

# Case study: Overton's

## Experian QAS Improves Operational Efficiency and Reduces Costs



### Situation

Overton's wanted to stop losing money on UPS surcharges for inaccurately addressed packages. They also sought a way to save time per call in the call center.

### Solution

Overton's implemented QAS Pro for Ecometry, which validates addresses during entry into the company's Ecometry Commerce Suite. QAS Pro validates against U.S. Postal Service® and other national authority data, and works with any database.

### Results

- An almost immediate decrease in delivery service surcharges, by 29%
- A decrease in lost or returned packages
- Savings of up to 20 seconds per call in the call center
- Cost savings throughout the organization

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**“As far as working with Experian QAS, I must say they are a top-notch company. From the first time I made contact with them up to today, they have bent over backwards to make things work as smoothly as possible.”**

**Tim Manns**  
Manager of Operations and Development

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### The Challenge

With \$65 million in annual sales, Overton's is the clear leader in the water sports arena. Currently, 70% of products are ordered over the phone, and 30% are ordered via the Web. Customer data is maintained in a centralized Escalate's Ecometry Commerce Suite.

As part of a move toward improving operational efficiency, the Overton's management team began researching how much they were paying for delivery surcharges on incorrectly addressed mail. The results were striking: at \$5 for incorrectly

addressed ground mail and \$10 for air mail, Overton's were paying more than \$26,000 per year.

Overton's management decided they had to do something to reduce the correction charges, a result of inaccurate address data being keyed directly into the customer database. It was easy for the call center staff to make mistakes as they manually keyed in customer names and addresses with no verification of spellings, apartment and suite numbers. Furthermore, the customers themselves sometimes made errors on their own addresses.

Experian QAS  
125 Summer St Ste 1910  
Boston, MA 02110-1615  
T 888.727.8330  
us.info@qas.com  
www.qas.com/us

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**“Now, when a customer says he lives at 123 Main, QAS automatically adds the street description, such as ‘Avenue,’ ensuring that we don’t enter an incomplete addresses. It’s been a huge benefit, has reduced our address correction fees, and I think will continue to further reduce our costs.”**

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“The common problems we noticed were spelling errors and incomplete addresses. For example, customers do not always tell you if it’s Avenue, Drive, Street, or Boulevard, which more often than not will result in a correction charge when it gets mailed,” said Tim Manns, Manager of Operations and Development at Overton’s.

The only method to check addresses, up until now, was to read back the address over the phone, consuming valuable time for both the customer and operator. Even after this manual check, the address could still contain errors.

**The Solution: QAS for Ecometry**  
Overton’s chose QAS for Ecometry, developed by Experian QAS, to save money on their address correction charges. Experian QAS verifies addresses against the U.S. Postal Service® records as they’re being entered, which ensures that only verified and correctly formatted addresses are entered into the database. A full address can be entered in as few as 12 keystrokes, helping to reduce address correction charges, call times and increase overall operator productivity.

Experian QAS has been seamlessly integrated so that users can access QAS Pro functionality right from within Ecometry’s familiar VisualLink, Minisoft, Reflections and ESM interfaces.

According to Manns, it took just one week to install QAS Pro onto all 120 call center desktops. Operators became quickly proficient with Experian QAS, needing only minimal user training.

#### **The Results**

Once Overton’s began using QAS Pro, they saw a 29% decrease in delivery service surcharges almost immediately.

“Now, when a customer says he lives at 123 Main, QAS automatically adds the street description, such as ‘Avenue,’ ensuring that we don’t enter an incomplete addresses,” said Manns. “It’s been a huge benefit, has reduced our address correction fees, and I think will continue to further reduce our costs.”

“Productivity gains were an added bonus that Overton’s had not even considered when we began investigating this issue,” said Manns.

“I think we probably gained about 20-23 seconds per call by using QAS,” said Manns. “That’s quite a significant savings.”

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