

Case study: P&O Ferries

Powerful in-house data control and integrated real time insight deliver a single customer view (SCV) for P&O Ferries

Background

P&O Ferries began carrying passengers in 1837 and today boasts the largest fleet of ships transporting passengers across to the continent. In 2009 they embarked on a voyage of discovery with Experian Data Quality to achieve a single customer view (SCV), with the aim of enhancing customer engagement and maximum marketing returns.

Situation

In a highly competitive market, P&O Ferries understands that success depends on deep customer understanding and that this insight can only come from a single customer view. Determined to improve their customer engagement, make more accurate strategic decisions and achieve operational efficiencies, P&O sought an effective SCV solution.

The company's existing data solution simply wasn't performing to expectations. International, multichannel customer data was captured from multiple touch points such as call centres and ports. It was then collated, transferred to a third party provider and checked for accuracy, before finally being returned to P&O Ferries. With so many manual parts to the process, the opportunity for duplication and error was great. When the data was finally returned to P&O, it was at least 10 days old and failed to identify individuals across multiple channels.

As P&O Ferries' IT Project manager - Rani Tarumarajan explained, "In this industry, databases begin to degrade from the moment information is recorded. If we're to understand our customers as individuals and

harness maximum customer value, we need to act on accurate data within hours, not days."

P&O Ferries needed a cost effective SCV solution that would bring control of customer data in-house, delivering real-time insight that could be harnessed by the whole company. In addition, contractual obligations meant that any solution had to be implemented immediately, or risk putting the project on hold for another year — chancing unnecessary costs through continued third party management.

Solution

P&O Ferries approached Experian Data Quality as the industry leader in developing and implementing data quality solutions, tasking them with the redesign of its operations and provision of an SCV. Transformation was to be companywide, covering all booking, customer relationship and customer management information systems.

Understanding that the 'contract clock' was ticking, Professional Services and the P&O Marketing team quickly identified the need for: enhanced data capture; database cleansing; and rationalisation of customer entries on the database.



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Rani Tarumarajan
IT Project Manager
P&O Ferries

Tailoring solutions to deliver a rock solid SCV foundation, Experian Data Quality deployed:

Online address capture

Used at point of capture to replace the old, manual data collection process. Staff across the business and channels could enter in a customer's address and immediately identify and correct errors. Using a bespoke and easy to use web-form, additional data can also be captured, such as preferred communications channels, contact frequency and marketing opt-in/out.

Address cleaning and suppression

Ensuring that the database would be constantly and rapidly checked, authenticated and cleansed against the most extensive, accurate and up-to-date databases available. The benefit of which would be that not only would duplicate records be deleted but 'gone aways' and deceased would be detected and where possible updated with the correct information, enabling the best possible communications with customers.

Data deduplication

Used to analyse P&O Ferries' database, identifying multiple entries for single customers who might have used different contact channels, for example, and merging them into a single and accurate customer record. It's a bespoke combination of solutions that allows P&O Ferries to gain a single view of individual customers, giving customers the messages they want, when they want them.

Results

Achieved within ambitious timescales, Experian Data Quality's address capture, cleaning and deduplication tools are fully embedded in P&O's data management process and deliver a fully automated SCV; minimising demands on staff time and maximising returns. Today, up to

date data is available for use within 24 hours of capture, transforming the previous 10 day turnaround.

Rani Tarumarajan said, "Now, we have better visibility into individual customers and can deliver increasingly targeted messaging. If we know a passenger travels to Calais to buy wine, for example, we can promote relevant discount offers. And because the whole process is in near real-time, it means that highly time-sensitive marketing messages can be delivered for customers to take advantage of on their return trip."

It's also saving time, money and effort, whilst adding brand value;

- P&O Ferries saves money by cutting out a third-party provider, and at the same time gains inhouse control.
- The bespoke web-form makes data collection faster and aligned to business objectives.
- Automated cleansing saves half a day of staff time per week.
- Messages reach intended recipients, maximising marketing returns and minimising wasted postage.
- All parts of the business can now access and harness customer data.
- Accurate, targeted and relevant communications build customers trust.

Rani said, "SCV delivers competitive advantage to P&O Ferries and Experian Data Quality has helped us at every step to realise its potential. The next stage is to capture more detailed customer comments; bringing our customers the experience they really want — and P&O Ferries an evergrowing base of satisfied and loyal customers."

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