

# BUSINESS LINK FOR LONDON TRANSFORMS DATA USING BUSINESSOBJECTS<sup>™</sup> DATA QUALITY MANAGEMENT

*“BusinessObjects Data Quality Management has reduced data duplication in the customer database from 25% to less than 2%. Customer satisfaction has increased to 93% and Business Link for London has saved £100,000 in marketing costs.”*

*Mike Pratt, Data Integrity Manager, Business Link for London*



## Industry

Not for Profit  
Business  
Development

## Business Process

Marketing, service  
delivery

## Challenge

Merger of multiple organizations led to 25% data duplication, reducing the effectiveness of marketing and undermining the value of Business Link for London's CRM investment.

## Why Business Objects?

Business Objects information management software reduced duplication to 2%, improved the quality and relevance of marketing, and saved the company £100,000.

## Business Objects Products and Services

BusinessObjects XI

BusinessObjects  
Data Quality  
Management

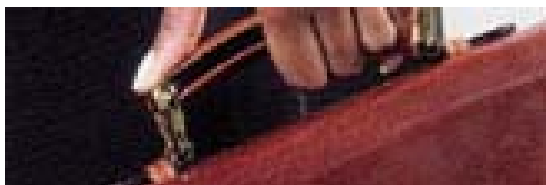
## CHALLENGE

Business Link for London is a small business support and advice service for London, providing free, impartial, and comprehensive advice to businesses to help them start up and grow. As a not-for-profit company, Business Link for London attracts funding from a variety of sources, enabling the provision of free and subsidized services to London's businesses with up to 250 employees. Services include business review, finance, and networking with other London-based organizations.

The organization was created in 2001 from the merger of several smaller Business Links operating around London. The goal was to create a cohesive brand and leverage economies of scale to improve the quality, timeliness, and relevance of service delivery.

However, the decision to merge the seven databases into one Business Link for London customer database proved a major challenge. As Mike Pratt, data integrity manager at Business Link for London, explains, “The geographic boundaries of the Business Links in London overlapped, creating significant record duplication. As a result, marketing activities were inefficient and the quality of service being delivered was affected significantly. Customer satisfaction plunged.”

The organization attempted to overcome this problem by implementing a commercial customer relationship management (CRM) package. However, by failing to address the quality of the data, Business Link for London still had multiple records of the same customer. “The organizations funding Business Link for London were becoming increasingly annoyed,” Pratt says. “Targets were not met, and Business Link was not delivering value for money.”



## APPROACH

If the organization was to meet its targets, improve marketing, and attain value from its investment in CRM, it had to improve customer data integrity. But the process was not straightforward. “With a high

turnover in start-up businesses, customer data is very volatile,” Pratt explains. “Furthermore, the only unique identifier that can be used is company name and/or address, which makes it harder to avoid duplication.”

Business Link for London turned to Business Objects, an SAP company, for help. The company uses BusinessObjects<sup>™</sup> Data Quality Management software to reduce duplication and improve overall quality. Initial analysis using sophisticated matching software revealed duplication levels at 25% – far worse than the expected 15%.

The information management tools from Business Objects take a two-fold approach to reducing duplicate information. First, any new customer name or address entered into the system is automatically checked against existing records, and potential duplicates flagged.

Second, the company receives a huge volume of data from external sources, often collected at exhibitions and events attended by up to 10,000 organizations. BusinessObjects Data Quality validates the data by verifying the address against the postcode and checking the postcode

against the Post Office address file to ensure it is a valid address. Throughout this process, it automatically checks for duplicates within the existing database.

"Within 18 months, the level of duplication was reduced from 25% to 2%," Pratt confirms.

## RESULTS

Data quality has transformed the effectiveness of Business Link for London. In 2006 and 2007, the organization has helped over 110,000 businesses and entrepreneurs, and the customer satisfaction rating has increased significantly to 93%. Business Link for London has expanded its database from 80,000 to 420,000 records, ensuring all customer contacts are now held within the CRM. "Transforming data quality was essential to attain value from the CRM investment," Pratt says. "Excellent data integrity is the basis upon which any sound CRM or business intelligence (BI) system is built."

The benefits of the company's enterprise information management solution include:

### Targeted Marketing

- By reducing duplication within the database to 2%, Business Link for London estimates a £100,000 saving in marketing costs over the past three years.
- Improved trend analysis has enabled marketing to improve its targeting of activities towards customers.

### Corporate Objectives

- Business Link for London has become far more proactive, contacting customers direct to offer relevant services that build upon previous interactions.
- The organization is now delivering more value for money for funding organizations, meeting targets for customer interaction.
- Customer satisfaction has risen to 93%.

### Ease of Use

- BusinessObjects Data Quality Management is a highly intuitive tool that has enabled Business Link for London to undertake its own data quality developments.
- Improved reporting provides immediate insight into the quality of new information sources, such as the quality of addresses within information from an event.

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