

Accelerating customer retention and acquisition at Bouygues Telecom



“We have an excellent partnership with XGS. It is a relationship built on trust, something we haven’t been able to develop to the same level with other partners.”

Mr. Lardet
CRM Manager
Bouygues Telecom

Background

Bouygues Telecom is France’s third-largest mobile phone operator with more than 8.7 million subscribers. It has more than 4,000 sales outlets and six customer service centres. The company was founded in 1994, and is part of the Bouygues Group, which has construction and media operations as well as telecommunications.

The Challenge

Bouygues Telecom launched its mobile phone service in France before the market was mature. Service providers were still focused on recruiting new customers, and dealing with correspondence from existing customers was a secondary priority. Bouygues Telecom designed its customer service systems accordingly.

As the market came closer to saturation, the focus changed to delivering customer service that would prevent existing customers from defecting to a competitor. Service providers wanted to retain market share and recognised that the cost of acquiring a new customer was higher than the cost of retaining an existing one.

In 2001 Bouygues Telecom decided to make retention its priority, but found that its typical time to respond to a posted letter

from a customer was two weeks.

So the company decided to outsource the processing of its paper-based customer correspondence to a service provider that could improve customer responsiveness.

The Solution

Xerox Global Services, which had already been printing invoices for Bouygues Telecom for five years, was one of five companies asked to tender for the letter-handling contract. In selecting Xerox Global Services, Bouygues Telecom pointed in particular to Xerox’s commitment to continual improvement of the service, at a competitive price.

Xerox Global Services provided a central processing centre 40 km from Lyon in eastern-central France. Here it receives, opens, sorts and scans all letters posted or faxed to Bouygues Telecom from all over France. The scans are loaded into Bouygues Telecom’s customer relationship management (CRM) system, where Bouygues Telecom’s customer-service agents can use them like any other piece of customer information.

The service level agreement stipulates that all correspondence should be loaded into the CRM system by the start of the next day.

Bouygues Telecom's agents can then call customers immediately to discuss their complaints.

Since the contract began in 2001, it has worked so effectively that Xerox Global Services has gradually taken over more of the tasks arising from customer correspondence. Once a letter has been scanned, character and handwriting recognition software picks out keywords for indexing. A computer tool called Categoriser uses the keywords to sort the letter into one of more than 300 categories.

Categorisation enables the letters to be handled appropriately within the CRM system. For example, letters containing 'cancel' are prioritised so that agents deal with them urgently, to retain the business. Categoriser was developed by the Xerox Research Centre in Grenoble, France, and Bouygues Telecom was its first commercial user.

Bouygues Telecom has also outsourced a significant amount of content processing to Xerox Global Services to take advantage of more efficient, low-cost processes. For example, if a letter is simply about a change of address or banking details, Xerox Global Services updates the customer record in the CRM system, freeing Bouygues Telecom's agents to concentrate on issues that require further investigation or customer contact.

In 2005 Bouygues Telecom extended the outsource arrangement to encompass acquisition processing. Xerox Global Services staff now handle all the administrative tasks associated with processing new customer applications. They receive applications from retail outlets and dealers, check that the contract is correctly filled in, verify that the supporting documentation (such as a photocopy of an identity card) is present, and check the applicant's name against industry blacklists.

They then upload the application into the CRM system. For applicants who pass all the checks, Xerox Global Services sets up the account and pays the dealer's commission, without any involvement from Bouygues Telecom. They reject unsuccessful applications and refer doubtful cases back to Bouygues Telecom.

The Results

By 2008 Xerox Global Services was processing 1.2 million letters and 2.1 million pages of customer applications each year for Bouygues Telecom.

Customers writing to Bouygues Telecom are experiencing faster, more effective service, while the company itself is benefiting from savings and from faster, more efficient distribution of work thanks to the replacement of a paper-based process with an electronic one. When Xerox Global Services brought the Categoriser tool online, the sort quality improved and fewer staff were required than with manual sorting; Xerox Global Services passed the savings from this on to Bouygues Telecom.

The new customer acceptance process operated by Xerox Global Services has greatly improved Bouygues Telecom's anti-fraud controls, significantly reducing losses due to unpaid bills. The applications process is faster, virtually error-free, and is saving Bouygues Telecom 20-30% annually compared with its application-processing costs before Xerox Global Services took on the contract.

The Future

With its performance having a direct impact on Bouygues Telecom's acquisition and retention levels, Xerox Global Services has become an integral part of Bouygues Telecom's operations. Through a policy of continual improvement, Xerox Global Services is always seeking to develop its relationship with Bouygues Telecom, helping the company achieve both its current and future communication objectives.

Case Study Snapshot

The Challenge

- As the mobile phone market became saturated Bouygues Telecom needed to focus its efforts on customer retention
- Current systems were unable to deliver the level of customer responsiveness the business needed

The Solution

- Dedicated central processing centre in Lyon for opening, sorting, scanning and indexing of all customer correspondence posted or faxed to Bouygues Telecom
- Correspondence categorised into 1 of 300 categories and loaded into the CRM system by the start of the next day
- Many areas of content processing including address changes and updating of bank details undertaken by Xerox
- All administration around customer acquisition processing and account opening also now managed by Xerox

The Results

- 1.2 million letters and 2.1 million pages of customer applications processed annually
- Bouygues Telecom customers are now receiving faster more effective customer service
- Cost savings including a 20-30% reduction in application form processing TCO
- Anti-fraud controls process improvement has resulted in significant reduction in losses from unpaid bills

About Xerox Global Services. Xerox Global Services is a world leader in document outsourcing services with industry expertise that helps you reduce costs, achieve operational excellence and grow revenue. Our unique combination of experience, technology and delivery capabilities enable integration, transformation and continuous innovation of your office environment, centralised print production, and communication and business processes. We deliver excellence in every corner of the world – locally, nationally, globally.

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