

*Centralizing Customer Data and Connecting Them to the
OEMPRO Newsletter System*

(Case Study)

Prague, 2014

1. Who Is GTS ALIVE?

The international group GTS ALIVE AG is the official issuer of the ISIC international ID cards in several countries, including the Czech Republic. These cards are used by more than 95% of Czech university students, but the cards are by no means intended for students only. Apart from the student cards, GTS ALIVE also issues own ALIVE cards, runs the internet portal isicpoint.cz and is behind the creation of the new virtual operator Studentfone.



2. Situation Before Project Implementation

The GTS ALIVE company found itself in a situation where - due to expanding their portfolio of web services - it was facing a steep increase in the number of its clients and the customer data management system was not sufficient any more.

The client data overview was scattered, working with data was unsystematic, there were no automated processes for shredding client data and the newsletter system was slow and inefficient. An additional problem was the lack of a unified register of customer agreements to process personal data; the agreements are necessary for personal data management.

"Before implementing the project, we were unable to efficiently work with data contained within individual applications, we were only using a separate newsletter system called phpList, into which we manually and from time to time uploaded additional e-mail addresses, without the possibility to subsequently target advertising campaigns at selected groups of customers."

Radek Klein, Senior IT Manager

3. How to Start?

The first step of the project was to carry out a technological and legal analysis. To successfully complete the project, it was necessary to not only ensure compatibility with current applications, but also to satisfy the requirements of current legal standards in the area of personal data protection.

Based on the analysis, an outline of a solution with three basic elements was created. Firstly, it was necessary to expand the current ALIVE platform in a way that would allow it to support systematic record-keeping of all types of client data. The second item was to ensure an overview of all client data across all systems. The third part included designing a faster and more efficient system for sending news and newsletters, which would be based upon a unified register of customers.

4. Systematic Data Processing

The client data was divided into data necessary to provide a requested service (e.g. issuing an ISIC card) and supplementary marketing data. For these two types of data, agreements are kept separately. Thus, it is always clear for which purpose and for how long the supplied data can be kept.

An automated shredding system was created for kept personal data in compliance with legal obligations under the Act No. 101/2000 Coll., on the protection of personal data. Simply put, data that is no longer needed is deleted in accordance with legal standards. It is frequently the case that a client uses several different services. In these cases, the system keeps the data as long as at least one of the services remains active.

The data that was agreed upon to be used for marketing purposes is then automatically sent to the new newsletter system. Thanks to this, GTS ALIVE can for example notify its clients of a soon-to-be expired travel insurance, directly and with certainty that all the contacted people have agreed to being notified.

"We devote great care and interest to all holders of our cards. We take a similar approach to protection of the supplied personal data. We only gather data that we really need in order to provide the best services to our customers not only in the Czech Republic, but also all over the world. Thanks to solutions by Orchitech Solutions we can be certain that we meet all legal standards and, if need be, are able to trace back what agreement was granted by a customer and when"

Radek Klein, Senior IT Manager

"In a time when most partners want to communicate with their target group primarily online, a newsletter system is very much in demand. It allows partners to precisely target a specific target group; it also allows monitoring of end-user activities after they have seen an advertisement."

Ing. Jana Rylichová, Communications Manager

5. All Information in One Place!

For correct organization and processing of data from all sources, it was necessary to create a central register and provide connections with all source systems. This source system can be an application (e.g. Online Ordering), a completed online survey or other sources. Gathering of data and sending it to the central register is now carried out by ETL processes, which are based on the Spring Batch framework. Beside Talend Open Studio, Spring Batch proved to be the right platform for integration of data from various sources.

It was also necessary to guarantee continuity with the already existing central database of all card holders (NCDB), which we had implemented for GTS ALIVE some time ago. Given the flexible design of NCDB this was an easy task.

6. News and Newsletters

Data with permission to be processed for the purpose of marketing represents an ideal source of information for sending personalized newsletters and news to customers who request this service. For this purpose, we implemented the marketing software Oempro, which we further customized to suit the needs of our customer; we have also ensured its compatibility with our solution as a whole.

"Thanks to pre-set notifications, our customers are automatically notified via e-mail that their card or insurance is about to expire, so they can extend their license or buy new insurance in time."

Radek Klein, Senior IT Manager

7. Results and Benefits - 2012

- From now on, an approval with data processing, which is for example the archivation of the data itself, is saved along with all personal data.
- A process of automatic data shredding was implemented. This process anonymises or deletes all personal information, without a valid data processing approval.
- Thanks to a complex approval database and a secure shredding process, the ALIVE platform is in compliance with legal obligations under the Act No. 101/2000 Coll., on the protection of personal data.
- Creation of a new central register of all customers.
- Connecting the central register and all sources of client data with NCDB.
- Ease of creation of (targeted) mailing lists.
- Speeding up the process of sending out e-mails tenfold.
- Increasing the number of email recipients by 50%.

8. Results and Benefits - 2013

- 100% increase in the number of newsletter subscribers.
- 700% increase in the number of opened newsletters.
- 900% increase in the click-through rate in newsletters.
- Increase in income from advertising in the form of direct mailing.
- Increase in sales of insurance, revalidation stamps and e-shop orders based on the newsletters sent.

"Sending out 80 thousand e-mails took 3-4 days in the old system, whereas, in the new system, 118 thousand newsletters were sent out in less than 4 hours. Within one day after receiving a newsletter, more than 13% of customers have opened it (in the past the average was 3-4% within one week after sending)."

Radek Klein, Senior IT Manager