

CASE STUDY

Company: The Messengers International

THE MESSENGERS INTERNATIONAL: Exceeding Expectation.



At a Glance

Customer Profile

- Based in Toronto, Ontario, Canada
- Founded in 1986
- 1600 daily deliveries
- Over 100 employees
- Agent courier relationships

Challenge

- Manual entry of pricing orders
- Keying waybills into automated system
- Charged for data transmission
- Declining sales
- Revenue loss, thin profit margin

Solution

- Courier Complete software
- CC-DirectLink
- Custom reports

Results

- Increased customer satisfaction
- Improved employee efficiency
- Staff overhead reduced by 50%
- ROI within 20 months
- Doubling of profit margin

Background

In the 19 years of service that The Messengers International have been in business, there has not been one day where they have not delivered a package. Come rain, shine, sleet or snow, The Messengers International have continued to be in the game working persistently during city wide emergencies and in some cases, operating in candlelight during power outages.

In their third consecutive year of winning the Consumer's Choice Award for best courier service in Toronto, The Messengers International continue to operate with their Platinum Principle leading their way: Always exceed expectation.

Covering the Greater Toronto Area, and the whole world, The Messengers International is a full-service express courier company that takes pride in its high quality service. Originating in 1986, The Messengers International started with only 10 employees offering same day rush and overnight deliveries. Today, with over 100 employees, The Messengers' team consists of walkers, cyclists, car and van drivers, rush and route drivers and internal staff, all working towards one main goal: to provide the highest quality of service to the customer.

A Lesson in Service

With a majority of clients located in the downtown financial district, The Messengers International is a reliable choice for rush courier service, processing over 1600 deliveries a day for some 1400 customers. Frank D'Angelo, President, credits this to the current operations software they are using and the excellent dedication of all the staff.

We could all learn a thing or two from The Messengers International and their unparalleled dedication to service. A popular express service boasts an amazing average from the initial time the client places an order to the actual delivery time of 18 minutes within the downtown core of Toronto; however, should a client require something faster, they offer a service guaranteed to be less than 15 minutes!

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Measuring his life in seconds, D'Angelo runs his business accordingly, placing emphasis on how his staff hustles in every stage of the delivery process. Under unique incentive programs, The Messengers International CSRs answer the phones within a quarter of a ring. The telephone switchboard is one area where D'Angelo believes the computer has no place, and always provides a live voice on the other end of the line. His customers have earned the right to speak to his staff right away. "Answering the phones quickly shows to the customer that from the very beginning of their service they are receiving fast quality. If you can't answer the phone quickly then how can you serve your customer quickly," says D'Angelo, who stresses the importance of first impressions and customers receiving fast quality service.

Challenge

Internally, The Messengers' operations were inefficient. Dispatch was overloaded with paperwork and spent the majority of their time on the phone handling calls. Their original software system supplier was then an industry leader who, overtime, had become complacent in meeting their customers' needs. Their software did not automate many of the necessary business operations, requiring manual entry of tasks such as pricing orders and keying waybills into their automated system. To add to their frustrations, The Messengers' executive team was unable to create detailed reports with accurate sales breakdown on a minute-to-minute basis.

D'Angelo anticipates the same service from his suppliers that The Messengers International provide to their customers. He

The Messengers International operate with professionalism and courtesy, not only caring for customers, employees and suppliers, but also the surrounding companies and community in which they do business. Being a high traffic company, their efforts surpass the norm to ensure that they are a good neighbour and friend to all. For example, during rainy or snowy weather, The Messengers International do their part to clean any mess made by their couriers when entering and exiting the building.

In addition, each employee represents a professional, dressed to impress; Office walkers and drivers wear dress shirts and ties, and cyclists wear riding gear such that they resemble a rider on the Tour De France or Giro D'Italia. They even operate with a green approach, adding environmentally

lives by honesty and respect, and expects the same from all of his employees and suppliers he deals with. When it came to evaluating his current software, D'Angelo felt his expectations were not met. When placing inquiry and support calls, The Messengers International were made to feel as if they were an inconvenience. Furthermore, he felt the company lacked concern for the welfare of their customers and operated on a nickel and dime basis. The Messengers International were charged for each order placed online even though this operation did not cost a penny to complete, allowing the supplier to receive payments without providing specific service. Running his company based on honesty, respect, and exceeding customer expectations, he decided that in addition to

friendly Smart Cars to their downtown fleet in addition to their walkers and cyclists.

To top it all off, The Messengers International have managed to make it so that their customers look forward to receiving an invoice. To help solidify customer relationships, D'Angelo sends a newsletter filled with inspiring stories, often written by him, to keep spirits high, and to reaffirm the dignity of every human being. His heart is displayed through his company and by doing so, D'Angelo feels he is able to further strengthen the relationship his company has with its loyal customers.

the lack of functionality, this company was no longer the right fit.

Additionally, in 2001 the courier market and economy, as a whole, took a nosedive with The Messengers International consequently suffering from declining sales and revenue loss. At the time, their current software was expensive to use and with the company barely turning a profit, The Messengers International needed to find an alternative solution. Something had to be done to save the company; it was all or nothing in D'Angelo's eyes. His focus then turned to finding a solution that would enable him to reduce expenses and streamline internal operations, without losing staff confidence or negatively impacting customers.

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Solution

The answer to his problems was Courier Complete, a Windows-based courier operations software that automates the front office, back-end business and in-field courier processes. In June 2001, while in a position of revenue loss, D'Angelo spent 50% of his remaining profits on new software and hardware with the belief that risking the company was essential in order to survive and save money in the long run.

Courier Complete offered The Messengers International a software system that was easy to use and versatile. It was everything they needed in one complete package, including a Web component that would not charge data transmission fees. In addition, the product was backed by proven technical support staff and offered The Messengers International an array of integrated solutions that could assist D'Angelo with his growth strategy.

Results

"Courier Complete allowed us to be more efficient internally which quite literally saved my company. The most important change is the record profits. We are open for business. Our staff is not frustrated due to bad software; our management team has fast, accurate information; our dispatchers are happier and our order takers are more efficient."

The Messengers International have never been faster with service available to customers in a matter of seconds. By phone, calls are answered within a quarter of a ring. Online, customers are happier

"Courier Complete was and is part of my strategic plan of increasing the profit margin in a declining sales environment," said D'Angelo.

The Messengers International could not afford any downtime and required a quick implementation of the new system. To assist in the transfer of software systems, Courier Complete trained The Messengers International staff individually beforehand, and on the go-live date provided them with several on-site trainers. In the weeks that followed, the Courier Complete staff remained just a phone call away should The Messengers International require anything.

In addition to the main software, The Messengers International implemented CC-DirectLink, a Courier Complete Integrated Solution designed to streamline the workflow between The Messengers International

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and their agent couriers. As with many courier companies, The Messengers International partner with other courier companies in different geographical locations in order to extend their service area. CC-DirectLink allows The Messengers International to automatically insert jobs into the agents' Courier Complete system with any status updates and proof of delivery information automatically updating in The Messengers' Courier Complete System. A customer is still able to track the real-time status of an order even though the order has been dispatched to an agent courier.

because they can access real-time proof of deliveries online without even placing a call.

Internally, The Messengers International have been able to drastically reduce the communication time and operating costs associated with agents. CC-DirectLink has eliminated the labor intensive paperwork that typically exists when courier companies perform agent work. Dispatchers have become more efficient directing more of their time and efforts to customers. Prior to this, reports would be faxed between the two companies with

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the order information then re-typed into their own individual systems.

D'Angelo realized financial results within a few short months, with profits steadily increasing over the following years. Courier Complete allowed The Messengers International to reduce staff overhead by 50%, having less staff handle more work with less effort. Profits doubled for The Messengers International and within 20 months The Messengers International realized a full return on investment.

"Switch to Courier Complete or die. I would have probably lost the business. When sales were brisk I was able to operate inefficiently but when sales declined in the entire courier industry by 30%, I needed a fix real quick. Now my profit margin has doubled. It will triple this year and my total profits have never been this high in the 19 years we have been open. Record profits after a 30% decrease in sales, pretty phenomenal if you ask me. Down right magical."

The Messengers International is predicting this year to be their largest profit margin in history with Courier Complete being a significant part of the formula. Other parts D'Angelo accredits their success to are: the best employee group in Canada, unrelenting dedication and the highest standards in the rush courier industry.

Future Solutions

The Messengers International is currently looking into Fleet Complete to track their drivers in real-time and prove pickup and delivery times using location information, www.fleetcomplete.com

About Courier Complete

Courier Complete is a Windows-based courier operations solution specifically designed for the courier, messenger, expediting and distribution industries. Courier Complete automates the front office, back-end business and in-field courier processes, including online customer order entry, accounts receivable, real-time deliver tracking, and account information. It uses wireless two-way data technology (WAP, BlackBerry® or Windows Mobile) to enable dispatchers to wirelessly send detailed order information to a driver's device. Drivers can view and interact with the information on their device and keep dispatchers up to date by remotely updating the status of pickups and deliveries. The Courier Complete Group includes training, available both on-site and remote; support, available to customers 24/7; data services, to assist in the conversion to the Courier Complete product; and a custom development and consulting team, to develop custom solutions that give businesses a competitive advantage.

Courier Complete

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