



RSM Case Study



The Virtual Travel Agency

“We needed a virtual call centre. We wanted to achieve the situation where a customer who is interested in Majorca could dial an 0800 number from a Teletext page – then a unit in our office would automatically distribute the call to one of our consultants at home, who had specialist knowledge of the region. That’s exactly what Gematech’s RSM has delivered.”

David Speakman, Chief Executive, Travel Counsellors Ltd and On-Line Travel

Travel Counsellors Limited is a highly successful travel agency with no high street premises. The company's growing success since its foundation in 1994 demonstrates that good customer service is more important than costly retail outlets.

Initially, the consultants who made up the company's sales force were distributed throughout the UK and operated by making home visits to customers and keeping in touch with the Atherton head office via laptop computers. With this operation running successfully, David Speakman wanted to create a complementary and even more innovative teleworking business, to be known as On-Line Travel. He believed that a telephone-based service would make additional consultants' expertise available to a far wider range of customers. But until the launch of Gematech's Remote Service Manager, RSM, he could not find enabling technology for a virtual call centre.

Gematech's RSM delivers the virtual call centre

Gematech's RSM provided the breakthrough in remote call distribution that On-Line Travel was looking for. It allows On-Line Travel to realise all the cost advantages of a teleworking operation without compromising customer service. When a customer dials one of the On-Line Travel 0800 numbers displayed on Teletext, the RSM ensures that their call is answered instantly and professionally and that they are connected to the most appropriate travel consultant. The consultant's home location is transparent to the customers who think they are dealing with staff in a centralised call centre.



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First-class customer service

David Speakman believes that RSM has tremendous customer service benefits. Customers get consistently excellent service because the system's ultra-high-speed resource scanning ensures that all calls are answered instantly. With easy-to-use graphical screens, On-Line Travel can set up individual call plans for each consultant, specifying which times of day they are available to take calls and when they are on holiday.

"It's a great success," says David Speakman. "We can direct the calls to any person we choose, working from home, and it therefore gives us total flexibility. It really is a highly professional virtual call centre."

Cost-effective and scalable

The RSM system connects to the consultants' normal telephones or mobiles, using dial-up connections rather than leased lines. So there are no fixed costs for On-Line Travel to bear.

The RSM supports up to 2048 home workers and can receive up to 120 simultaneous calls per unit. More RSMs can easily be linked together to accommodate more consultants as the business grows. Remote access facilities for diagnostics and configuration further minimise the costs of the company's geographical distribution.

In control

RSM's easy-to-use management screens make it simple for David Speakman to monitor his consultants' productivity and efficiency. He sees this aspect of RSM as essential to maintaining first-class working practices among a team of dispersed teleworkers. RSM's management information screens help ensure that all the consultants are answering calls as they should and that the company's resources are operating at maximum efficiency. Call statistics can be viewed as easy-to-read graphics or analysed on a spreadsheet. Live call statistics are available for both incoming and outgoing calls, so if a customer should be cut off, the consultant can obtain the number. Where a prospect does not become a customer, On-Line Travel can make contact at a later date.

A swift return on investment

David Speakman sums up the benefits of RSM:

"The RSM allows us full control of our distribution of calls, even though they are to remote sites. It allows us to analyse and therefore maximise the most efficient way to do business. The RSM is an enormous aid to efficiency and productivity and it will easily pay for itself in less than one year. Most importantly, it sets On-Line Travel up to deliver really first-class customer service."

Gematech (UK) Ltd, Telford House, Hamilton Close, Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire RG21 6YT
Tel: 0845 345 3333 Fax: 0845 345 3340 Email: enquiries@gematech.com
Freephone: 0800 328 8354

Web: www.gematech.com

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