

Case study: Leger Holidays

UK tour operator increases the efficiency of business processes with QAS Pro and QAS Batch



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Mike Fountain
Marketing Database Manager



Leger Holidays

UK tour operator Leger Holidays has been providing holiday packages for over 25 years, offering customers a choice of 423 destinations in 25 countries. The company specialises in short breaks, themed holidays such as Battlefield tours, and cruises in Europe. It markets holidays directly to its customers, and via travel agents, using direct mail and direct response advertising to acquire new customers.

New business enquiries are serviced by the company website, www.leger.co.uk, and its call centre. In 2006, around 100,000 people enjoyed one of the company's holidays.

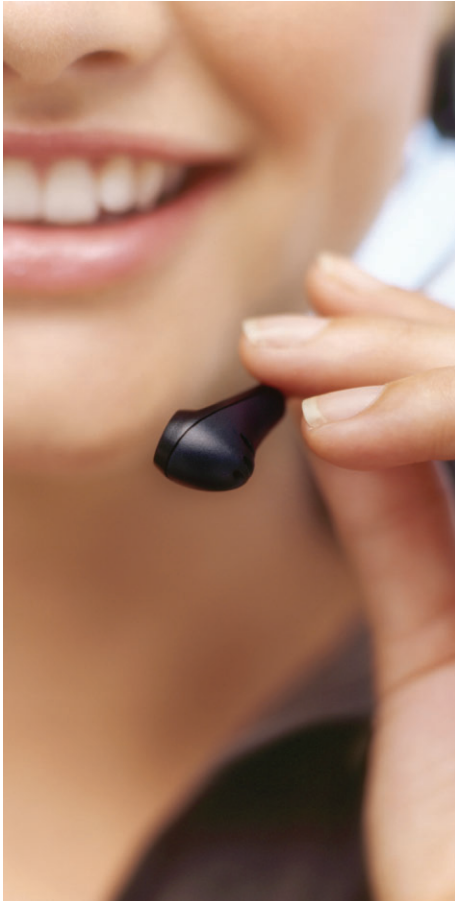
Situation

Leger Holidays has a combined customer and prospect database of around 2.1m records. Before using QAS software, data collected from inbound calls to Leger Holidays' call centre was prone to errors. Operators frequently mis-typed customer details and the process was time consuming. This meant that valuable reservation time, which could have been spent promoting other company offerings, was wasted. The consequences of getting a customer's details wrong are also significant, potentially resulting in tickets not arriving on time or local coach pick up details being given incorrectly.

QAS worked with Leger Holidays to improve data accuracy at point of capture, using QAS Pro. However, the company had no solution for the ongoing verification of existing contact information within the database. Data decays over time with postal area changes and as people move house.

Leger Holidays runs a campaign each month to between 1,500 and 150,000 contacts. Over the course of a year, this equates to approximately 1.5m mailing packs. As a result of not validating the data prior to campaigns, Leger Holidays found that some of the direct mail packs were not reaching their intended destination. In addition, preparing data for each campaign was led by the IT department and was extremely time consuming. There was no set structure for the addresses and manual work had to be done on the data extract to ensure that the fields were correctly formatted for the mailing house.

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Solution

The company deployed QAS Pro, which captures contact data quickly and accurately, after evaluating the software against a competing solution. Mike Fountain Head of Direct Channel Marketing at Leger Holidays, comments:

“When we were selecting a software partner, QAS won hands down in terms of technical support, professionalism and service.”

QAS Pro is integrated within Leger Holiday's “Traveller” system, a bespoke software solution for the travel industry, so when calls come in to the company's call centre, customers' details are now verified instantly. To update legacy data, Leger Holidays uses QAS Batch. The solution cleans and verifies contact records and standardises the addresses into a regular, consistent format.

Before QAS Batch

Addr1	Town	Postcode
145 West End DriveHorsforth	LEEDS	LS18 5JX
15 Worcestershire LeaWarfieldBracknell	Berkshire	RG42 3TQ
210 Willow Avenue Birmingham		B17 8HH
68 Kensington Gardens Carlton	NOTTINGHAM	NG4 1DZ

Addr1	Addr2	Addr3	Town	Postcode
145 West End Drive	Horsforth		LEEDS	LS18 5JX
15 Worcestershire Lea	Warfield		BRACKNELL	RG42 3TQ
210 Willow Avenue			BIRMINGHAM	B17 8HH
68 Kensington Gardens	Carlton		NOTTINGHAM	NG4 1DZ

After QAS Batch

Results

Using QAS Pro and QAS Batch, Leger Holidays has improved the efficiency of several business processes.

Mike Fountain comments: “We can now be confident that the tickets we issue will reach the right person at the right address. We have also seen a 7% uplift in data quality since using QAS Batch. This has improved our marketing campaigns, with 97% of the records in the database being accurate enough to mail to.”

Mike Fountain has identified that prior to using QAS Batch, approximately 10% of the data that was being used in mailing campaigns was inaccurate.

That is 150,000 mailing packs per annum that might not have reached the intended recipient. At a cost of 40p each, this equates to £60,000 of wasted mailings. Now using QAS Batch, the contact information has been updated where possible and the 3% of data that is unfit for mailing can be suppressed from the campaigns. This improved data accuracy and subsequent data enhancement has enabled Leger Holidays to gain a better picture of the true value of each customer.

Also, the data doesn't have to be reworked prior to mailing campaigns, which means there is less input from the IT department and duplicate contacts can be matched more easily.

Future plans

Data suppression is next on the agenda for Leger Holidays. At present, it has no way of flagging change of address, mortalities and contacts signed up to the preference service (telephone, mailing or fax) on the database. It is looking at the suppression module of QAS Batch to help achieve this.

It also plans to deploy QAS Pro on the Leger Holidays website. Currently, when visitors to the website register their details, they must enter their address details in full in free text format.