

Case study: Cancer Research UK

SaaS brings Cancer Research UK simple, accurate and secure supporter engagement with QAS Pro On Demand



Cancer Research UK

Millions of people owe their survival to Cancer Research UK's groundbreaking work into preventing, diagnosing and treating cancer, which has helped to double cancer survival rates in the past 40 years. What makes the charity's achievements all the more remarkable is that every penny raised — £433 million in 2010/11 — comes from the public. It's this money that goes on to fund more than 4,000 researchers, doctors and nurses who pioneer new treatments in the fight against cancer.



Cancer Research UK is using the QAS Pro On Demand Software as a Service (SaaS) solution for address searches, saving time, cutting costs and offering better services to its supporters.

“We decided to focus on a single partner providing the latest solution. Experian QAS was in a good position for two reasons: firstly, we'd worked with them since 2005 and knew that they take a customer-centred approach; and secondly as an industry leader we knew that they were ahead of the game in terms of SaaS.”

**Fiona Hutchison,
Cancer Research UK**

Situation

Cancer Research UK's websites are an important link with supporters. When users request information or wish to make a donation, they are prompted to enter their postcode. Using postcode look up software, Cancer Research UK provides the remainder of the address, making data input more convenient for the user, and at the same time, capturing valuable contact information.

While important for supporter engagement, the postcode look up processes employed were far from simple, as Cancer Research UK's Service Support Manager, Fiona Hutchison explains, “Contact data is the lifeblood of our fundraising efforts. But organic growth had resulted in multiple postcode look up systems with different maintenance, support and finance requirements. All they had in common was the fact that they took up a lot of time.”

The use of different vendors meant that Cancer Research UK staff had to update each system manually; if they didn't, the whole system could fail and lead to contacts being lost. In addition, the diversity of systems and payment models made planning and budgeting time-consuming and expensive, especially as the charity's anti-fraud measures demand a high number of postcode look ups.

Solution

In 2009, Cancer Research UK approached Experian QAS to explore next generation technologies — specifically the advantages offered by SaaS. Project objectives were to: streamline the postcode look up system into a single supplier with standardised processes; reduce account management time; cut demands on IT staff; create a system that was accurate, robust and secure; and deliver a solution that was cost effective.

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Taking the time to understand Cancer Research UK’s business objectives, Experian QAS identified QAS Pro On Demand as the perfect fit. The advantages of the cloud based solution were compelling, offering: a simplified single supplier with one point of contact; automatically updated postcode data via the cloud; secure Experian QAS hosted data and servers; and the ability to scale up their service to process millions of addresses each year.

Results

QAS Pro On Demand was rolled out in late 2009, transforming the way that the charity runs and benefits from postcode look up software.

A primary advantage is the fact that manual updates have become a thing of the past. With updates now taking place automatically over the cloud, employees are freed from an onerous monthly chore and Cancer Research UK doesn’t have to worry about system failures and lost engagement opportunities.

A single supplier is simplifying account management, made all the better since the charity now has a single point of contact at Experian QAS who has a deep, and deepening, understanding of

what they’re trying to achieve. Alongside ease-of-management comes ease-of-budgeting, with a postcode look up licence that can be scaled up to process millions of queries, taking away the annual planning headache.

Taking these benefits together, Fiona Hutchison estimates that the Experian QAS solution is saving her at least a week a year. “QAS Pro On Demand just works — before we adopted the SaaS solution, postcode look up software was a headache — today, I don’t even need to think about it. I know it’s doing exactly what we want it to and if we need help, my Experian QAS team is always on hand.”

It’s also helping the charity to do more, as Fiona explained. “We’re now bringing our high-volume Race for Life website in-house, but with an estimated 1 million postcode look ups a year, it simply wouldn’t have been possible without the flexibility and scalability that a cloud based solution brings us. People quite rightly focus on the front-of-house work of Cancer Research UK, but QAS Pro On Demand is one of the unsung heroes that help to make our important work happen.”

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