CATEGORIZING RETURNS WITH LETTER ID
SUNRISE IMPLEMENTS AN ESSENTIAL TOOL FOR TARGETED FURTHER PROCESSING

Sunrise Communications AG, or Sunrise for short, operates in a highly competitive market environment. This means, on the one hand, keeping costs as low as possible using efficient processes. On the other hand, it is also important to maintain seamless contact with customers. Delayed responses reflect negatively on the corporate image. In this regard, handling returns plays a crucial role. Letter ID has helped this dynamic telecom company bring momentum and structure into its returns management system.

Sunrise

Based in Zurich, Sunrise Communications AG is the second-largest player in the highly competitive tele-communications market. The company's shares have been listed on the Swiss Stock Exchange since 2015. Sunrise is the largest private telecom provider in Switzerland, supplying over three million private and business customers with services and products for fixed and mobile telephony, Internet, mobile Internet and TV. In mid-2018, Sunrise commissioned Switzerland's first 5G antenna.

The challenge

For telecommunication companies, conventional letters are still indispensable for contacting customers. Sunrise uses letters not only for corresponding with business customers, but also uses physical means of communication via marketing activities. Every month, there are approximately 10,000 to 20,000 returned letters - correspondence that cannot be delivered for one reason or another.

Until 2011, all returned mail was processed manually at Sunrise. Every single return had to be opened by hand and the content identified. This tedious procedure typically required several days of work and was performed by several employees. During peak peri-

ods, the contents of up to 25 letter crates had to processed. The personnel expenses and related costs were colossal. In addition, it also delayed the down-stream processes.

To put an end to this unsustainable situation, Sunrise developed a draft concept in 2012 for reorganizing returns management based on Letter ID.

The solution: automation and clear returns identification

With the introduction of Letter ID, Sunrise ushered in a new era in returns processing. The key element of the solution is the ability to freely store individual customer and shipment-specific information in the data matrix code. The code can be used to read the consignment type and document type, without having to open the letter. The content of the return is clearly identifiable: for example, subscription offers, contracts, invoices, installation instructions, marketing flyers, etc. The assignment to the individual product categories or customers is also guaranteed and is done automatically.

Categorizing items according to mail type and document type allows returns to be systematically sent to the in-house departments responsible for further processing. Sunrise receives the returns in electronic form and obtains the return data from Swiss Post office along with an image of the mail. The physical returns are properly disposed of by Swiss Post. Sunrise uses Swiss Post's interface data transfer for fast and secure data exchange. The transfer of return data is fully automated and occurs on a daily basis. The data flows directly into Sunrise's CRM system, allowing the various downstream processes to be triggered without delays.

The benefits for Sunrise

Automated returns management with Letter ID and data transfer offers both quantitative and qualitative added value for Sunrise:

– With the implementation of Letter ID and processing automation, the company has reduced the total cost of returns management by more than two-thirds.
– Thanks to clear identification and returns categorization, various downstream processing scenarios can be implemented according to the business case.
– Example letter type "Contract changes for German Sunrise Swiss calls": Customers want to be informed about any changes as soon as possible. Letter ID greatly speeds up the second contact process.
– Example letter type "First German reminder, Sunrise mobile Swiss": Before the process for the second contact is triggered, the appropriately programmed data matrix code triggers an address check.
– Letter ID creates the requirement that customers can be contacted via another communication channel if the letter was undeliverable. For example via SMS.
– Information from the data matrix code of the Letter ID will be displayed to the call center agent as a push notification if the recipient address is no longer correct. This allows the agent to request the new address over the telephone.
– When dealing with existing customers, fast response times contribute significantly to service quality and customer loyalty.

For more information on Letter ID, visit
swisspost.ch/letterid

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