

### *Incasso invest in the latest in database marketing technology*

Based at their head office in Leeds, Incasso is the specialist Credit Management division of Cobbetts, one of the UK's top 50 law firms. They provide a complete Debt Recovery Service to clients throughout the United Kingdom and through an established partner network, extends their service worldwide.

One of the most significant advances made by this highly successful firm was their decision to invest in the technology necessary to enable them to expand their business development activities in a more focused manner.

**Mark Taylor**, the Incasso Business Development manager remarked, "If your target market can be defined and quantified then it becomes far easier to sell your services. The more you know about your market, and I include your customer base in this, the more successful your marketing will be.

"We recognized the great benefits of direct marketing and database marketing in particular. Some years ago we decided to invest both time and money to develop the best possible database of prospective target companies and organizations that we could promote our services to.

"We began with what was then a state-of-the-art contact marketing software system which unfortunately we had outgrown. As with many of the other systems we looked at it was rather limited both in terms of the number of fields available per record and its overall reporting facilities.

"What we were looking for was a system that was totally flexible and could grow as our requirements changed. The point was that as we became more expert in designing and using database marketing techniques so we realised the limitations of the old system."

The major change came two years ago when the firm decided to invest in the latest Debt Recovery system from Linetime.

Over the last 6 years Incasso's business has grown substantially, however increased competition meant that already tight margins were being squeezed and their clients were making more and more demands on their services, the result being that Incasso began investigating the debt recovery software market with the support of the Cobbetts IT team.

Incasso were looking for a system that would enable Incasso to not only continue to grow (the department now employs 43 people), but also take advantage of all the latest technology that was beginning to become available, especially with regard to Internet based communications. It was also essential that the new system allowed Incasso to develop new business and improve the operating efficiency.

After a detailed and thorough look at the literature, web sites and other marketing collateral from all the main legal software providers, Incasso opted to take a seriously close look at the products from two contenders. The result was that after detailed demonstrations of both products, a close examination of their support services and conversations with existing users, they chose the **DebtimeSQL system**, part of the **Liberate** suite of software from Linetime.

The choice of the Liberate suite provided the opportunity for Mark to replace the old marketing database system and adopt the **Liberate Contact Marketing** software as their standard.

As Mark recalled, "This new system had a number of significant advantages, not least being the fact that it took advantage of a common customer database so there was no duplication of effort or possibility of mismatch between important customer records. So often in the past the marketing database had been out of synch with the accounts database causing many problems that disappeared overnight once the Liberate system was installed.

"Prior to the installation of the Liberate system we only paid 'lip-service' to the whole philosophy of database marketing. In fact what we were doing was using a 'scatter-gun' method when what we really wanted was to adopt a more focused approach. The possibility of being able to quickly and easily segment the market according to the service on offer and therefore adopt real niche marketing tactics was very appealing.

"These niche marketing tactics are not only employed within our new business development campaigns, but we also utilize the power of Liberate Contact Marketing within our client database. Comprehensive client information is recorded and used as and when appropriate to enable us to stand head and shoulders above our competition. Very often it is the small details that makes us different.

"The Liberate system has also enabled us to offer clients a regular newsletter either via email or post according to their preference."

In addition to the practical advantages that Liberate Contact Marketing offers there are other campaign management aspects that were equally important to Mark as he developed the firm's business development strategy and activity programme.

"Being able to produce an audit trail of all marketing activities was perceived as quite a significant benefit to the management team here at Incasso.

"The ability to track individual campaigns and analyse their effectiveness has meant that we have improved our 'hit-rate' enormously. We now think we know what works and what doesn't within our target market, but we're in no way complacent. The concept of database marketing is evolving just as the database itself evolves along with our understanding of what's possible and what's the most effective.

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