

Are You Losing Orders?



Happy New Year from all the team at AFD Software - we hope you enjoyed the Christmas break.

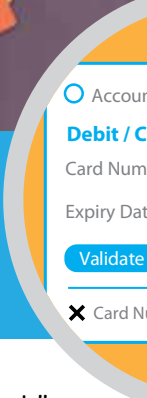
Did you know that the percentage of online orders that do not proceed to checkout is almost 70%? In this January edition of Postcode News, we look at the reasons that cause this and the simple changes that can be made to streamline the customer's journey and convert more sales.

We also highlight our experienced team's ability to integrate our range of data validation solutions into any application - including popular e-commerce platforms.

In November, AFD Software enjoyed an evening of celebration at our annual charity event. We look at some of the charities that received donations and the vital work they will continue with the carefully channelled funds.



ONLINE PIONEERS



Twenty-three years ago, in January 1997, AFD Software anticipated the impending business opportunities that the internet and online shopping would bring. “Postcode Internet” was launched, allowing - for the first time - websites accepting orders and capturing customer details to validate the address provided, so making orders easier to complete for the customer, and delivery more accurate and reliable.

Fast-forward to 2020 and AFD’s full range of contact data validation solutions including name, address, bank, email and telephone validation are all available as online solutions. Millions of online lookups are handled by AFD each year; our solutions help ensure communications are accurate, deliveries go to a valid address, payment details are correct and data entry is lightning fast.

It’s safe to say AFD’s early “hunch” was correct: according to the Office for National Statistics, e-commerce sales by businesses in the UK non-financial sector were £688 billion in 2018, rising from £582 billion in 2017.

Abandon ship?

Although e-commerce sales are rapidly growing each year, there is room for improvement around making the customer journey as simple to navigate as possible.

“Cart abandonment” is when an item is added to a basket but not purchased. A recent survey based on data from 41 different studies provided an average cart abandonment rate on e-commerce sites across all sectors at nearly 70%. When using a mobile device to shop online this figure is even higher at just over 80%.

Billing details		Your order	
First name	Last name	Product	Total
Joel	Miller	My product x 1	£35.00
Address		Subtotal	£35.00
16 Jericho Way		Total	£35.00
Town / City		<input type="button" value="Place order"/>	
Huddersfield			
County			
Yorkshire			
Postcode			
HD33wZ			
Phone			
07469396102			
Email			
Mrjcmiller2@gmail.com			

Billing details		Your order	
First name	Last name	Product	Total
Joel	Miller	My product x 1	£35.00
Address		Subtotal	£35.00
16 Jeri		Total	£35.00
CA28 6UB 16 Jericho Road, WHITEHAVEN		<input type="button" value="Place order"/>	
CM4 0SB 16 Jericho Place, Blackmore, INGATESTONE			
HD3 3WZ 16 Jericho Way, Oakes, HUDDERSFIELD			
L17 5AW 16 Jericho Farm Close, LIVERPOOL			
L17 5AX 16 Jericho Close, LIVERPOOL			
Phone			
07469396101			
Email			
Mrjcmiller1@gmail.com			

A key reason stated in the survey was the checkout process taking too long to enter all data required and being overly complicated.

AFD's solutions minimise the complexity and time taken of the checkout process, allowing your site to convert more orders. Customers will benefit from a smooth online shopping experience that they would happily use again.

Expanding Integrations

Our highly experienced teams do not rest on their laurels nor bask in our historical success as online pioneers, they are constantly working on implementation tools for a wide range of web platforms and technologies. AFD has recently added the following to our range of integration options:

jQuery Plugin

Our jQuery plugin makes adding functionality to input controls on web pages simple. The plugin is also compatible with Bootstrap 3 & 4 form validation standards as well as the constraint validation API.

In most cases, the out of the box code will be exactly what is required, however there are many configuration options that will allow developers to implement the desired AFD solution with flexibility. Our experienced support team are on hand to advise in all cases – and if

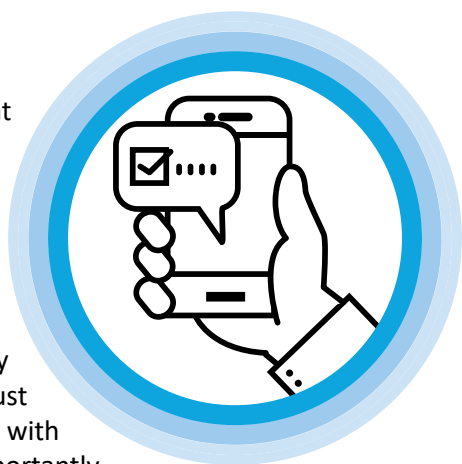
you've no idea at all what these geeky terms mean, just give our friendly team a call, and they will help!

Magento 1 & 2

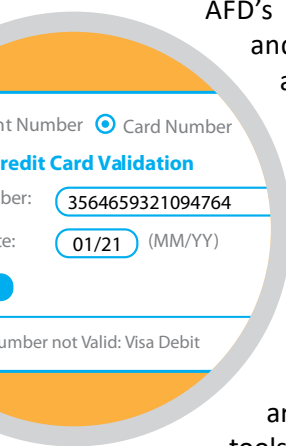
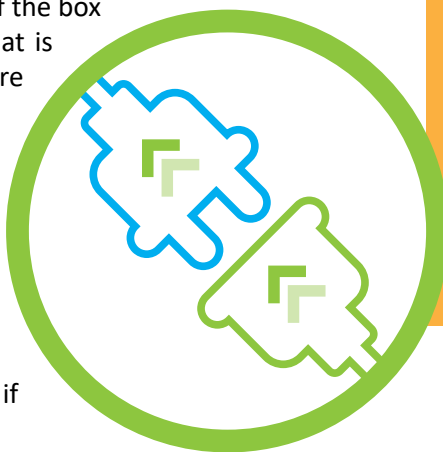
Magento is a highly customisable and robust e-commerce platform with many features. Most importantly, AFD Software is now available as a feature via our Magento Integration Extension which supports both Magento 1 and 2.

Shopify

Another leading e-commerce platform that AFD's solutions can be integrated within is Shopify. More suitable for organisations without inhouse developers, Shopify is simple to setup and start the process of online-selling.



In short, we have ready-made plugins and integration options to provide access to our powerful range of contact data validation solutions. If you have a system or platform that requires our functionality, we can provide it.



EXPERIENCE AND SPEED OF DEVELOPMENT



Joe Browns was founded in 1998 as a mail order clothing business that has now grown to a large online lifestyle brand with an increasing physical retail presence. Inspired by a group of friends' collective spirit of being "fun, spontaneous and free", these foundations have been retained and instilled into the culture, staff, products, website, catalogues and stores.

We sat down with Darren Abbott, Finance Director at Joe Browns Ltd, to ask why AFD Software was selected to manage customer contact data accuracy.

"AFD Software has provided Joe Browns Ltd with address validation for the past fifteen years. **Ultimately, communication and orders fail if errors are entered or information is omitted.** We like working relationships to be built around people and results – AFD have the right people and have delivered the results we have wanted.

Customer recruitment is essential for the business and we have seen a large shift in how customers choose to buy from us. Back in 2002, 30% of orders were placed online. This has since tripled with orders placed through the website currently accounting for 90% of sales.

Our catalogues provide an opportunity to not only showcase our products but to communicate our culture and resonate with those who read it. We send around 8 million catalogues each year; to maximise the chance people will read them and hopefully convert into sales, they need to be delivered to the intended address. Similarly, customers shopping online expect a



smooth checkout process and for their delivery information to be fast and easy to enter.

Magento 2 was selected as the new e-commerce platform for our website; when we began exploring the functionality we wanted and the data validation elements required, **AFD were fastest to respond. We knew there would be an integration piece and their teams' experience and speed of development further increased our confidence that we had selected the right partner for providing contact data quality solutions."**

CHARITY EVENT 2019



The Faraday Institute for Science and Religion

In early November last year, AFD Software hosted its 2019 charity evening at Babbage's, the events venue located at Mountain View Innovation Centre in the Isle of Man.

All of the team and Directors at AFD nominate charities of their choice to receive a donation. Working for AFD is described as “more than just a job”. Having the knowledge that their efforts at work directly contribute to the relief of suffering around the world is a wonderful incentive for the team to continually work hard and make a difference in their respective roles.

The event celebrated donations totalling £1,000,000 to over 70 charities covering medical research, international aid and development and poverty relief. Representatives from many of the charities were in attendance to share in this special evening and to hear from some of the charities directly about how the donations will be used.

Three presentations were delivered on the night from The Faraday Institute for Science and Religion which teaches how strongly faith and science are connected, Live at Home, an Isle of Man charity who assist elderly people in particular to live with dignity in their own homes, and Hope for Justice – a UK charity who are working to stamp out Human Slavery. Three very different subjects, but each inspired those present to continue to work hard and deliver tangible results to those in need.

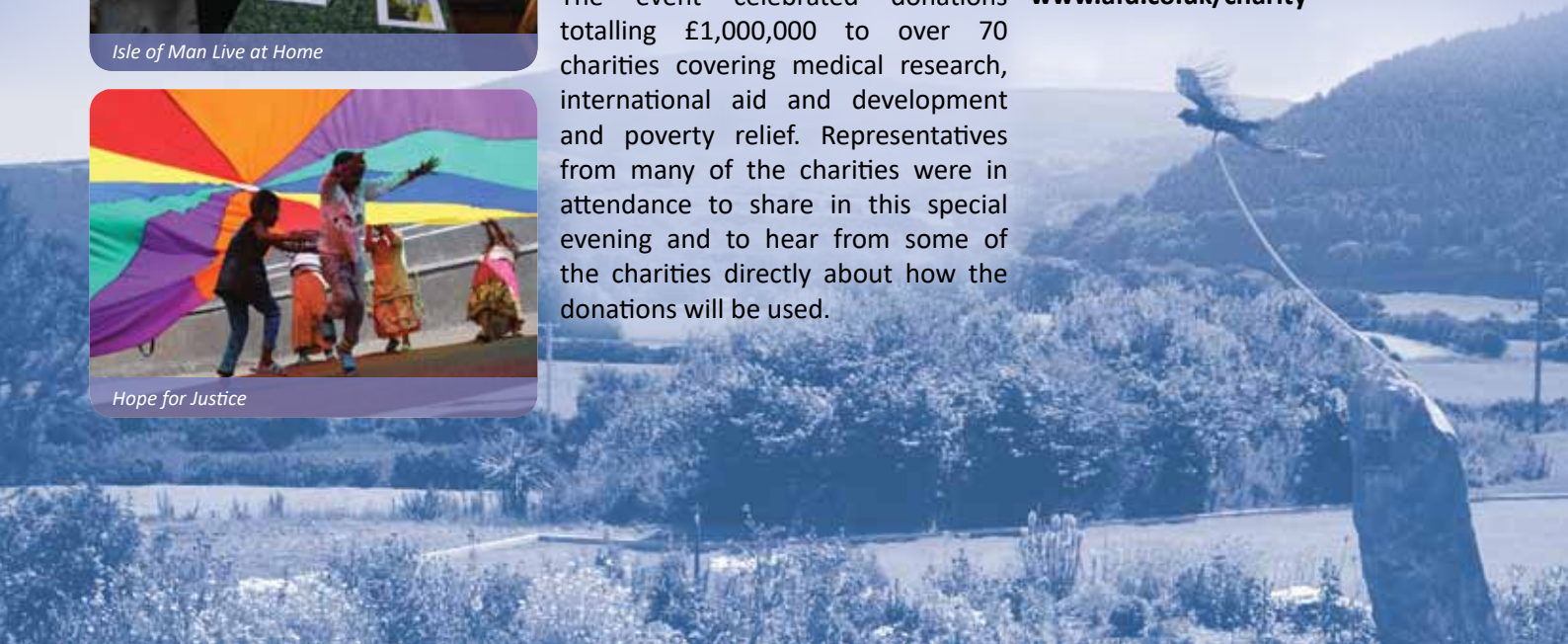
All of the charities nominated and the work they perform can be seen at www.afd.co.uk/charity



Isle of Man Live at Home



Hope for Justice



Between October and December 2019 there were significant updates to data on The Royal Mail Postcode Address File (PAF). These included 21 new localities; 8,176 new postcodes; 105,771 new delivery points and 17,990 delivery point changes.

Postcode	Double Dependant Locality	Dependant Locality	Post Town
BA1 7		LOWER SWAINSWICK	BATH
CA10 1	HIGH BANK HILL	KIRKOSWALD	PENRITH
CF62 4	BRO TATHAN SOUTH	ST. ATHAN	BARRY
CF62 4	BRO TATHAN NORTH	ST. ATHAN	BARRY
CF62 4	BRO TATHAN EAST	ST. ATHAN	BARRY
CF62 4	BRO TATHAN WEST	ST. ATHAN	BARRY
CF72 4		LLANILID	PONTYCLUN
CW6 9		EATON HILL	TARPORLEY
EX6 7	SPLATFORD BARTON	KENNFORD	EXETER
G66 5		AUCHINLOCH	GLASGOW
GU14 6		FARNBOROUGH AIRPORT	FARNBOROUGH
HP22 3		STOKE MANDEVILLE	AYLESBURY
HP22 3		WESTON TURVILLE	AYLESBURY
IP25 5		WATTON	THETFORD
IP25 5		CARBROOKE	THETFORD
LN1 5		SAXILBY	LINCOLN
ME14 4		THURNHAM	MAIDSTONE
NE45 5		ROMAN HEIGHTS	CORBRIDGE
SO45 1		LANGLEY	SOUTHAMPTON
TA5 2		NORTH PETHERTON	BRIDGWATER
TA9 4		EDITHMEAD	HIGHBRIDGE

The most up-to-date PAF data is available now in our latest Q.1/20 update. You can order updates for any AFD Software solution by calling 01624 811711 or email postcode@afd.co.uk



Matt Dolman, Continuous Integration Engineer

Since 1996, Matt has worked for AFD Software in numerous roles that have allowed him to gain vast experience both personally and professionally. In Matt's role, no two projects are the same. His outputs allow our range of data validation solutions

to work with new technologies based on our customer requirements.

The jQuery, Magento 2 and Shopify plugins discussed in the centre pages, all had input from Matt and his years of experience and range of skills. He will continue to add to our portfolio of integration options.

In discussing his role and AFD as an organisation Matt commented "What I love about working at AFD is the fact that the company is not afraid to stand out and be itself. From the way that a huge proportion of the profits that AFD makes are given to Charity to the unique ways in which AFD looks after its staff and enthusiastically looks to unlock the potential of everyone in the company".

Matt lives in China with his wife and two daughters and speaks Mandarin Chinese fluently, although British by birth. He enjoys playing board games (Gloomhaven being a favourite) and reading Science Fiction and Fantasy novels.

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