

# The Co-operative Group: Large-scale location analysis to aid business critical decision making

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The Co-operative Group is the UK's largest mutual business, whose purpose is "Championing a better way to do business for you and your communities." Owned by over eight million members, The Co-operative operates a total of 4,500 outlets, with around 87,000 employees and has an annual turnover of £11 billion.

## Challenge

In 2008, The Co-operative continued the expansion of its food operation by buying circa 900 Somerfield stores, taking its total number of food stores to over 3,000.

To cope with the increase in workload, The Co-operative Retail Location Analysis (RLA) team needed a solution which would speed up the planning process, aid decision making and make the department more efficient.

The RLA team were asked for a solution to identify which of the Somerfield stores would potentially fail the Office of Fair Trading (OFT) rules for acquisition, which would in turn enable the group to prepare to dispose of the stores in a tactical manner. Having worked together for over six years, The Co-operative turned to their trusted partner Experian to enable this solution.

## Solution

It was vital that the intended solution was compatible with the RLA team's existing systems, including the location planning software Experian Micromarketer Generation 3 (MMg3), and the team's series of databases.

The solution also had to be capable of handling large datasets, and produce high quality analysis on a large scale. It was hoped that the solution could cut analysis time, and allow the team to prioritise stores more efficiently. The Co-operative RLA team asked Experian to provide them with Alteryx; a front end data-flow system which enables geographic business intelligence and uses the engine behind the Experian MMg3 being used already.

By implementing Alteryx alongside the existing Experian MMg3 software, The Co-operative RLA team were able to:

- Access Co-operative data and convert these to spatial objects
- Append census and lifestyle customer information to user-defined boundaries
- Apply geographical processes to the data
- Perform spatial analysis without waiting for maps to load
- Output results to most known file types as required.

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### Implementation

Adhering to very tight timescales to enable The Co-operative RLA team to quickly improve their processes and decide which stores need to be closed, Experian installed Alteryx and the relevant background datasets onto the Co-operative computers.

An in-depth training course was provided by Experian to ensure all users fully understood the full benefits and intricacies of the system. The RLA team were given direct access to their Account Manager, who provided around the clock after-sales support as and when requested.

From this, the RLA team spent two weeks building a module which replicated the OFT rules for acquisitions.

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“Experian provide us with a professional software and data package which meets our analysis needs. Customer Service from the Experian Team is second to none and we feel like a valued customer. We are very happy to be associated with Experian.”

— **Daran Hewitt**, National Location Analysis Manager, The Co-Operative

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### Results

The successful implementation of Alteryx into Experian MMg3, has enabled increased processing speed for The Co-operative, whilst maintaining the overall quality, accuracy and reliability of current RLA methods. This has equipped the RLA team to cope with a higher workload.

Using Alteryx and Experian MMg3, the Co-operative put almost 1,000 Somerfield stores through the OFT rules for acquisition and two hours analysis time per site was saved as a result. The Co-operative RLA team have since used the module to analyse many new potential sites, that would not have been previously possible without Alteryx.

**For more information please contact us**

0845 234 0391 [marketing.services@uk.experian.com](mailto:marketing.services@uk.experian.com)

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