

Case Study

Case study: Eurostar (www.eurostar.com)

www.metafour.com

BACKGROUND: Eurostar International Limited - The high speed rail service that links the UK with various destinations across the European mainland. Their consistently high levels of punctuality, speed, convenience and ease of border crossing means that Eurostar are now recognised as one of the fastest and most reliable national and international courier services available. Evidence of their on-going success comes from achievements including the Train Operator of the Year Award, the HSBC Rail Award and the Best Train Company Award from The Guardian and Observer.

REQUIREMENT: The Euro Despatch Centre (Eurostar's purpose built handling Centre), frustrated by their previous supplier, decided to replace their existing system with Metafour's NetCourier. Eurostar required a system with varied and high functionality based upon their numerous service options and reservation facilities. More specifically, a system package was required with the following functionality:

- The ability to comprehensively organise consignment transportation from St. Pancras International in London to Paris and Brussels. Consignments required point to point tracking.
- To manage group baggage check in, collection and transportation from St. Pancras to various customer destinations across Europe.
- To offer customers the opportunity to reserve and transport bicycles from destination to destination. With a rising trend in the number of inner city cyclists throughout Eurostar's destinations, the company required a system that would allow customers to pre-book the necessary storage required to transfer their bicycles.
- With an ever increasing number of customers using Eurostar to cross the channel it stands to reason that the amount of lost property on their services increased. Eurostar required a means of organising any recovered property; record inquiries from customers; cross reference inquiries with logged items; and a means of returning items to their rightful owners.
- An interface through which select clients can book Eurostar courier services online.
- Promote fluidity and continuity of information between staff at all levels.



SOLUTION: Metafour implemented its NetCourier package solution and then tailored it to suit the additional requirements of Eurostar's unique business model. Through its highly flexible modular design structure our solution now facilitates all of the above requirements integrating both the logistical and lost property management requirements into a single consolidated solution.



METAFOUR DEPLOYED:

- Consignments can be booked either via a web-based interface using pre-populated data or via telephone depending upon the preference of the customer. Once on-board the progress of the consignment is tracked until its arrival at the desired destination and the job is logged as complete.
- Groups and individuals with excess baggage are able to check in baggage *en-masse* using NetCourier. The system allows customers to register their luggage at one terminal and collect it within 24 hours at their destination.
- A specific Lost Property module has been developed that allows Eurostar to log and manage the following: customer inquiries, matched items, found items, abandoned items, posted and couriered items, as well as a searchable record of all previous jobs.
- Customers who wish to travel with bicycles can now reserve a space on the same train they are travelling on.
- Information can be accessed by all necessary users throughout the company, increasing both efficiency and the reliability of all aspects of jobs management.
- Functionality including emailing and invoice management, processing sales and cost tariffs, tracking and retrieving any necessary POD information is available
- NetCourier's a powerful search facility which allows Eurostar to review any job that they have processed throughout any of the modules in the system.
- NetCourier is delivered with full training. Metafour offer support, maintenance and development as a service. The Lost Property module was developed as bespoke software.

RESULT AND TESTIMONIAL: Eurostar are unique in the services they offer. The increased functionality and fluidity that NetCourier has added to Eurostar has helped to further secure the niche market role that they have monopolised. Combined with NetCourier, Eurostar has bolstered their unique selling point and further secured their position against any emerging competition.

David Bridges, Management: "We are more than satisfied with NetCourier and our relationship with Metafour. Obviously the services that we offer are unique in terms of how and where we operate. Since switching to NetCourier our internal operations have become smoother and less frustrating, and I think quite obviously this has had a positive knock on effect in terms of our sales and customer relations."

