

DATABASE

TRENDS AND APPLICATIONS

Solutions for the Information Project Team • www.dbta.com

Volume 21, Number 2 • February 2007

QuantumMail Turns to Melissa Data for List Hygiene and More

Rapidly growing direct mailer gains competitive edge.

Founded in 1986, QuantumDirect, Inc, the parent company of QuantumMail.com provides customers with inexpensive, high-quality direct-mail services for lead generation. "We are technology-based and very much Internet-enabled" said J. Chris Anderson, vice president of information technology. "We have invested heavily in our Web site to provide tools so instead of hiring an agency, customers can prepare their mailings themselves."

Most of the company's ordering processes are offered over the Web and the vast majority of the orders come in via the Web. "We specialize in very small order quantities," Anderson noted. In a typical transaction--perhaps a 200-piece mailer--a customer logs onto the QuantumMail Web site, where contact information, images and content is stored. Clients have the option of uploading their own mailing list or using a prospect list QuantumMail provides.

"We deal with a lot of data including a lot of mailing lists and contact data," Anderson noted. "We accept data from our customers and must clean it up and put it into a format in which it is ready for a mail merge. So we put it through a data hygiene process to validate the addresses and to make sure they are all deliverable."

Doing Data Hygiene

To perform the data hygiene operations, QuantumMail uses the Address Object from Melissa Data. Melissa Data is a leading provider of easy-to-use and cost-effective solutions for achieving the highest level of data quality. The company's line of software, databases, components and services affords customers the flexibility to correct, verify and enhance U.S. and Canadian contact information using almost any language, platform and media for point-of-entry or batch processing. The Address Object enables QuantumMail.com to integrate real-time address verification directly into their Web site, and offer customers a 24-hour direct-mail service. "They

have the option of correcting any problems that come up during the process," Anderson noted. "At the end of the process, they know that everything on their mailing list will be mailed successfully. Being able to guarantee that an address is valid helps tremendously."

After the mailing list is prepared, customers can create their mailer on the Web site and then submit the order, which will usually be printed and mailed within 24 to 48 hours. The entire procedure is highly automated. "The Melissa Data tools help us automate a lot of the process," Anderson observed.

"Melissa Data tools are critical to our business."

Additional Services

QuantumMail can also help customers develop targeted mailings, using commercial lists and offering demographic filters and a street selection process to zero in on specific neighborhoods. To make it easier for customers to develop a mailing list, QuantumMail geocodes data using Melissa Data's GeoCoder Object. Working from street addresses or ZIP® codes, the GeoCoder Object adds latitude and longitude coordinates to each address in the mailing list. "We do a lot of work with realtors who 'farm' a neighborhood around a house they have sold," he said.

QuantumMail also creates match ups with Google maps. The customer can see exactly where the material will be sent. "They love it," said Anderson. "They can see the individual houses to which their mail will be delivered."

In the production area, QuantumMail uses Melissa Data's MAILERS+4® postal automation software to prepare the postage forms. MAILERS+4 automates the mailing process to

meet USPS® requirements for maximum discounted mailings. It verifies and standardizes addresses against the DPV™ database, adds ZIP + 4® codes, eliminates duplicates, postal presorts, and prints barcoded labels, tags, and required postal forms. QuantumMail uses Melissa Data's Canadian Addresser to validate and standardize Canadian addresses.

QuantumMail runs the Melissa Data tools in conjunction with a 100-million record database of all U.S. addresses. "We send that through the Melissa Data tools," Anderson said. "We get updates every couple of months and even though it is validated, we validate it again. We want the comfort that everything is kosher with Melissa Data." Finally, the company is looking to add technology that will allow it to take advantage of the USPS Change of Address (NCOA^{Link™}) program to update its lists.

Working with Melissa Data

"A lot of what we would do, would be difficult or impossible without Melissa Data tools," Anderson said. "They are critical to our business. The tools are easy to work with and integrate with our software." And the formula is working. For the past two years, QuantumDirect has been on the list of fastest growing private companies in America.

And Melissa Data has proven to be a good partner. "They have gone above and beyond what could be expected several times," Anderson said. "They have been very responsive to our needs."

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