

Doing Business Overseas?

AFD Software has launched a cost effective, international option to complement its flagship UK Postcode range. Discover more about AFD WorldAddress™ in this edition of Postcode News.

Looking for payback?

How does investment in AFD solutions repay itself? AFD continues to lead the way in handheld name, address and bank data validation. In Postcode News you can see leading firms in home shopping, transport sectors and charity explain how they are seeing a quick return on investment... and much more. We hope the stories of Shop Direct, FirstGroup and Gift will inspire you.





Field Marketing

AFD Pocket Postcode® at work!

Shop Direct is the UK's leading online and home shopping retailer, with annual sales of around £2 billion and five million customers. Shop Direct is dedicated to home shopping with the clear goal to 'Inspire Every Household to Shop With Us For Life'.

Recruiting Customers

The Director of Field Marketing at Shop Direct is responsible for ensuring new customers are recruited to the group brands, including Littlewoods Direct. He has a team of hundreds of field sales staff deployed nationwide in shopping centres, high streets and door to door. This team approach prospective customers and recruit them, from cold, to the Littlewoods Direct brand.

Unscrambling Data

He begins "To build life-time loyalty we have looked at every aspect of the customer experience. We wanted the first contact to be quick, easy and professional." On the streets, sales staff would write basic customer details such as name, address and date of birth on to a form. "This is tedious and we had to reject a huge number of enquiries because poor data prevented a successful credit check. In fact, we had to employ a team of staff just to unscramble the data in over 15% of enquiries."

Shop Direct decided to make the process electronic by utilising the latest handheld technology. The Business

System Manager led the electronic recruitment project: "The most time consuming data to record face to face is the postal address. We looked at three different address management vendors, and at doing the work ourselves. We selected AFD because their Pocket Postcode compresses 1.73 million records to the smallest size, and uniquely, AFD offer tiny, incremental quarterly data updates. Integration into the Itronics Q200 handheld application was straightforward and the commercial arrangements were competitive."

Acquiring More Customers

The Director of Field Marketing added "By using handheld devices Littlewoods has cut up to three days from the recruitment process – so customers get catalogues faster, and sales momentum is maintained. *Our field team have increased the number of Littlewoods catalogue enquires by a staggering 22% per hour. These thousands of extra enquiries convert to customers at the same ratio. Fast, accurate data entry with AFD Pocket Postcode is a key component in this success.*"

Focus on Selling

The Director of Field Marketing has the task of motivating this large field sales force and achieving sales targets "Using AFD Pocket Postcode my staff can concentrate on selling the benefits of home shopping, not gathering data. The professionalism of the process discourages fraud while building customer confidence. The customer experience is better, the recruitment levels are higher and the Littlewoods brand is stronger."

www.afd.co.uk/pocketpostcode

Revenue Protection

AFD Pocket Names & Numbers® at work!

FirstGroup plc is the world's leading transport company employing over 137,000 staff and with annual revenue of over £5 billion. FirstGroup operate the Croydon Tramlink network, which carries almost 26 million passengers per annum, through First Tram Operations.

Challenging Fare Evasion

For efficiency trams are built with large doors enabling rapid on and off passenger flow to minimise time at tram stops. This efficiency means relying on the public to purchase a valid ticket or pass prior to travel. First Tram has selected AFD Pocket Names & Numbers to help them in their duty to minimise fare evasion on the Croydon Tramlink network. The aim is that those who pay are not subsidising those who don't.

Penalty Fares and Prosecutions

When fare evaders are challenged some give a false name or address - so revenue inspectors would call a central office to validate the details. During peak periods one person could receive calls from up to twelve inspectors! Each month around 800 penalties are issued. Duff spellings in addresses and names frequently invalidated a summons and caused problems when going to court.

Going Electronic

The paper based penalty fare system needed to be replaced with an end to end electronic system. Dominic is IT Service Delivery Manager for Tramlink:

"We wanted to issue inspectors with a handheld device containing the full Royal Mail PAF® file and UK name data. We tried two solutions one of which was AFD Pocket Names & Numbers. AFD are unique in offering both a high quality front end and developer tools in a product which compressed over 30 million records into less than one Gigabyte. It is clearly a robust commercial product and any questions we have put to AFD support have been answered within 30 minutes."

Operational Success

Dominic continued "We are amazed at the benefits. Operationally, rapid instant entry and validation of residency has freed up people in the office for other tasks, and better data has resulted in more successful summonses. From a management perspective, inspector activity is better focused because we have new visibility on fare evasion by route and time of day and can identify multiple offenders. We use the HP iPaq HX2790 and *Pocket Names & Numbers plays a major part in the success of our new penalty fare system.*"

www.afd.co.uk/pcnnce





Intelligent Fund Raising

AFD Pocket Postcode Plus™
and AFD BankFinder® at work!

Gift is the UK's leading face to face fundraising and field marketing agency and has recruited donors who have pledged over £50 million per year to the charities they represent. A network of over 300 full-time staff operate in the field, nationwide, from seven regional centres.

Account Director at Gift is Tony Charalambides "We have a very simple philosophy: keep our Fundraisers happy, so that they recruit happy donors, which means we have happy clients. Our Fundraisers are not paid commission, so they are free to fundraise with integrity and transparency."

Improving the process

Gift Fundraisers are on the streets in sun, wind and rain, speaking to people who are often in a rush. In these circumstances it is hard to build consistency into the recruitment process. "It's difficult to ask all the questions and write clearly onto a paper form in these conditions. Errors in key contact and bank information were introduced and as a result some of the hard work in recruiting was later lost." Gift realised that equipping Fundraisers with Personal Digital Assistants (PDA) would bring a new integrity which would benefit the donor, charity and fundraiser."

Tony leads the data management team and drove the PDA project from specification to rollout to 300 users:

"We wanted to help Fundraisers focus on the donor, so making it fast to enter full accurate address and bank details was a 'must have'. We investigated and tested various address management options and AFD Pocket Postcode Plus and BankFinder were technically superior and competitively priced."

Quality donors

"With Pocket Postcode Plus, Interaction between the Fundraiser and the public is more professional, and with real-time data validation Fundraisers can more effectively judge the authenticity of a supporter and eliminate those who are not really serious. This saves time all the way down the line. Our Fundraisers are excited, the feeling was that we were cutting new ground, using the latest technology – and there is no scepticism from public."

Milly Ahmed, Director of Gift said: *"Through using AFD Pocket solutions Gift and its clients have eliminated the costs of dealing with Direct Debit rejects and the lost contacts which came from poor address data. Gift can now offer charity clients daily new donor feeds with 100% validated address and bank data. This results in faster follow-up to the new interest we generate in a charity, which reaps greater rewards."*

"AFD has been incredibly helpful from day one and their service has been a big part in making the final PDA solution what it is. Pocket Postcode Plus and BankFinder make our product much stronger."

www.afd.co.uk/pocketpcplus
www.afd.co.uk/pocketbankfinder

For more details about Gift please contact Milly Ahmed on 0207 281 8833 or visit www.gift-fundraising.co.uk

NEW

AFD WorldAddress™

AFD has launched a cost effective international option to complement its flagship UK Postcode range.

With AFD WorldAddress you don't need any specialist knowledge of complex international address formats and we return data which can fit into a UK format (among others) and can be easily formatted for a label or letter. So in most cases you won't have to change your existing database structure.

AFD WorldAddress avoids the cost and intricacy of widely differing license arrangements by making the international option available via its proven online hosted service.

We have seen an increasing need from amongst our community of 8,000 customers to deal with the complexities of overseas address data and formats. Requests are mainly for Western European, North American and other English speaking nations, however, the solution is truly Global covering 230 countries.

The depth of data available varies considerably. You will find a table online* which illustrates the level of data, from high quality full property level data - to just the name of a city!

* www.afd.co.uk/worldaddress

UK Sales Director - Mike Solomon

"While most UK based organisations trade almost exclusively within the UK, many are embracing global trade and the international opportunities available through the internet. That may mean a database with 1% or 60% of overseas records. Regardless of how many, with AFD WorldAddress you can now access a high quality cost effective solution from a single source."



Data News Q.3/08

The Q.3/08 data release has over 160,000 new delivery addresses, over 12,000 new postcodes and 19 new localities. Postal Address Data is constantly changing - new buildings are constructed, existing buildings are changed to apartments or back to large houses, and some are demolished. Royal Mail Postcode Address File statistics and newly announced changes can be found at:

www.afd.co.uk/news/datanews

Royal Mail continues a range of activity to update the PAF file. For example a mailing to over 151,000 businesses and vacant premises in East Anglia has so far resulted in 10,917 amendments and 4,086 deletions. These and all the other changes are reflected in the latest AFD update.

BankFinder updates are essential to ensure that details are not incorrectly accepted or rejected. Occasional 'emergency updates' from BACS are immediately made available to BankFinder customers who receive updates.

Updates range in price from £60 +VAT per annum to £150 +VAT per annum depending on the product. To order updates please call **01624 811711** or email: postcode@afd.co.uk



Hot Spot

Nicola Blissett

Credit Control / Book-Keeping Assistant

Nicola loves chasing money and reducing sales ageing, but describes herself as 'more like a retriever than a rottweiler.... people pay because they love me not cause I bite them!'

Despite her maiden name being King, Nicola is adamant that there was no Royal theme involved in naming her two boys Harry and William. Nicola is bubbly, friendly and very well organised "I like my snap, roasts, curries, chillies... a bit of spice". Prior to moving to Isle of Man Nicola managed sales at various hotel chains including Holiday Inn, Royal York and Best Western. 'My Father owned a garage and sponsored bikers who raced on the Isle of Man right through my childhood. We moved here in 2005 and its a great place to raise a family".

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Postcode News is printed on 130gsm Robert Horne paper. At least 70% is made from recycled fibre. Manufactured by Burgo and approved by the Forest Stewardship Council.

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