Flowervision Customer Case Study

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"Customer service is our key business priority and Magenta worked with us to to understand what we do. This resulted in a solution that worked for our business and ensured continous improvement in our levels of service. Magenta's innovative dynamic scheduling capability was able to provide a solution where legacy distribution planning systems had failed."

About Flowervision

Keeping customers happy and deliveries on time can be difficult when you're on a two hour turnaround to unload stock, pull together orders, plan routes and make sure drivers have their delivery manifests ready to go. That's the challenge Flowervision London faced on a daily basis.

Flowervision are one of the UK's suppliers of fresh cut flowers, pot plants and florists' sundries with 6 offices in England offering 24/7 service with delivery 6 days a week. Being located in the UK means that they are able to fulfill orders as they come in, saving customers the need to plan and order in advance from Holland.

Flowervision London, located near Heathrow Airport, covers the majority of London and the Home Counties.   With deliveries of new supplies from Holland coming in at midnight, the business has a very tight turnaround of only two hours to unload, sort orders, plan routes and load vehicles, so making the process as streamlined as possible is essential. Customers are able to order online until 10pm for delivery by start of business the following morning, so the business needs to be sufficiently agile to ensure they meet customer demands within the expected timeframe.

Customer satisfaction is a key priority for the company especially as it looks to grow the business over the coming period.

Business Challenges

With a growing client base leading to an increasing number of customer orders to manage, scheduling jobs was becoming more difficult. Having one planner, a pen and paper was no longer an option if they were to continue to expand and satisfy customer needs. More orders meant it took longer to plan the routes and ensure that the orders were correct adding pressure to the business as the window to get the orders put together, checked and loaded couldn't be extended if customer expectations for delivery times were to be met.

In addition, Flowervision needed a tool that would help them to grow their operations, particularly as they looked to expand into new and unfamiliar locations.   Flowervision had already implemented TomTom Webfleet from COGS Fleet Management Ltd, so were looking for a scheduling and routing technology that would integrate with TomTom to increase efficiencies and reduce duplication of effort.

Solution

Flowervision chose Maxoptra, an approved TomTom applications partner, to provide the solution they needed. Besides being very simple and intuitive to use thereby enabling staff to quickly become proficient, the web based nature of the solution meant that it was cost effective and scalable so able to accommodate the growth in the business.

Magenta Technology provided the system, working closely with Flowervision to really understand their business, including the development of a methodology to input order volumes into the plan at the very last minute before loading the vehicles and using a larger map interface.

By using Maxoptra, the Planning Manager is easily and quickly able to build capacity loads and import these into the system, then see at a glance proposed routes and schedules. Having these visually presented to them, planners can then manually manipulate the routes before printing out manifests for the drivers to begin loading their vehicles. Seeing the expected start and finish time along with the tight integration with TomTom ensures all drivers work similar hours and reduces errors in entering data as the full manifest is sent directly from Maxoptra to the driver's TomTom PRO device so that, once loaded, drivers can see their route and delivery schedule for the day.

Data from the driver's TomTom device is also sent back to the central system in real-time enabling the planner to see any deviations, such as delays from the planned schedule, meaning Flowervision can keep the customer updated on delivery times. The data that is collected can also be used for intelligent reporting helping to understand driver performance, compliance with Health & Safety regulations and areas for improvement.

Next Steps

Magenta are currently working with Flowervision to further enhance the Maxoptra system by using the same barcode readers used to unload the delivery trucks from Holland to measure built delivery capacities. This will help streamline the planning process by enabling the Planning Manager to assess built delivery capacities quicker, entering these directly into their barcode terminal which will feed the data directly into Maxoptra. By the time the Planning Manager has completed this, the schedules will have already been built owing to Maxoptra's dynamic scheduling technology.

Results

By integrating Maxoptra into the business, Flowervision have seen the following benefits:

- Ensuring that the company meets its expectations to customers of 'order by 10pm receive by open of business the next day.'

- Reduced need for contact with drivers to find out where they are as they can see real-time status of location of driver on the system

- Proactive customer service through tracking of their orders and updating of specific delivery times

- Reduced time drivers spend on manually inputting schedules saving about 20 minutes a day per driver.

- Ability to scale the system to grow with the business

- Now data is held on driver performance, customer deliveries and other information, Flowervision can start comparing business performance