



CASE STUDY: *EDIFY DELIVERS THE GOODS FOR DHL WORLDWIDE EXPRESS*

BACKGROUND:

DHL Worldwide Express

DHL Worldwide Express is the world's largest and most experienced international air express network with service to more than 675,000 destinations in the world. DHL maintains its leadership position by continually expanding and upgrading its network of offices, hubs and services, and by offering superior service through a well-trained and dedicated workforce. On an average day, more than 260,000 DHL shipments are sent to destinations throughout the world. In 1997, DHL handled more than 100 million shipments.

CHALLENGE:

Less talk and more action

As business grew, DHL needed to respond to questions from an expanding customer base in 750,000 cities around the world. Ease of use, convenience, and proactive exception handling are the standards by which carriers fiercely compete in today's package shipping business.

Although DHL's competitors were offering many ways to check the status of shipments and to schedule pick-ups, none of them provided a truly interactive, automated information system. Most callers still ended up in live phone conversations with service representatives. DHL looked at these trends and saw an opportunity.

"Our research showed that 65 percent of customers tracking deliveries would rather use some type of automated system than deal with a live representative," says Alan Boehme, Director of Customer Access at DHL. Based on this information, and the universal presence of the telephone in mailrooms, Boehme decided that

an automated interactive voice response (IVR) system was the best solution for scheduling pick-ups and tracking deliveries.

DHL, however, was operating a variety of computerized telecommunications and call center systems, as well as legacy hosts and LANs. The company needed a solution more powerful than traditional IVR products, and flexible enough to bridge multiple hosts and networks. It also needed a product that would let the company develop applications quickly—and get to market before its competitors.

"Within six weeks from the day we brought Edify in, the IVR application was up and running. After 45 days of testing, we declared it a success and began the process of rolling it out nationally."

*-Alan Boehme,
Director of Customer Access*

SOLUTION:

A completely new, automated information system

DHL's choice was Edify's Electronic Workforce[®], a software solution enabling the development of applications that use advanced interactive voice response, as well as Web, fax and workflow technologies. This answer was ideal for two reasons:

System Flexibility: Electronic Workforce has the unique ability to combine host data access with the latest client/server and PC applications. This flexibility allowed DHL to automate functions in mixed and changing system configurations.

Speedy Implementation: the Electronic Workforce object-oriented development environment helped DHL deliver GlobalTrack™, a prototype automated system, in fewer than four weeks—and become the first in the market with an interactive package tracking service. Electronic Workforce also allowed DHL to enhance the core GlobalTrack solution with features such as Speedbooking, which allows customers to schedule pick-ups using the buttons on their telephone.





IMPLEMENTATION:

Expediting the solution

GlobalTrack now resides on two servers at the company's Redwood City, California headquarters, where it handles 5,000-6,000 callers each day. The servers are set up to guarantee redundancy for back-up purposes, with each capable of handling 24 concurrent callers. This benchmark was put to the test during the UPS strike in 1997 when, under emergency conditions, calls more than doubled to 12,000 per day. GlobalTrack proved to be the reliable, scaleable and flexible solution DHL had envisioned.

Convenient and easy to use

Tracking a DHL delivery is practically effortless. GlobalTrack uses the airbill number provided via touchtone phone by the caller to query the delivery database, and returns to the caller with a voice response that includes delivery information details. For problem deliveries, the system immediately can connect the caller with a customer service representative. Customers can receive a faxed confirmation of their package's status automatically generated by the system—a feature exclusive to DHL.

In the United Kingdom, customers can easily schedule pick-ups using their touchtone phones to enter account numbers and pick-up times.

Better business practice

Ease of use and convenience were not the only objectives DHL had when implementing an automated customer access solution; proactive communication with the customer when there were problems with the shipment was key to maintaining customer satisfaction.

In some countries a large portion of DHL's business comes from a small number of large-volume customers, so proactively managing the daily shipments from these key accounts takes DHL's already superior customer service to a new level. Daily review of key customer shipments and

handling of exceptions are automated to be performed by the Electronic Workforce. The system automatically traces delayed shipments and determines the source of the problem and current status. Automating this key element overnight means that the process is already well advanced before representatives in the Key Accounts department arrive for work each morning. This ensures that they can solve a shipment issue long before the customer becomes aware of it.

This workflow solution, combining e-mail, voice and fax technologies, has allowed DHL to provide a level of service unmatched in the package shipping industry.

BENEFITS:

Customer satisfaction and business expansion

"We've received a customer acceptance rating of over 90 percent," says Boehme. "They would much rather use GlobalTrack than talk to a live representative."

Not only are customers happier, but DHL has been able to expand their call capacity by 100 percent without increasing headcount or expanding physical call centers. In the United Kingdom, they have increased scheduled shipments by 2,000 per day, increasing business by one third—and saving the time of 20 agents, who can now be reallocated to tasks more valuable and complex than querying the database. The result: better service, happier customers, and ultimately greater business volume.

"Edify's Electronic Workforce gives us a competitive edge in delivering the best possible service at the lowest cost," said Boehme. "The system has paid for itself in less than six months."



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Technical Summary

Host: A set of HP9000 servers across the world
Database: GlobalTrack, an Informix-based database
ACD: Aspect (US only)
Call Routing: AT&T

Applications Summary

Shipment delivery tracking
Package pick-up scheduling

Media
Telephone, Fax