

Customer Index, the key to service transformation.

The City of Westminster has successfully created a clean, cross-referenced Customer Index for a fraction of the cost normally associated with this task, with the help of **Silverbear**.

THE PERENNIAL ISSUE FACING LOCAL

authorities is "how to do more with less". An area in which significant customer service improvements can be made, and efficiencies gained, is in "channel shifting", using the most effective channel for the nature of the interaction with the customer.

As Sir David Varney wrote in his review Service Transformation, "Efficiencies could arise from a shift to cheaper and more effective channels". For most authorities, this means shifting appropriate service provision to a transactional website. This offers scope for significant service improvement

and cashable savings.

The cornerstone to providing a transactional website is clean, cross-referenced customer data in the form of a Customer Index. Traditionally, this is not something that most Local Authorities possess. The City of Westminster had just such an issue to face when they were introducing their 'Citizen 100' program. Simon Shears, the project manager for Westminster, explains, "One of the projects in the CRM Program is to deliver 'Citizen 100' - where the citizen is the focus of the call and all transactions are recorded against the person - except where customers wish to remain anonymous.



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By building up a picture of transactions we will deliver a better quality of service which will ultimately enable us to move a significant proportion of transactions to on line self service transactions".

In order to achieve this, Simon looked at products for cleansing his customer data, "what I found wasn't very encouraging" Simon explained, "I spoke with other local authorities and most had spent a lot of money on purchasing data cleansing products, the vendor had sold them consulting time to do the first project and then left them to it, with no skills transfer. The result was specialist shelfware gathering dust and clocking up support charges".

Naturally, Simon was keen to avoid a repetition of this, so he looked to Silverbear's 'on-demand' customer data cleansing proposition. As he explains, "I had heard good things about Silverbear, and so approached them about our requirement".

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Simon Shears, project manager for Westminster

The Silverbear solution comprised of an on-demand data cleanse of their customer data, with a project to implement a "Change of Circumstance" application that will help maintain an accurate Customer Index. "The beauty of the Silverbear on-demand data cleansing solution is that there is no expensive software to buy" explained Simon "You just give Silverbear the data extracts, they cleanse it and give it back to you". In Westminster's case this amounted to a 93% success rate in getting an accurate Citizen record, which left 7% of records that required manual reconciling. "This was done using the Silverbear reconciliation tool, which we had access to over the Web, and our contact centre agents cleansed this data during quiet periods in the centre".

Simon adds; "This accurate Customer Index now gives us a stable platform on which to roll out our online 'One Stop Shop' and integration strategy, both of which are key to Westminster in improving customer service and achieving efficiencies". ■

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