



De Lijn offers improved, customized public transport service thanks to Dynamics CRM.

De Lijn wanted to improve its customer service and has therefore introduced Microsoft Dynamics CRM, with the help of its CRM partner Realdolmen. Realdolmen has also integrated the software with various backend systems so the new tool really is a single working environment for De Lijn employees.

Dynamics CRM primarily ensures faster, more efficient and more customer-friendly responses to customer queries. Marketing campaigns now also run via Dynamics CRM, so the marketing departments in different provinces can harmonize their campaigns and share their knowledge and experience.

A third project phase is to manage contacts with B2B clients. Having all the contacts and information in the new CRM system means De Lijn employees can stay up-to-date with the client histories. This helps them collaborate, communicate and sell better.

In a final phase, employees who have direct contact with passengers will also start using Dynamics CRM. This will for example give employees in De Lijn stores a complete overview of all the available client information. This will help provide a better, more personal service. Some 300 employees at De Lijn are using Microsoft Dynamics CRM to assist customer service, for communication, to manage B2B relationships and for direct contacts – including sales – with passengers.

“We can bundle all our customer information in Microsoft Dynamics CRM so we can provide a better and more individual service,” says Jo Bellekens, CRM Project Manager at De Lijn.

“It’s true that we’re a provider of public – so not individual - transport, but our service didn’t previously have sufficient focus on individuals. With the help of Dynamics CRM, we want to work in a more customer-oriented and individual way, especially in terms of communication, contacts and sales. It will help us encourage more people to use public transport.”

INTEGRATION OF CRM WITH OUTLOOK

The largest group of Dynamics CRM users at De Lijn is the 135 people in the customer services department and external call centre. They were therefore the first ones to start working with the new system in the first phase of the project. They now register all possible interactions with customers in the ‘Customer Response System’. This can involve complaints as well as positive feedback, requests for information or reports of lost property. A large proportion of these contacts with customers are made via email.

“We were able to integrate Dynamics CRM perfectly with the email system, thanks to Outlook,” explains Realdolmen. “We also ensured integration with the website.” Now, when a question or complaint comes in, the employees at De Lijn create a dossier in Dynamics CRM. They can request input from a colleague straight away via email. The email reply to the customer is also sent automatically straight to the correct dossier. If the request comes from a subscriber, the customer service employee can easily look up their history thanks to the integration with the client database. This helps De Lijn provide its customers with a more personal service.

Realdolmen also took care of the integration with all sorts of other backend systems. This gives the CRM users up-to-date information about the journeys, bus lines and drivers.



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COMPLAINTS RESOLVED MORE QUICKLY

It's this information that the customer service agents often need to answer questions or resolve complaints quickly. “The customer service department no longer needs to rely so much on colleagues looking up this information for them,” explains Jo Bellekens. “This has dramatically reduced the turnaround time for answering questions and resolving complaints, so we can quickly close the increasing number of dossiers, which is very important as we are legally obliged to always reply to customers within 45 hours.” De Lijn opted for a collaborative agreement with Realdolmen following a European public call for tender. Jo Bellekens: “Having a local partner was a distinct advantage, simply because we speak the same language. The cost price was the most important selection criterion, but the ease-of-use and ability to build the system using modules also played an important part in the selection. We started with a basic Dynamics CRM package that already works very well, which Realdolmen then modified for us.”

Realdolmen: “It's a large and complex project, partly because we always have to reach a consensus about the different working methods in the various provinces.” As well as its integration with Outlook, the reporting possibilities in the new system are also a great benefit. “Users can create their own dashboards and views, for example for the number of complaints, turnaround time, or dossiers that have been open a long time,” explains Jo Bellekens. “This means they can prioritize the dossiers that have been open the longest more efficiently, whereas they used to have update individual tables for this. Reporting to the management is also much more efficient now.”

BETTER COORDINATION OF MARKETING CAMPAIGNS

In the second phase of the project, 30 employees from the communication department also started working with Dynamics CRM for managing marketing campaigns. De Lijn previously had central software for this, so there wasn't much campaign coordination amongst the various regions. “We didn't make any agreements about which region was supposed to do something at what time,” says Jo Bellekens.

“Knowledge was also not being reused or shared amongst the different entities, but this is possible now that we manage all cam-

paigns centrally via CRM. We will also run more campaigns via email in the future. We'll be able to collect as many email addresses as possible using the MOBIB chip cards, which will soon replace the magnetic card and paper subscriptions. And because email is a cheap and efficient form of communication, we want to make maximum use of it.”

INTERACTION WITH GOVERNMENT AND COMPANIES

A third project phase in the CRM project is managing contacts with B2B clients. This phase must be completed by the end of 2013. “To enable this, we are using Dynamics CRM to keep a record of all interactions with governments, companies and other business clients,” says Jo Bellekens. “We're selling 'third payer systems' to companies. This means employers can for example intervene with the cost price of the subscriptions for its employees.

A local authority can also pay for its employees' or residents' public transport. But this isn't the only reason De Lijn has contact with local authorities. Our throughput coordinators, bus stop managers and controllers are also in regular contact with local authority departments. They often only have one contact person whereas we send different people to discuss different subjects. Our employees will be able to keep a record of what's already been done for a client thanks to CRM. This will help us improve our collaboration and communication, and ultimately lead to better sales.”

BETTER AND MORE PERSONAL ADVICE

The final phase of the project is aimed more at normal passengers. All information that is collated about clients in the backend will then become available in the frontend to employees who have direct contact with clients. This includes the people who work in De Lijn stores. “They'll be able to see all the information about the client on their PC monitors, such as how many and which subscriptions there are in the family, and the history of complaints and call-up bus service reservations,” says Jo Bellekens. “This will help them provide better advice to the clients, for example about transport tickets and journey routes.”

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