



The Book People Accelerate Handling of Queries to Improve Customer Service

Challenge

To handle queries and complaints quickly and efficiently, whilst gaining valuable insight to identify issues so they can be resolved quickly.

Summary

The Book People is one of the top UK suppliers of books. It is a genuine multi-channel business, dealing with its customers by mail order, over the phone, through its website, www.thebookpeople.co.uk, and via field agents and currently has a turnover of £78M. Founded in 1988, the company's rapid growth has been based on providing quality books at unbeatable prices – and on a total commitment to outstanding customer service.

The Book People has been using Maginus software for several years to run most aspects of its business. When the company needed to improve its query and complaint management processes, it was logical to handle this within the Maginus system.

“We ask a lot of our Maginus solution, but it just keeps delivering results,” says Carol Cade, The Book People's Managing Director. “Maginus lets us concentrate on the business and get on with the job, and it adapts to new business initiatives very easily. For example, since using Maginus we opened new business streams including fulfilling orders for Associated Newspapers, handling Corporate Book Events and distributing for Red House (www.redhouse.co.uk). We have other new business initiatives planned which will also be handled within Maginus.

Quick Facts

www.thebookpeople.co.uk

Industry

Book Retail

Customer profile

Multi-channel retailer selling by web, call centre and via field agents

Maginus solution

Maginus OMS

Customer benefits

- Improved customer service - faster query response
- Tighter control of query management
- Reporting tools help identify order and distribution problems

Battling the Backlog

Less than 1% of despatches generate queries and complaints. However, with order volumes as high as 30,000 per day at the busiest times of the year, that can still represent a significant volume of incoming calls and emails.

Previously, these queries were handled by staff whose main responsibility was taking orders. This was creating call backlogs, which had a knock-on effect not just on

customer service but on the volume of orders the company could process.

Carol Cade says, "We needed a way to accelerate our handling of queries and complaints, but also to improve our visibility of just what was happening when things did go wrong. We work with very tight margins, and order problems – no matter where they occur, or how infrequently – can turn a profitable sale into a cost, and a loyal customer into a lost customer."

The Maginus Solution

The company turned to Maginus, and the Maginus Helpdesk solution, to solve this problem.

The Book People now has a specialist team to handle incoming queries and complaints using a workflow system that's fast, flexible and accurate. One group of staff is responsible for the initial customer contact, logging each incoming query and giving customers a reference number.

Where calls cannot be easily resolved, another team of senior staff take decisions about each query and responds to the customer, usually the same day.

Flexible Query Management

The entire process is much more streamlined because of the flexibility of Maginus Helpdesk which lets The Book

People set up workflows for each type of query. The workflow controls exactly how each type of query is handled, and this has brought new levels of consistency to customer service.

Managers can track the progress of each query, see who's handling it, and reassign tasks to cope with peaks and troughs. They can also measure the performance of each member of staff – and, because Maginus Helpdesk is so easy to use, they can bring in temporary staff to help without impacting service levels.

Invaluable Insight

Maginus Helpdesk is also invaluable in detecting recurring problems – for example, if there's an issue with a particular carrier depot. For the first time, The Book People's customer service teams can provide solid evidence to the management team to enable them to iron out issues that impact customer service and the efficiency of the business.

"Maginus Helpdesk is just fantastic," says Kath Reid, who supervises The Book People's customer service department. "Using Maginus Helpdesk we can respond

the same day, even during the busiest times of the year. The accessibility to information is great – literally a couple

of clicks and we can find the relevant information. We can see when staff are overloaded with enquiries and reassign tasks to other people. We can explain exactly what's going on to our customers."

Taking Control of Customer Service

Because Maginus Helpdesk is a multichannel system, The Book People can deal with email or web queries in the same way as phone calls. This gives customers more choice in how they contact the company and helps reduce the burden on the query team, they can reduce the time it takes to process each enquiry.

"We pride ourselves on the quality of service we provide," Managing Director Carol Cade concludes.