

Systemax EMEA gains competitive edge with SCV powered marketing



Systemax is one of the world's biggest IT resellers. Faced with declining margins in the IT reseller sector, Systemax Technology Group EMEA knew it needed significant improvements in its cross-border marketing activities. In partnership with Blue Group, it has implemented a campaign management solution, along with a consolidated marketing database that enables a Single Customer View (SCV) across all its EMEA territories. Systemax can now make connections between customers in many countries that are enabling it to market to them more effectively and profitably.

Systemax™



Systemax Technology Group EMEA

Systemax is a Fortune 1000 company with revenue of \$3.4bn. Its sales are mainly B2B – clients range from major corporations, to small-to-medium sized businesses, value added resellers, government organizations and individual consumers. Information about those customers was scattered across the EMEA region in a variety of unconnected databases. There was only one basic customer marketing database in the UK, another in France and a few other siloed collections of customer data. Systemax did not have an EMEA-wide view of any of its data, selection capability was very limited, while modeling capability was non-existent.

Struggling with manual and time-consuming processes in a period of major business re-engineering to remain competitive in the market, Systemax needed an EMEA-wide Single Customer View (SCV) solution with sophisticated modeling and targeting capabilities using Blue Group software to support marketing campaigns based on rich analytics – improving customer experience and boosting profit margins.

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Engine for Sales Growth

"We knew we needed to change. We needed an engine for sales growth and to attract more market development funds from vendors," says Dan Taffler, Director of Business Intelligence at Systemax Technology Group EMEA. In early 2012, Systemax began looking for a partner with enterprise solutions capability and a proven track record.

Flexibility was key. Systemax did not want to implement a solution then have to remodel it every couple of years. It was vital that the solution was adaptable to changing requirements and flexible enough to allow Systemax to bolt on its own additional modules. Features such as multi-channel selection capability and ease of integration with SQL databases were also high on the wish list.

Systemax turned to Blue Group to work in partnership to deliver the business transformation.

Together Systemax and Blue Group scoped out and managed the complex project. Taffler explains, "We were going through a huge business transformation so we needed a company that could be flexible. We chose Blue Group because they had an enormous amount of experience. It was clear that Blue Group and their solution could handle our flexible deployment issues."

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Dan Taffler,
Director of Business Intelligence,
Systemax Technology Group EMEA.



Engine for Sales Growth

This flexibility was soon tested when Systemax was forced to change the project plans quite significantly. When the project started the reseller had four different back office systems across Europe. The plan was to consolidate these into one. However, this process took longer than expected. Some countries that were expected to be using the new single consolidated back office system, were still using old systems. So the project plan was redrawn into two phases – phase one was the UK implementation, while phase two addressed the rest of Europe. As a result, delivery dates on each separate work package had to be completely reorganized.

“Blue Group did an excellent job of partnering with us – rescheduling work, being flexible and always trying to get the best result from the situation,” says Taffler.

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Dan Taffler,
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Engine for Sales Growth

Systemax was keen to retain ownership of the intellectual property (IP) associated with the database. While it is usual practice for companies to hold on to ownership of their own data, too often marketing database suppliers retain the rights to the database and how it is designed and structured. In practice this essentially locks the customer into the solution – as it is so difficult to port complex unstructured data from one database to another when changing provider. This was a deciding factor in the selection of Blue Group. “We valued Blue Group's flexible approach on this. They were confident that people would stick with them and did not want to lock people into proprietary contracts like some of the bigger suppliers do,” says Taffler.

Taffler reflects on the selection of Blue Group:

“Blue Group built a good relationship with us. They had the skills, they had the solution and the right people to deploy it. They were looking for a partnership and an ongoing relationship – that is a very different philosophy from some of the other suppliers. For all of those reasons we chose Blue Group.”

Dan Taffler,
Director of Business Intelligence,
Systemax Technology Group EMEA.



Sophisticated Actionable Insight

Systemax has now consolidated all its disparate customer databases into a single EMEA database. EMEA-wide analysis identifies meaningful connections from customer data across the countries enabling Systemax to service global accounts more effectively and also to cross-sell across a corporate hierarchy.

Systemax has achieved sophisticated, actionable insight into customer behavior underpinned by the Single Customer View. "The Single Customer View has really revolutionized the way we do marketing in all areas," says Taffler. The SCV facility can pick up individuals browsing the website and relate them to corporate hierarchies. This has enabled Systemax to aggregate its marketing activities at corporate or multinational level, identifying targets for framework agreements or perhaps a rebate incentive program. The

solution also allows it to identify relevant content and recommendations to offer individuals, not only based on that individual's browsing history but also on the purchase history of their company.

"Our marketing capability has been significantly improved. We can now reach more customers in a highly targeted, intelligent way."

Dan Taffler,
Director of Business Intelligence,
Systemax Technology Group EMEA.



Case Study



Sophisticated Actionable Insight

The new data analytics, data mining and discovery capability with the Blue Group marketing solution generates more intelligent ways of marketing and have enabled richer multi-channel campaigns. Enhanced predictive modeling and analytics support the greatly improved selection capability that underpins successful multi-channel waterfall and trigger-based email campaigns.

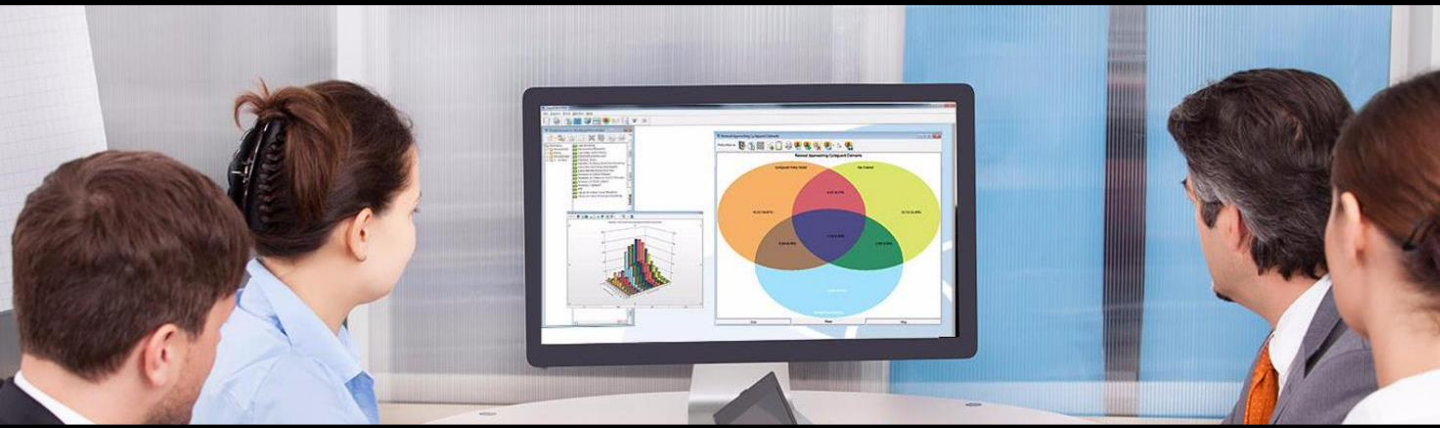
Email campaigns have seen quantifiable improvement. Over the last few months "Open rate" has increased by up to 37%, while click-through rate up 29%. Unsubscribe requests are down by 26% and the latest campaigns have seen ROI increase by a massive 27%.

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Click-through rate is up **29%**

Unsubscribe levels are down **26%**

Overall campaign ROI has seen an increase of **27%**



Driving Competitive Advantage

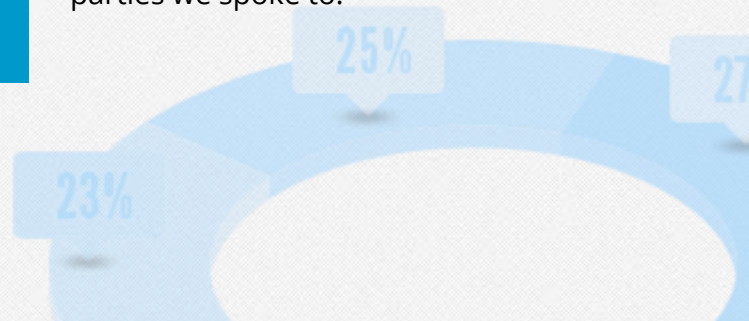
The Blue Group solution is driving tangible competitive advantage. Taffler believes Systemax is unique in the IT reseller channel in having an EMEA single customer view database on which they have built several new capabilities.

"It enabled us to be a true end-to-end company. Previously we had major gaps, not just in the marketing side, but also in our ability to accurately execute some of our campaigns. It has given us a significant competitive edge in the market," says Taffler.

"There is real business value from the relationship, more than we would have achieved by trying to do this in-house."

Dan Taffler,
Director of Business Intelligence,
Systemax Technology Group EMEA.

He adds, "We have an enterprise grade solution and an enterprise-grade partner. We see the partnership continuing into the future because Blue Group have really tried to understand our business and strategic needs over the coming years. There is real business value from the relationship, more than we would have achieved by trying to do this in-house or with some of the other 3rd parties we spoke to."





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