

GETTING IT SORTED



PINESOFT SYSTEMS ENABLE DHL TO COMPETE IN A NEW MARKET SECTOR.

Opportunity knocks: Deregulation of the UK mail delivery market presented DHL with an enormous business opportunity. With the right systems and support in place, an IT infrastructure capable of complying with the Royal Mail's highly complex and exacting reporting procedures, DHL could expand its traditional delivery business to offer daily deliveries to each of the 27 million addresses in the UK. Using Royal Mail's delivery network, the process is known as Downstream Access.

Putting the right systems and support in place was the first critical step.

Pinesoft, with a reputation for in-depth knowledge of the logistics industry, as well as an intimate understanding of DHL's requirements, was commissioned to provide DHL with the tools it needed to compete in an emerging market sector.



The project required swift development and even swifter implementation, since DHL's legacy systems, though robust, had simply not been designed for the monumental volume of transactions and the demanding reporting requirements of the Royal Mail.



Pinesoft redesigned the scope and usability of the previous client-based software models, an approach which helped maximize the available budget. They added a full set of interfaces integrated into both the carrier and DHL's client networks, incorporated a comprehensive raft of management reporting tools and segmented the databases to maintain system speed.

Amongst other considerations, Pinesoft has to ensure that DHL's software could be made capable of meeting the high Service Level Agreements which apply in bulk mail delivery.

Many corporate clients, undertaking mass mailings, require ongoing reports about the progress and whereabouts of every single one of their mailed items.

Addressing the challenge.

DHL's existing Citrix and SQL servers were left in place but Pinesoft re-designed all other aspects of their system infrastructure.

The interfaces now offer automatic compliance with the carrier network (DHL Express, delivers sorted mail to the Downstream part of Royal Mail's service) and Royal Mail's own network.

Usability changes have included tight office integration and exception reporting/alerting directly to the client company via automatically activated SMS text messages. DHL's clients can now undertake real-time monitoring of their mailings without having to seek information from DHL. Data related to the mailings is now supplied to the Royal Mail with enhanced accuracy and timeliness, avoiding the possibility of 'bounced' (rejected) mail.

Pinesoft's introduction of an indefinite archive strategy is where they really pushed the envelope. All databases within the system are consistent and the speed of the system is maintained through the constant archiving of transient data to parallel databases. Clients can now access their historical data as and when they need to.



Stamp of approval - the business benefits.

Apart from the speed brought about through full automation, DHL now achieves higher levels of customer satisfaction, and retention, through its system efficiencies. Operating costs have been reduced since there is no longer a need for administrative staff to generate reports. Enhanced cash-flow has also been achieved, through more efficient capturing of client data, resulting in swifter billing.

Working together

Pinesoft is now involved on an ongoing basis in product development, testing, staff training and user interaction. They provide 24/7 operational support and have become an extension of the DHL team, ensuring that all processes are fully tested before being applied.

From the IT perspective, Fatih Abu-Median summarises the new situation by saying, "Meeting Pinesoft was a lucky break. There's enough to keep us busy in this market without having to worry about software issues. We can focus purely on refinements and enhancements for the future. For that very reason, our relationship with Pinesoft continues."

Established in 1994, Pinesoft is a software development company which specialises in the rapid application development of complex transactional systems for both large global organisations and SMEs, primarily in the logistics and distribution sector.

Through expert use of object-oriented design methods they ensure that their bespoke solutions can always be integrated with a client's ongoing business needs.

The right place at the right time

"Pinesoft sent in a team that moved swiftly to get us up to speed, whilst undertaking the core developments to put in place an evolutionary system that would enable our capabilities to adapt to the growing demands of the Royal Mail and the growing business of our customers."

**Fatih Abu-Median,
DHL's IT Manager (Projects).**



smart IT solutions

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