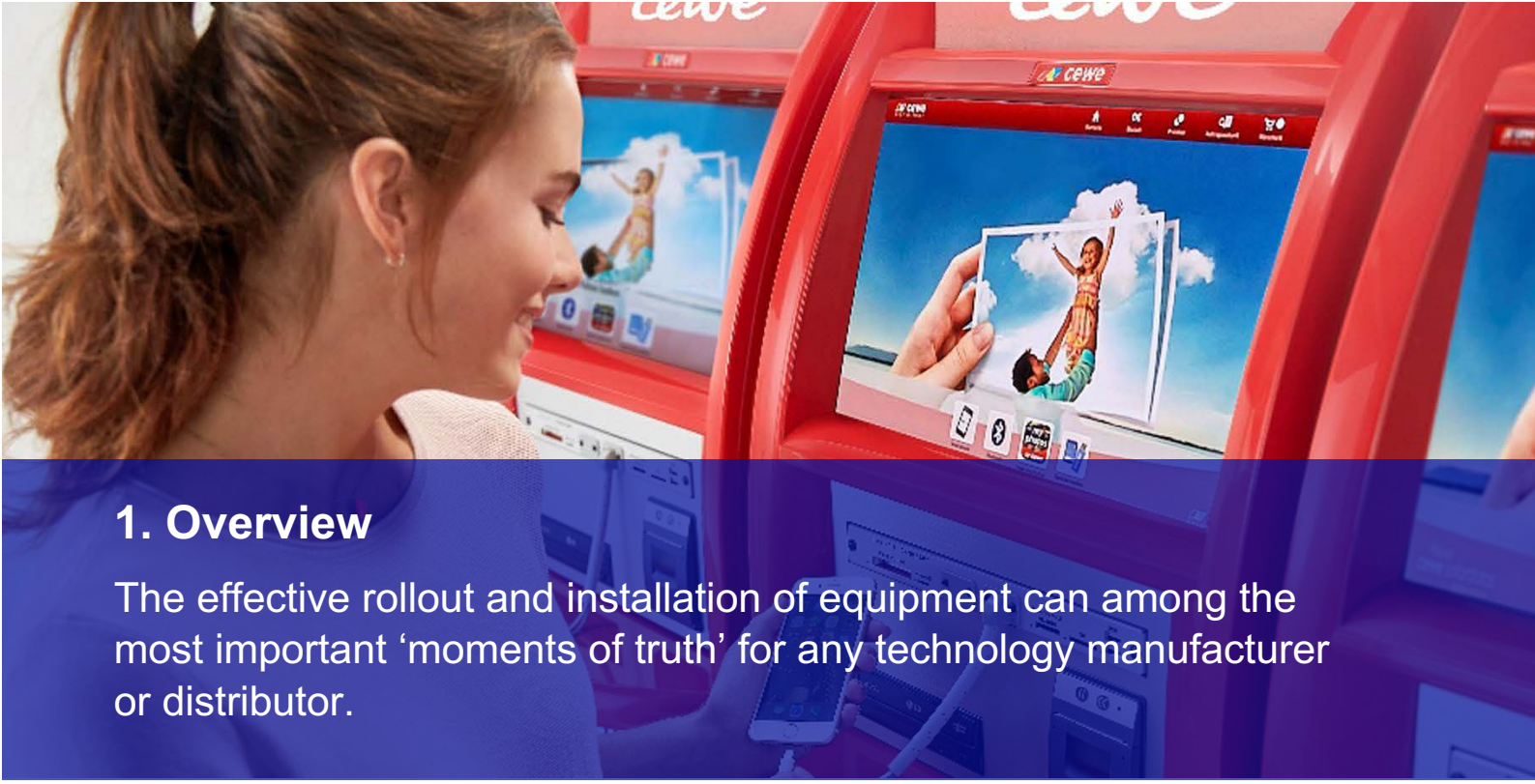
Technology Service & Support



1. Overview

The effective rollout and installation of equipment can among the most important ‘moments of truth’ for any technology manufacturer or distributor.

A smooth and timely transition from purchase order to operation will set the right tone for a long and successful customer relationship. Any delays or mistakes risk setting things off on the wrong foot, creating discontent among end users, hampering future sales growth or, worse still, leading to the cancellation of existing orders.

Rollouts vary significantly in scale and complexity: from a single site with one or two units to a nationwide project with thousands; from the technical delivery of standalone or plug-and-play products to the full-service installation, connection, and configuration of leading-edge networked technologies.

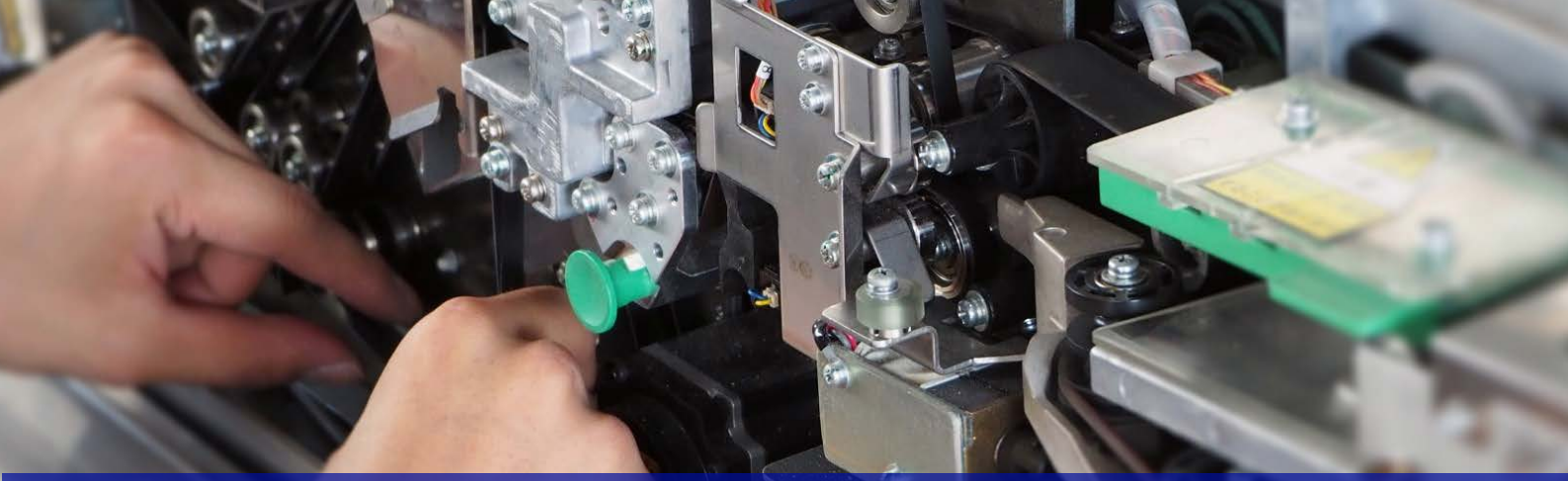
What all rollouts have in common is the stages that should be considered in the planning process, plus the resourcing and expertise required to successfully implement them.

The ‘Moment of Truth’

First coined by Swedish businessman Jan Carlzon, the phrase ‘moment of truth’ refers to the moment when a customer or user interacts with a brand, product or service and forms (or changes) an impression about it.

The first moments of truth occur as customers encounter and purchase a product. But the process doesn’t end there. For many if most business-to-business technology products (as well as some sophisticated or high-end home consumer products) the rollout and installation process is likely to be fundamental to the purchase experience. And customers and end-users will still be experiencing moments of truth – and sharing them on social media and personal and business networks – long after a product is purchased and installed. Every technical service or support interaction is a critical moment of truth.

These will often take place at critical points in the customer journey – when the final purchase decision is in balance, for example, or when the product has stopped working as expected. How these moments of truth are handled can seriously damage or enhance the reputation of a manufacturer in an instant.



2. The Technology Installation Process

Qcom's technology installation projects are planned across five stages: (i) inventory & logistics; (ii) assembly; (iii) site surveys; (iv) installation; and (v) support.

Planning and delivery might be required in just one or two of these areas for simple technical delivery projects, such as those involving small numbers of standalone (non-networked) products, or individual plug-and-play units, for example.

But as rollout projects grow in size and the technology involved increases in sophistication and complexity, the ability to provide a complete end-to-end turnkey solution becomes pivotal to effective and reliable project delivery.

1. Inventory & Logistics

Large rollout projects often require the receipt, handling, and onward dispatch of products to each individual installation site. Qcom's state-of-the-art storage facilities include dedicated staging areas where products can be worked on as soon as they arrive.

Our storage warehouses have clean and anti-static rooms, providing appropriate conditions for high-tech products and preventing any faults, accidents, or damage.

Transport to installation sites also needs to be safe. Qcom works with preferred logistics partners using specialist vehicles rigged with strapping points and padding to keep even the most delicate technology secure.

Depending on product size and location factors, units may require specialist handling technology form power pushers to scissor lifts or stair robots.

2. Assembly

These specialist facilities also allow us to provide in-house assembly and sub-assembly support on projects. This can include hardware assembly (panel and cabinet building or cable and wiring assembly) or software loading and configuration.

Dedicated test facilities are also vital, allowing us to identify any issues or faulty mechanics in our pre-check procedures. This significantly reduces the risk of any issues or complications during each onsite installation.

3. Site surveys

Installation locations are likely to differ greatly in size and layout, as well as in practical arrangements for parking, access, and opening hours.

Advance site surveys allow us to check not just these physical factors, but also power, connectivity, and any other issues specific to the equipment.

By investing properly in the site survey process we can make bespoke local arrangements for each and every installation. This allows us not only to plan the most efficient installation schedules, but also to be confident in their reliable delivery.

4. Installation

Working to processes agreed with the manufacturer or distributor, existing equipment can be decommissioned and removed before new equipment is unpacked and placed.

Physical installation is typically followed by connection to power and networks, software installation, configuration, and testing. Basic operator training is often provided to an onsite user or representative.

5. Support

New technology and/or new users inevitably means teething problems. Qcom can support its rollout projects with as much or as little technical support as the product and client requires.

Our telephone helpdesk support can provide an efficient and highly effective customer advice and ‘snagging’ service on new technology. Our technical filter process means up to 80% of problems – whether technical or user error – can be resolved over the telephone.

Our nationwide engineering network means we can also back that up with rapid-response field support, from swap out replacements through to comprehensive programmes of preventative maintenance or aftermarket warranty support.

Case Study

Successful rollout of photographic technology equipment.

A bespoke end-to-end project plan was at the heart of Qcom's successful and on-time completion of high-tech photographic equipment in nearly 500 UK and Ireland stores.

Qcom carried out the installations for Europe's largest photo company, CEWE, which had been commissioned by a leading High Street pharmacy to replace self-service printing equipment.

Working through a period of highly localised and fluctuating pandemic restrictions, Qcom developed and delivered a bespoke project plan embracing a full suite of services from inventory and installation to training and aftersales support.

The project was scheduled in two phases, covering 176 stores in July and 300 stores during October and November.

A site survey was carried out at each store a month before installation, allowing engineers to plan each installation individually and identify any potential problems. Equipment was received in bulk at Qcom's warehouse facility, and then distributed to stores in line with the engineering schedule.

On each installation date, existing equipment was decommissioned and removed, and one or two new units were installed as required. Kiosks, screens, and payment units were configured and tested by the engineer, and staff at each site were provided with basic operator training.

Following the successful completion of this project, Qcom has continued to support the equipment with ongoing maintenance and swap-out services.

Qcom's ability to provide this comprehensive end-to-end service was critical to the successful completion, allowing us to individually manage every aspect of every installation in every location.

Read the full case study at www.qcom.co.uk/casestudies/technology-rollout-retail-estate/

3. The Right Skills & Culture

Every best practice rollout project should be built around these stages, and on proven technical procedures and processes which have been agreed in advance with the client.

But no matter how rigorous the planning, the overall quality of the project delivery is ultimately dictated by the quality of each individual installation. And this ultimately rests in the hands of the engineers and support teams who carry them out.

Technical Excellence

Qcom engineers and technical consultants are experienced, manufacturer-trained and certified to work on even the most advanced systems. Continuous training ensures these skills are maintained at the highest level.

Working alongside them are specialists for every process. To ensure the right price-point for every installation, for example, we offer a tiered service that provides engineers and technical consultants for higher-end installations, and technical couriers to implement simpler devices.

Service Culture

But technical excellence is not enough. Installations can be a critical customer touchpoint – often the first time that hundreds or thousands of end users will have encountered and engaged with the manufacturer and its products. This makes service excellence every bit as important as technical excellence.

Qcom's service culture is built on the understanding that, with each and every onsite installation, we have 'your brand in our hands'.

Our engineers are recruited for attitude and a service mindset, as well as technical aptitude. Successful installation projects require engineers, consultants and technical couriers who can work with people as well as technology.

To build on this, our training and development programmes are shaped by our commitment to 'going the extra mile'.

This fosters and encourages a right-first-time attention to detail, and a proactive approach to problem solving which allows us to better manage the issues that will inevitably arise through the course of large technology rollout.

Case Study

UK-wide smart locker installation

The service culture of an experienced field engineering team was key to the successful installation of 4,700 smart lockers at 1,200 sites around the UK in less than eight months.

Qcom delivered the entire rollout for US/UK technology company Bybox, from stock inventory and dispatch to locker installation and configuration.

Qcom's experienced engineers worked one-to-one with individual site managers throughout the project, identifying on-the-ground solutions to local timing or on-site issues.

This proactive and service-oriented approach proved vital as the Covid-19 pandemic reached the UK, introducing not only new working restrictions but also fresh challenges such as social-distancing queues forming across retail spaces already earmarked for installations.

By installing the lockers in little more than six months, Qcom helped Bybox meet its demanding contract commitments to a major new customer. By responding proactively to challenges in order to stay within these tight deadlines, Qcom earned plaudits from the Bybox team for consistently 'going the extra mile'.

Ria Mercer-Bowell, Bybox Head of Global Implementation, said: "Qcom has proven to be a very adaptable, dependable and customer-focused supplier whilst working on this large, business-critical implementation. Fast becoming a preferred supplier, Qcom is delivering a great service."

Read the full case study at www.qcom.co.uk/casestudies/installation-intelligent-lockers/

4. In-house vs Outsourced Delivery?

One of the most fundamental decisions to make is whether to deliver your technology projects with in-house or outsourced resources.

There are many good reasons why rollouts are, in our experience, among the most frequently outsourced technical services projects.

As we have discussed in previous sections, successful rollouts require a specific blend of skills, infrastructure, and territorial coverage. These do not generally align to the core resourcing of technology manufacturers, system integrators, or distributors, and where they are in place they are typically dedicated to other activities.

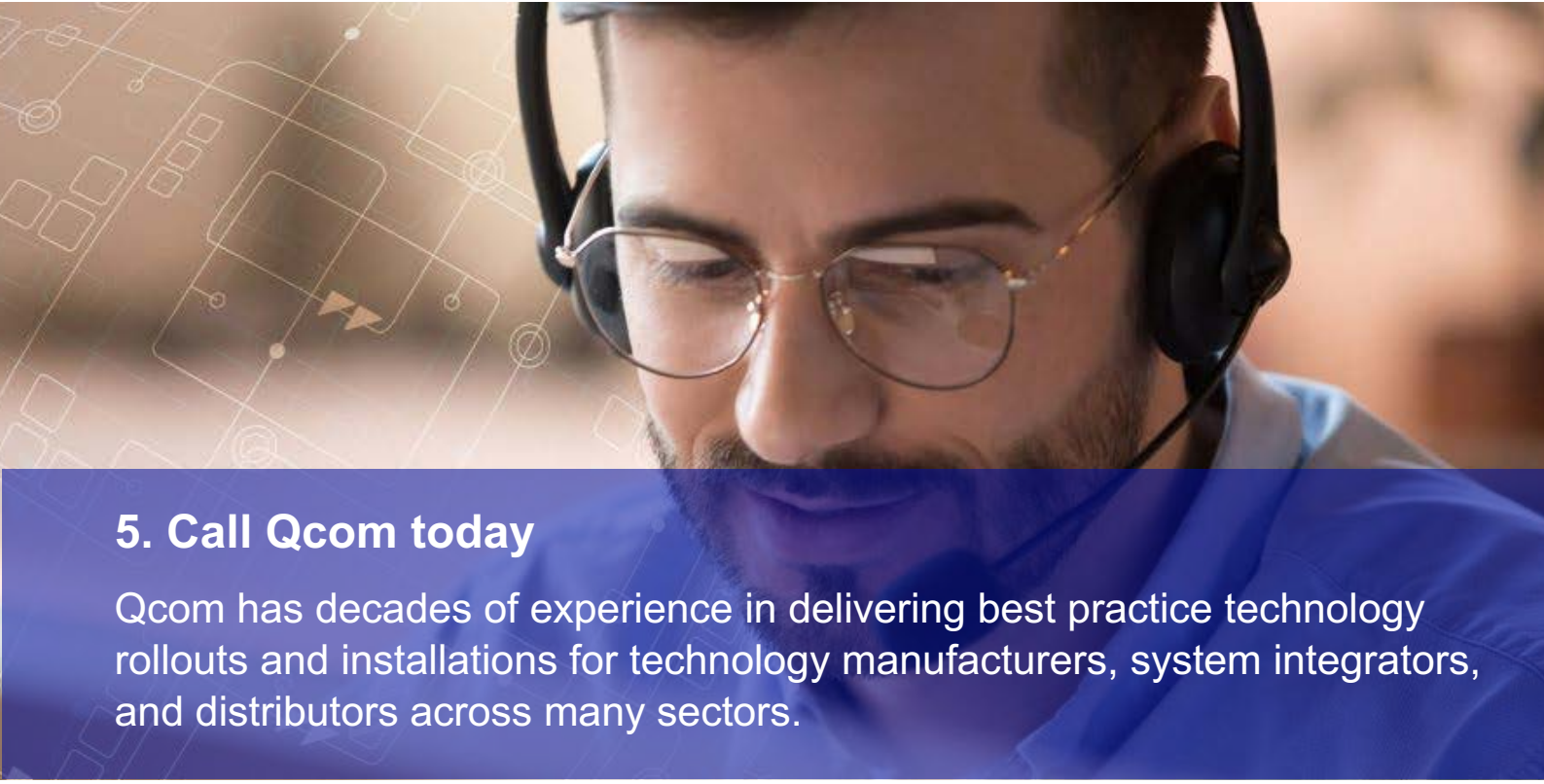
In addition, demand for rollouts tends to be uneven and hard to forecast. This is particularly true with b2b technology products, where major orders can cause significant but unpredictable spikes in demand for delivery and installation. This can leave fixed cost in-house engineering resources struggling to efficiently meet a highly variable level of demand.

Outsourcing to a technical services specialist can help your business meet these challenges. An outsourced technical services partner will be able to draw on a larger specialist resource pool to meet either cyclical or unexpected peaks in demand. That larger pool will also give you direct and immediate access to specialist engineering and service expertise, dedicated infrastructure, and instant national coverage across your sales territories.

The result can be both an improved quality of rollout and reduced cost of operations.

Despite these advantages however, it is vital to remember that this remains one of the most important ‘moments of truth’ in your customer lifecycle. By outsourcing delivery and installation you will be placing a great deal of trust in your provider. These projects will very much represent ‘your brand in their hands’, so your due diligence and preparations will need to be rigorous. This will include not just planning but also training – not matter how skilled the provider’s engineers and technicians are, they are unlikely to arrive fully prepped and ready to go.

You can read more about the factors which can influence this decision in Qcom’s e-guide, Inhouse v Outsourced: Achieving Technical Services Excellence For Your Business.



5. Call Qcom today

Qcom has decades of experience in delivering best practice technology rollouts and installations for technology manufacturers, system integrators, and distributors across many sectors.

From simple technical deliveries through to the widescale installation of new and leading-edge technologies, these projects make up a significant proportion of our portfolio.

Contact Qcom today on outsourcing@qcom.co.uk or +44 (0)1905 827650 to discuss your technology rollout and installation requirements.

Or visit www.qcom.co.uk for more information.