

## **2TOUCH**

### **NATURAL COLLECTION CASE STUDY**

#### **2TOUCH AND NATURAL COLLECTION PARTNER TO DELIVER THE BEST OF ECO RETAIL**

##### **Brief**

In order to help minimise waste and maximise its operational and financial efficiencies, Natural Collection, the UK's leading non-food ecological retailer, appointed 2Touch to provide a comprehensive Multi-Channel Response and fulfilment service; including a customer interaction centre and a warehousing and distribution facility.

Additionally, much emphasis was placed on 2Touch to ensure that it provided a solution which complimented Natural Collection's pledge to promote and supply products that are Fairtrade, Organic, Energy Efficient, Recyclable, Compostable, Hand made, Educational and Healthy.

##### **Challenges**

Not shy of a challenge, the team at 2Touch invested considerable time and effort towards re-enforcing the relationship and cultivating Natural Collection's trust to ensure that a close partnership developed.

Because of its commitment to providing ecologically considered products and services, Natural Collection emphasised at the start of the partnership, the importance of ensuring ecologically friendly packaging, including recyclable bubble wrap was being used for their customers' goods. This was a challenge that 2Touch had to overcome quickly in order to ensure that complaints were kept to a minimum and customer brand loyalty in the long term was not affected.

##### **Solution**

Based on its expertise and knowledge, Natural Collection put forward a number of recommendations which would help 2Touch to address the issues regarding the use of non-ecologically friendly packaging. As a result, 2Touch invested in an industrial paper shredder to recycle waste paper and packaging as bio-degradable protection for items being shipped. This provided an opportunity not only to replace the need for bubble wrap but also for 2Touch to recycle all of its paper waste for use by the Natural Collection fulfilment team.

Furthermore, following advice from Natural Collection 2Touch now source discarded packaging and cardboard boxes of all different sizes from a number of local businesses recycling them on their behalf and subsequently use these materials to package Natural Collection's products. Special labels are also placed on every single box so that customers can clearly see the boxes are being recycled. The introduction of these bespoke processes demonstrates 2Touch's commitment to immersing itself in its client's brand, and also shows an ability to provide commercially viable processes which endorse and underpin the spirit of the brand, while aiding customer loyalty.

Natural Collection customers can choose from a range of communication channels, including telephone, post or web, to make a customer service enquiry, request a catalogue or purchase goods. The companies have worked closely together to establish a robust IT system whereby any orders via the web can be downloaded automatically into 2Touch's mail order system, every hour of every day. Orders which are received by post are delivered to 2Touch's specialist team within its Initiation Department who upload any cheque or credit card details into the data capture system and then fulfil the order. A similar procedure is followed when dealing with customers calling the dedicated customer service help-line. Furthermore, should a customer require express shipping, 2Touch has the capability to run a priority pick, whereby no other orders will be completed until this particular pick has been fulfilled. This can be specified by the customer for an additional fee; however a Customer Service Agent can instigate this service free of charge as a matter of goodwill, if required. These orders can be delivered via courier or Royal Mail Special Delivery rather than the standard delivery method to ensure it meets customers' expectations. This entire multi-channel system is managed by 2Touch.

With the ability to pick, pack and despatch within a 24 hour window, 2Touch ensures Natural Collection's business is successful and customer satisfaction is achieved. With ISO 9001:2000 certification 2Touch is able to deliver consistent, high quality, customer service standards, 24/7.

2Touch operates a sophisticated computerised Warehouse Management System (WMS), providing two major benefits to Natural Collection. Firstly, it provides real-time stock information, right down to single digits, and secondly, it allows 2Touch to produce trend reports. Both of which serve to equip Natural Collection with the ability to better anticipate the amount of stock it will need and when. This reduces Natural Collection's costs by enhancing its purchasing performance and helping to eliminate over-ordering. The 2Touch

Warehouse includes a secure area to hold high value stock and the entire warehouse is monitored by 24hr CCTV to ensure complete peace of mind.

As a relatively young and growing business, Natural Collection's requirements are constantly changing and some of its products such as Easter eggs and Christmas cards are seasonal. This pre-empted 2Touch to propose bespoke methods within the dedicated customer service centre whereby agents endeavour to up-sell certain products which may not be selling as well as anticipated, or may be in danger of losing seasonal relevance. During a recent seasonal campaign, 2Touch sold one or more additional items to 16% of customers. In simple terms for every 20 calls taken, 2Touch has managed to up-sell to three people which increased the average order value by 8%. The result was a significant uplift in revenue for Natural Collection - all of which would have been lost if these processes were not in place.

To continue improving the service for Natural Collection customers, 2Touch ensures a proactive approach is taken to any feedback received through the various communication channels. One such process which was introduced as a direct result of customer feedback was an 'order despatched' email. The IT team developed a formula within the system which has the ability to send an email to customers once their order has been completed by the fulfilment team. The email provides customers with a specific shipment carrier tracking number giving them the capability to monitor the progress of their order. This was made possible because of the close working relationship between 2Touch and Natural Collection and their joint commitment to improving the customer experience.

Recently Natural Collection recognised that Guardian readers shared many of the same ecological philosophies and beliefs as Natural Collection customers. So, to maximise the potential revenue available from this opportunity, Natural Collection forged a partnership with the Guardian under the Guardian eco-store name. This collaboration resulted in 2Touch creating a duplicate customer service facility featuring all of the response and management facilities already in place for Natural Collection.

### **Verdict**

Julian Spector, Managing Director of Natural Collection explains: "2Touch demonstrated its mettle by the way in which it responded to, and overcame, the challenges experienced at the outset of the relationship. We are also pleased that we have been correct in our choice of partner as 2Touch is proving to be both scaleable and flexible. This is important because of our growth aspirations and the fact that the relationship is proving a smart match on three

separate criteria – chemistry, experience and performance. Furthermore, 2Touch has always been passionate about our proposition, both the management team and the agents appear to live and breathe our philosophy, all of which is invaluable when interacting with our customers. Since our relationship began, Natural Collection has won Best On-line Retailer at the Observer Ethical Awards both in 2006 and 2007.”

**Ends**