



The Wine Society Toasts its 6 Millionth Order

Challenge

To improve the efficiency of The Wine Society's operations across the organisation and also help it continue to drive the business forward during a time of multi-channel growth.

Summary

Since implementing Maginus OMS, The Wine Society has significantly improved the service it provides to its customers - from reducing the delivery time to offering members a choice in how they interact with the Society.

The Wine Society is a co-operative organisation specialising in supplying wines to a large and growing membership, broadly recognised around the world for the quality of its wine and customer services. The Society is owned by its members and exists exclusively for their benefit, under a mutual business model.

Its mission is to continue to exceed customer satisfaction levels through excellent service and first-rate wines. With this, and the growing membership in mind, The Wine Society implemented a multi-channel solution from Maginus, to help improve customer service, increase efficiency, and cope with the large amount of orders received through its varying sales channels. The initial implementation was in 1998 and since then the solution has been regularly upgraded, as technology has evolved and the business has grown.

Quick Facts

www.thewinesociety.co.uk

Industry

Fine Wine

Customer Profile

Multichannel organisation specialising in supplying fine wines to a large and growing membership

Maginus Solution

Maginus OMS

Customer Benefits

- Drinks specific functionality
- Improved customer service in line with company ethos
- System reliability

Background

Founded in 1874, The Wine Society is a membership co-operative which only sells to its members, meaning service, product quality and value for money are guiding principles. The Society currently has 115,000 active members, the majority of whom are individuals within the UK, although they do also have Corporate Accounts and a small number of overseas members.

The Society buys high quality wine at a variety of price levels from around the world. Because the shareholders are actually the members, The Wine Society does not profit maximise, ensuring it only builds sufficient profit to reinvest in the business.

Challenges

Customer service is one of the key differentiators for The Wine Society. The challenge for the Society has been maintaining the customer service levels across the different sales channels with a growing number of members. When Maginus OMS was first implemented, around 50 per cent of orders were placed via post and 50 per cent over the phone, now orders can be placed via the phone, online (these two being the primary channels), via post or via a mobile phone in addition to wine purchased in the store.

With 1500 products available for sale online and around 1,000 inbound calls each day, most of which are to place orders, The Wine Society needed a central system to track, document and process all of this information.

Solution

Maginus OMS controls orders, and the fulfilment of those orders, irrespective of the sales channel. This gives The Wine Society a single point of maintenance for all product, pricing and other business information ensuring efficient processes and excellent customer service. Essentially, Maginus controls the business with integration to external systems such as a specialist system developed by The Wine Society to handle their 'Wine Without Fuss' service.

David Marsh, Head of IS at The Wine Society said, "Maginus' solution fulfils a fundamental role in giving us central control of all pricing and product information across all of our channels. The functionality fit was great and the core system has proved to be very stable and has always worked well for our business.

David continues, "One of the reasons we chose the system from Maginus was that we were confident that we could work with the people to build a strong working relationship. They obviously understood the mail order market, took a consultative approach and were able to advise us on industry best practice and developments. We have an excellent on-going relationship with Maginus and have every confidence that they will continue to execute to a high standard."

Results

Since the implementation, Maginus OMS has supported The Wine Society's extensive growth, with turnover doubling to just over £80m and it has processed over six million orders, across the different channels.

In addition, the Society has strengthened its membership figures by 50 per cent, whilst only increasing the number of employees by 28 per cent, highlighting the increased efficiency that the system has helped to deliver.

David Marsh concludes, "We have been using Maginus for a great length of time and have remained extremely satisfied by its capabilities, particularly as it has continued to develop as the retail environment has changed around us. Maginus' solution is entirely scalable and durable - it grows and adapts as its customers business strategy evolves. But equally important, for us, is the strong working relationship we have with the staff at Maginus.

At Christmas time, the business receives four times as many orders as a typical day in February for instance, meaning that 40 per cent of the annual turnover is handled in two months. The staff at The Wine Society find the contact log within Maginus very useful - it gives them a history of everything that's happened with the member and allows them to answer queries quickly and easily. Maginus also holds all data relating to products, availability, pricing etc which helps staff to answer customer queries such as whether wine is to lay down or to drink now. This access to information allows them to handle the peaks of the business much more smoothly.