

Case study: DVLA

Enterprise-wide licensing from Experian QAS delivers significant cost savings to the DVLA



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Clive Powlson
Senior Procurement Officer
DVLA

DVLA

The Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) is part of the Department for Transport (DfT). Its primary aims are to facilitate road safety and general law enforcement by maintaining registers of drivers and vehicles, and to collect vehicle excise duty (car tax) on behalf of the Treasury. The DVLA employs over 6,600 staff, the majority of which are based in Swansea.

Situation

The DVLA manages one of the biggest databases in the UK, holding approximately 42.9 million driver and 35.7 million vehicle records. The maintenance of these records is crucial as their accuracy impacts other objectives, such as law enforcement on the roads, road safety and revenue collection.

Keeping on top of data quality is no easy task due to the sheer scale and dynamic nature of the data. Each year, the DVLA processes 17.7 million driver requests such as provisional or replacement licences. It is a similar story on the vehicle side, where 91.8 million transactions are processed including new vehicle registrations and changes to existing documentation. To deal with this staggering level of administration, the DVLA employs

2,000 staff in two main business units – Driver Customer Services and Vehicle Customer Services. However, as data enters the DVLA via numerous different channels there is always the danger that errors can occur when information is mis-typed or mis-heard or handwriting on application forms is unclear.

Solution

The DVLA has been working with Experian QAS for many years to improve its data quality. QAS Pro, a data capture and validation tool, allows a full and accurate address to be returned by simply inputting basic address elements such as house number and postcode. QAS Batch, a data cleaning tool, updates and reformats historical data held within DVLA’s databases. Both tools are used across Drivers and Vehicles

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divisions as well as other primary areas of the DVLA such as contact centres and local offices.

The DVLA entered in to a 10 year business transformational programme or PACT contract (Partners Achieving Change Together), led by IBM and Fujitsu. IBM leads on business change and Fujitsu provides end-to-end ICT services and support. Working alongside Fujitsu, an enterprise-wide licence for Experian QAS products was arranged in March 2007, helping to promote the use of these data quality controls more widely across the organisation.

Results

The new enterprise licence has resulted in significant cost savings for the DVLA. Year on year it had been investing more as other departments requested the QAS software. Now all departments have the tools to improve data quality and the DVLA can budget effectively. The agreement also entitles it to 28 days of professional services. To date, these have been used to accredit different applications and provide advice on new initiatives.

Due to its success, the contract was reviewed by the DfT and the terms and conditions were changed to incorporate other divisions of the DfT. One such area was the Maritime and Coastguards Agency. This Agency controls the shipping tax service and all shipping companies must register on its website. As part of the redesign of its website, MCA looked to Experian QAS to provide the address verification. Procuring this through PACT achieved a cost saving of 30 percent.

Clive Powlson, Senior Procurement Officer, DVLA comments "Two fundamental pieces of information underpin everything we do at the DVLA; the individual's driver/ vehicle number and their address. Experian QAS has played a key part in improving confidence in our data. Working closely with our PACT partners, Fujitsu and IBM, we are confident that Experian QAS will continue to deliver value."

Future plans

The next project on the horizon is a 'Software as a Service' initiative that Experian QAS is working on with Fujitsu. The idea is to host a single instance of QAS on a central server farm that can be 'called upon' or accessed by any application across DVLA. This will dramatically improve the management of the software updates and licensing.

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