

## Case Study

### Industry Sector | Technology Client



**Canon is continually looking at ways to increase its efficiency within all areas of its business. After close evaluation, it felt that improvements could be made within its mailroom, print support and reception/ switchboard services and made the decision to outsource these functions to a specialist partner.**

#### **A problem shared...**

Canon is a world leader in imaging solutions for the home and office environments. Active in more than 50 countries, its name is synonymous with excellence and innovation. Canon recognised that it had to strengthen service levels but also to deliver cost savings in order to maintain its strong market position and build on its global brand success. Many of its own internal processes at its UK headquarters in Reigate, Surrey, would require improving to achieve this.

Nigel Stark, Facilities Manager, Canon UK Ltd explains: "Canon recognised that there were new opportunities to run mail, switchboard and reception facilities more efficiently. There were no best practice procedures in place or any models to benchmark existing processes against.

"All of these facilities are vital to the efficient running of a busy headquarters. Important documents need to be mailed swiftly and securely; data needs to be stored and retrieved easily with a system in place for destruction as and when legislation requires; and reception and switchboard, as many customers' first point of contact with Canon, need to be run with efficiency levels second-to-none.

"These facilities were not part of Canon's key areas of expertise so we were looking for a specialist partner who would provide us with the relevant skills and expertise we needed. By partnering with Swiss Post Solutions we have benefited from bespoke, innovative and measurable solutions, as well as a shared belief in strong business ethics and high standards of people management, growth and development. Outsourcing to Swiss Post Solutions has meant that we can re-focus valuable time and effort on our primary business".

#### **An innovative solution**

Our involvement with Canon began with a thorough assessment of the current methods and modes of operation. The company's unique benchmarking database – which is the largest in the marketplace – was then used to compare Canon's practice with current market best practice.

"Benchmarking not only gave us a practical guide for improvement but offered us valuable knowledge of the market and our competitors," continues Nigel.

In the mailroom a number of strategies were implemented to improve the facility: mail rounds were rescheduled to optimise efficiency and prevent congestion at peak times of the day; staff were cross-trained to cover for holidays or sickness absence of colleagues thereby reducing reliance on costly untrained agency staff; personal development plans

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were introduced to give staff direction, improve career progression and retention. Staff were also trained in basic equipment operation to reduce time lost waiting for engineers. Now, when a fault is detected the mailroom is notified by the Security Desk and a member of the mailroom will then go to the machine in question. If the problem is only minor then they will fix it. If, on the other hand, the problem is more serious then they will process a request for an engineer.

Nigel recognises the improvements: "With Swiss Post Solutions' guidance we have been able to progress our policy of career development for all staff and at the same time increase our productivity."

Swiss Post Solutions' technologies were introduced to reduce inefficiencies in the couriers process, allowing Canon to take advantage of uBook, a desktop booking and management system and iTrak, a system for tracking inbound signature deliveries. Additionally, uFile was introduced to manage data archiving.

Nigel was pleased with the results: "iTrak got rid of paper records, thus saving paper and supporting Canon's strong environmental policies and replaced them with a consistent audit trail enabling a package to be tracked from the moment it arrives in the building to when it reaches the intended recipient's desk. The increased control over inbound deliveries means less chance of deliveries going missing and a more efficient process for delivery.

"Savings are now made every time we order couriers via uBook. We no longer have different departments using different couriers negotiated at different rates. Everybody now books couriers from their desk using uBook. The system couldn't be simpler; the user is prompted to set the delivery parameters and from them the most cost effective courier for the job is used. Someone from the mailroom then comes and collects the package. That's it!

"With uFile we moved from processing and retrieving documents manually to having up-to-date knowledge of where documents are, when they were archived and when they can be destroyed at the touch of a button. Swiss Post Solutions saved Canon £10,000 within uFile's first year of implementation, and the system has now been successfully rolled out to our European Strategy Centre in Stockley Park, Middlesex."

The reception and switchboard services were also turned around with the introduction of new technology to streamline incoming calls to the correct departments and to give switchboard staff daily updates of when people are absent or on leave. Service Level Agreements were introduced to keep staff informed about what is expected from them and cross-training was again employed to help reduce costly reliance on agency staff when colleagues are on holiday or absent due to sickness.

### **'Revolutionised service delivery'**

"Swiss Post Solutions has revolutionised service delivery for mail, archive management and reception/switchboard. Services are more efficient, staff are happier in their roles, more skilled and more productive, and clearly this has resulted in a considerable cost saving for us which fits perfectly with Canon's global philosophy of 'Kyosei' – living and working together for the common good. Swiss Post Solutions has managed to cut Canon's expenditure on these facilities substantially," explains Nigel.

Helen Kopicki, Client Services Manager, Swiss Post Solutions reports monthly to Canon. The report contains not just information on current performance but acts as an aid to improving the services delivered.

"It isn't just about hitting our targets. These reports allow us to track long term trends and alter our targets accordingly. If we are achieving 100% in a given area I want to look at ways to make the target harder. If we always get the first mail sort finished by 9am as agreed with our client, I want to see if we can do it by 8.30."

Nigel welcomes the additional value our company provides to Canon: "We have built a strong working relationship with Swiss Post Solutions and found them an expert and committed partner, continuously looking not only to meet targets but also to beat them."

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