



# Where on Earth?!

Welcome to the Spring 2011 edition of Postcode News.

In this issue:

- **What's it like to establish a solid business with a truly global reach?** AFD customer iFlorist know – and WorldAddress has helped them deliver the goods. Read their fascinating story.
- **How can you understand your customers better, and acquire new ones?** Lifestyle Media Group find answers by using socio-geodemographic system Censation – from AFD
- **Find out how Postcode Evolution™ provides a positive future for all 7,000 AFD customers**



# iFlorist Blooms with WorldAddress

***"Building a truly global, internet-based business is no easy task."*** says David Price, iFlorist Managing Director, as he explains the cultural challenges overcome by the firm since it started in 2006. ***"Here in the UK, a bunch of yellow roses are considered a gift of friendship. In France, it would signify you were having an affair, so regional differences are key to understand!"***

The vision to build a global floral and gift delivery service was born when the three iFlorist founders – on three different continents – put their heads together. Earthed in Lancashire common sense, Chrissy Price designs the arrangements to fit local culture, customs, seasons and flower availability. From age 14 Chrissy worked in her mother's flower-shop in Rochdale – her skills developing as she moved to work in the southern hemisphere for 14 years – with designs gracing the Sydney Opera House and New Zealand Houses of Parliament.

## International Business

The carefully researched knowledge of local floral gift customs across the world is encapsulated on the iFlorist site. To make a gift, enter the country name, select the occasion, and floral designs appropriate to the locality are displayed on the site. David continues ***"In the USA, most bouquets are delivered as an arrangement in a vase, whilst in the UK they are hand-tied and delivered in water – in Europe bouquets tend to be 40cm shorter than in the UK, it's all about having that local knowledge."***

A real understanding of regional and national holidays, the business calendar and time zones across the world is essential. David adds: ***"It is pointless offering a delivery service in Canada on Victoria Day – florists are closed! There are different cut off times for deliveries in different time zones and destinations which must also be taken into account to avoid raising false expectations."***

[www.iflorist.co.uk](http://www.iflorist.co.uk)








## Local Understanding

Localising is a key passion of David's: "At customer check-out we make it easy to pay in the currency and method of choice – which relates to the country from which the order originated. For example, for an order placed in Germany, Giro electronic bank transfer is usually the preferred payment method."



On Mother's day this year over 600,000 stems of flowers were delivered on one day through iFlorist to over 120 countries and as David points out: "International addressing is not for the faint-hearted. India has no street names, Ireland has no postcodes, and French addresses seem to be laid out in the wrong order!"

The delivery address is no less complicated and no less essential than any other aspect of global trading and this too needed automatic validation. David is clear that the success of iFlorist depends on the address being intelligible to the local florist and the delivery driver:

[www.afd.co.uk/worldaddress](http://www.afd.co.uk/worldaddress)

"Flowers are delivered on important days – anniversaries, birthdays, special days. Gadgets won't perish if undelivered, flowers will – we had to get international addresses right."

## WorldAddress - Accurate and Effective

"We'd been reviewing how best to help the customers enter the right delivery address for some time. Customers don't understand international address formatting – and neither should they have to. AFD's WorldAddress is a truly global solution which helps customers enter validated delivery address details."

We present the address entry form with the local, national address layout using familiar names, and WorldAddress provides a powerful and effective search to help customers find the right international address.

We were able to start slowly at an affordable rate and our use of WorldAddress has grown with the business. It just works – which means flowers get delivered – and that's what we are here to do."



# Understanding and Acquiring Customers with Censation

Censation is the most widely distributed socio-geodemographic classification system in the UK. Thousands of organisations have the power to use it to understand the relative affluence, life-stage and life-style of their customers. This understanding leads to better business decisions.

Until now, Censation has gone through an annual update cycle but now, with dramatic changes in the UK economy, and with new information available to AFD which monitors the effects on the UK population – Censation has gone through a major refresh and will be updated quarterly.

Dr Tim Drye is responsible for the refresh: ***“The new release improves the placing of postcodes to life-stage and life-style categories. It does this while retaining the classification system codes which provide continuity to marketing analysts. The result is an even better system.”***

The update provides on-going classification to recently built housing estates with over 450,000 addresses being newly categorised in this release.

## Ready For New Census Data

The refresh of Censation also takes into account the format of the newly completed national UK census which is due for release in 2012. Dr Drye continued: ***“The latest refresh updates processes used to build Censation in a way that prepares for data due from the new Census.”***

The Office of National Statistics (ONS) is responsible for the UK Census. Dr Drye is a key member of the Market Research Society Census Geodemographic group which is central in representing the views of the private sector which have shaped the Census and its eventual output.

[www.afd.co.uk/censation](http://www.afd.co.uk/censation)



# Censation in Action at Lifestyle Media Group

Travel and Catalogue companies need to generate interest and enquiries for the holidays and products they sell. Lifestyle Media Group is pivotal to customer acquisition by matching genuine interest to the right travel company or catalogue. They have established long-term relationships with high profile media partners such as The Independent, Daybreak/ITV and Take a Break magazine. These media partners all give exposure to holidays and catalogues.

This interest generates catalogue requests and enquiries through over 50 websites. Online, the user's interests are recorded leading to valuable understanding of customer interests.

Ginna Clark LMG Director said: ***“We add to this picture of the user with demographic insights from the Censation socio-geodemographic system. The result is that we are able to generate high quality, high value, and permission-based leads for a wide variety of companies who specifically contract us to do so for them. For example there are certain demographic characteristics associated with a desire for Solar Energy products.”***

***We use Censation as part of the process which identifies individuals likely to be interested in the products and services of our clients.”***

[www.uktourism.co.uk](http://www.uktourism.co.uk)



# Are you evolving? So are we!



The best organisations are always learning – they want to understand what customers are doing today, to be aware of and evaluate the latest innovations in their field. This is what we strive for at AFD Software. Over the past year a quiet, but important development is taking shape – we call it Postcode Evolution. Already over 300 AFD customers are using it. So what is it?

## About Postcode Evolution

Graeme Howie is AFD Software Technical Manager: *“Postcode Evolution is an integrated service delivery platform - the web server, application server, data layer, data update and program update mechanism is delivered in a single package. Postcode Evolution provides access to current and future AFD products and services. It is flexible, reliable and scalable and is designed to allow clients to seamlessly transfer between hosted and installed operation.”*

Developers are more definitely focussed on server based applications and Postcode Evolution is designed for a rapidly emerging future. It automates program updates, data updates, maintenance and registration.

Graeme continued: *“We continue to innovate in every area of our business, working with customers as they grapple with a constantly changing environment. Postcode Evolution is both backwards compatible (it builds on the past) and forward compatible - it's built for the future.”*

Over 300 AFD customers are using Postcode Evolution – to find out more please email [support@afd.co.uk](mailto:support@afd.co.uk)



## Professional Sales Culture

While interviewing for the Censation article, Lifestyle Media Group volunteered this about AFD sales professional Bob Gokani: *“Bob Gokani is one of the nicest, most straight forward people we have dealt with. He was convincing and re-assuring. He took the trouble to work out what we really needed and what AFD provided and everything was exactly as he had said.”*

*With AFD we have really been able to improve the quality of what we provide to our clients. So different to other sales meetings, we came out with a warm glow and a lasting impression we still talk about today.”*



Would you like to discuss your needs with an AFD Software Sales Professional? Email [sales@afd.co.uk](mailto:sales@afd.co.uk) or call 01624 811711

# Olympic Postcode Assigned

Until now E20 has been the fictional London district of Walford in TV soap EastEnders. Now E20 is officially adopted by Royal Mail to serve the Olympic Park in East London.

The postcode district will serve the entire Olympic site which falls across four London boroughs. Key venues have been allocated their own individual postcode - The Olympic Stadium postcode is E20 2ST. The new postcode district is able to cope with the huge residential development plans to be put into action after the 2012 games.



## Chris Edge-Alexander - Internet Technologies Developer

*"At AFD I have freedom to express, experiment, explore and research. AFD has developed an open, innovative, grounded culture – and I love being part of that."*

Chris has skills in business analysis, project management, infrastructure support, architecture and development – grown over the past 14 years in IT. Outside work he cites programming as a chief pastime!

Chris enjoys travelling to the USA and especially likes the "anything is possible", "can do" attitude he sees there. He believes people are interesting, people drive things and people make a difference. He has wide-ranging interests in reading Science Fiction and Ancient History and on the athletics front has achieved 100 and 200 metre sprint championship status for Isle of Man and North West of England.

Over the past three months there have been 17 new localities added to PAF, 8043 new postcodes, and 100,326 new delivery points. There have also been over 31,899 changes to existing addresses. These are all included in our latest Q.2/11 update.

Censation data and Map data have also both been fully refreshed for the Q.2/11 release.

BankFinder for Q.2/11 contains all the latest sort codes and validation information for both bank accounts and card numbers. This includes the withdrawal of Solo and the reassignment of some of those card numbers. With bank consolidations and re-organisation often taking place, only by having the latest release can you be sure of not rejecting a valid account number.

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