



3.3 TUI Nederland: Station Centraal – The Paperless Experience

Description of Good Practice

In December 2002, TUI Nederland, the market leader in the Dutch travel industry and part of World of TUI (TUI AG), opened the doors of Station Centraal, a unique travel store that seeks to improve customer satisfaction, increase sales and profit margins and substantially reduce paper waste.

Instead of being a static administrative booking centre for holiday products, like many regular travel agencies, Station Centraal is a multimedia experience centre, where people get informed and inspired to travel around the world.

Station Centraal is located in the old train station in Amersfoort, which was chosen for its central location and status as the fastest growing municipality in the Netherlands. The travel store offers special holiday products from both mainstream and sustainable tour operators, as well as its own themed and tailor-made products under the brand name of Lissone Lindeman. The centre has a travel bookstore, a restaurant in the style of a train dining car, a meeting and reading room and a luxury cruise and train department.

To achieve its goal of a paperless working environment, Station Centraal has developed its sales processes and administrative recording with the latest information technology. All information concerning a customer and trip, including basic data, notes, complaints, bills, insurance claims, etc., is recorded digitally, rather than in files or on paper documents.

Implementation

The paperless system is managed through the Alexandria Content Management System. This system is combined with scanning equipment, allowing Station Centraal to store and link all e-mails, files, faxes, bills and signed confirmations to a customer's file, which can be searched with system criteria.



ONE OF THE SIX 'COCOONS' TO SEDUCE PEOPLE TO TRAVEL

Alexandria has been linked to I-Garda, the Internet version of the Garda reservation system normally used by Dutch travel agencies.

Station Centraal has also developed a Customer Relations Management programme, which will store valuable customer information, such as interests, hobbies and previous countries visited. This data is gathered from every customer who visits Station Centraal or who registers for the digital newsletter through www.stationcentraal.nl.

In addition to paperless administrative data recording, Station Centraal is also moving toward



printing on demand, a process whereby tailored information is printed according to the needs of the customer, eliminating the need for large numbers of expensive and detailed brochures. Station Centraal has so far introduced printing on demand for the holiday products of Lissone Lindeman, its in-house tour operator.

Benefits

A principal benefit of Station Centraal's specialised paperless systems has been the significant reduction in paper waste at the centre:

- The use of the digital content management system has resulted in an estimated reduction in paper waste of about 37,500 pages, which equals about 187 kilograms (412 pounds). This estimation is based on 7,500 customer files each consisting of five pages, which weigh five grams per page.
- The use of printing on demand for Lissone Lindeman holiday products has resulted in an estimated reduction in paper waste of about 780 kilograms (1,720 pounds) in one year. This estimate is based on the average weight of a travel brochure of 750 grams (1.7 pounds), handed out 20 times per week. The on-demand printed information for Lissone Lindeman averages about three pages.

Additional benefits have included:

- Improvement of business processes due to the newly developed IT software;
- New marketing opportunities with the Customer Relations Management database, which gives Station Centraal insight into travel market trends and potential customers; and
- Increased customer satisfaction from the one-on-one relationship Station Centraal can offer to customers through information technology.



THE EATING FACILITY WITH A FLAT SCREEN TELEVISION 'WINDOW' FOR DESTINATION DOCUMENTARIES



THE FACADE OF STATION CENTRAAL, THE EXPERIENCE TRAVEL STORE OF TUI NEDERLAND

Comments

Since Station Centraal only recently opened and the new processes are still being implemented and altered where needed, it is difficult to provide additional quantitative results of the reductions in paper use. Nevertheless, Station Centraal demonstrates that it is possible for travel stores and agencies to substantially reduce the use of paper with a new business approach and modern information technology.