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CASE STUDY: HURRICANE COMMERCE & AN POST

The Requirement

During the early part of 2020, An Post began the process of selecting a data partner to provide them with the technology required to support the increasing requirements for complete, accurate and valid data for customs clearance.

Regulatory events in Europe, such as Brexit and Import Control System 2 (ICS2) and the STOP Act and Entry Type 86 in the United States were changing the landscape in terms of data provision.

Following a rigorous selection process, Hurricane Commerce was chosen as the preferred data partner with an initial focus on inbound shipments presented to Irish customs.

Cyril Mc Grane, An Post's Director of Pricing, International and QOS, said: "The number one requirement was to identify the right partner who we could trust to provide An Post and our customers with the best possible solution. We needed a solution that was capable of reacting quickly, providing real-time updates and utilising the best of machine learning.

"Hurricane stood out because of the quality of their product and the deep knowledge of David Spottiswood and other members of the team of the postal sector. We needed to find a partner which understood the dynamics of the sector and the changes that were affecting the postal world."

Continually learning and developing

The integration of Hurricane's automated data solutions was a major step for An Post and one that would require continual learning and development, reacting to the various nuances presented by Irish customs.

There was also the challenge of postal users not being used to the requirements surrounding product descriptions and other data linked to them such as HS codes.

A strong collaborative approach saw Hurricane continually building out solutions to meet the demands of An Post and its customers.

Cyril said: “Hurricane does the smart stuff to ensure that the customer journey is as seamless as possible.”

Return on Investment

Cyril said: “Hurricane had the knowledge and expertise to deliver on time a product that a post could never have built and that has continued to provide further capabilities over time.

“Another key attribute of Hurricane’s product is its scalability. We started with a focus on import and then expanded to export.

“More recently, we have started to deploy the Hurricane solution across our retail network, initially into our 50 or so owned post offices including all major cities such as Dublin, Limerick and Cork, and with the intention of rolling out across our wider post office estate.

“This is another significant innovation by An Post, placing Hurricane’s tech at the front end to fix the data at the start of a parcel’s journey. This is all part of our mission to continually adapt to meet the needs of our customers and ensure the highest possible delivery service levels.

“The changes the postal sector has been through have been seismic and An Post is widely regarded as having been an early adopter of the systems, processes and technology required to succeed in the modern world of cross-border eCommerce.”

David Spottiswood, Hurricane Co-Founder, said: “An Post is a fantastic example of a post that recognised the requirement to invest in the kind of solutions that were going to be business critical in a changing world with ever more stringent requirements governing cross-border data flows.

“Complete, accurate and valid data is essential in smoothing the processing of shipments and, ultimately, ensuring the best possible customer experience and retention. And the only way to meet the requirement for data with this level of granularity is through automation.”

For more background listen to The Postal Hub Podcast interview with Cyril Mc Grane and David Spottiswood -

<https://www.thepostalhub.com/podcasts/episode-301-an-post-international-parcels-hurricane>

