

Client Club Travel 2000
Product DbBACS
Industry Travel

Case Study

The travel industry can be a fickle business to be in, and with today's increasingly changing marketplace and growing competition, requires keen management to stay one step ahead and remain successful.

VERSION ONE 1

CT2 is one such successful North-west based tour operator specialising in the provision of both flight-only and complete holidays to the Canary Islands, the Balearics and mainland Spain, with some provision to Portugal, Cyprus and Malta. With a turnover of £50 million, this privately owned organisation encompasses a number of other trading companies operating within the holdings group of HCCT Holidays Ltd.



"The software easily paid for itself in just a couple of months."

Graham Currey, Group IT Director, Club Travel 2000

Operating from 12 UK regional airports as well as the larger national airports, CT2 believe that what sets them aside from their competitors is price, availability and flexibility. Key clients include nationwide travel agents and multiples such as Skydeals, Sunshare Vacations, the Lotus Group and AirFlights Direct.

Carrying in the region of 250,000 passengers each year, a key differentiation for CT2 is to provide their holiday products not as a traditional high street travel agent, but by operating call centres, view-data operations and internet booking facilities. Using this call centre technology to sell their products, the 80 staff at CT2 pride themselves on their key business objective of being able to provide clients with flight-only and inclusive-holiday products at a price and availability that no-one else can match.

The Challenge

Graham Currey, as Group IT Director, is responsible for all systems within the group, including the call centre, communications, network infrastructure, software development, 3rd party implementations and management. He explained: "The tour operating industry has moved over the years from a traditional 'single payment system' where we used a third-party broker to collect due debt on bookings on our behalf, to a system where we want to develop e-commerce links with all our customers and trading partners.

"An example of this is when British Airways wrote to all their agents informing us that, unless we set up a direct debit facility with them, we would be unable to trade. We resisted that pressure for a long time, but recognised the need to have a direct debit facility for use with our own agents, which could strengthen our commercial relationship with them and enable us to more directly control how we collect money from them without using third party brokers. We didn't want to be at the mercy of these third parties who would raise their charges to us without notice."

CT2 recognised that they would be following an industry trend by taking up this practice, and so evaluated costs and available products, thus turning this negative situation into a positive for themselves.



Flexibility of the Software

Graham Currey continued: "Having scoured the marketplace for compatible and flexible products, we were drawn to Version One and their DbBACS system because we liked the flexibility and power of the software and we liked the easy implementation path of the product."

Version One's DbFAX software had already been used by CT2 for several years since they have a large faxing requirement, both ad hoc and structured, for communicating with their large base of agents. The company would automatically fax out all their accounts statements and other important notifications to more than 1500 agents once a week. "3 mouse clicks and we've scheduled 1500 documents to go out automatically on a Wednesday. This is absolutely essential for our credit control." said Graham.



He continued: "Our purchase of DbBACS was with the sole intention of strengthening our relationship with 1500 customers. So, what we've done is to encourage our agents to trade via direct debit with us and to implement a BACS solution with all the power and flexibility we need. This DbBACS software has facilities to take data in any format and produce the relevant format ready-made for automatic BACS transmission. The advantages are that, firstly, we're in control, secondly, we receive our money faster and thirdly, it's ultimately far more convenient for us and for our customers. When we map DbBACS functionality with DbFAX functionality - that is, when we fax our agents the statement or notification and then direct debit the amount - this whole operation has a really neat synergy."

Substantial Benefits

There are a number of other substantial benefits for CT2 as a result of this implementation. Using DbBACS allows them to collect money owed much more quickly, the system is very easy to use and the credit control department benefits from the system since it makes the process of collecting cash for overdue bookings a process rather than a chore.

Graham's colleague, Janet Taylor, is Credit Control Supervisor, and she commented: "Using DbBACS and DbFAX means that I can ensure we collect the money we're owed without ever needing to pick up the phone and chase anyone. This is a real bonus for us."

Graham Currey has calculated the savings to the Group as a direct result of implementing DbBACS. "We're saving the equivalent of a half person each week, that is 2.5 days salary each week, as well as being able to allocate that time to more efficient tasks. We're saving a substantial amount of money on lengthy telephone calls and explanations which usually runs into £000's each year, as well as the savings on third party collection fees, which can amount to more than £1,000 each month. "With these immense financial benefits we've gained, the software has easily paid for itself in just a couple of months," he commented.

So pleased are CT2 with their use of DbBACS, that the software figures greatly in future plans. Graham and his team are looking to implement it for their purchase ledger payments and, since the company - and therefore numbers of staff - are growing, CT2 are also looking to use DbBACS for a more effective method of transmitting their salary transactions

**VERSION
ONE** 

Version One Limited
London House, London Road South,
Poynton, Cheshire SK12 1YP UK
Tel 01625 856500 Fax 01625 856501
+44 1625 856500 +44 1625 856501
e-mail info@versionone.co.uk
web <http://www.versionone.co.uk>