„ViVa" – Visitor CRM for Messe München International

MESSE MÜNCHEN INTERNATIONAL

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1 Summary

In the last two years Messe München conducted and successfully completed a Visitor-CRM-Project named "ViVa", which is the abbreviation for "Visitor Value". This project title is programmatic since Messe München is aware of the consistently increasing value of international trade fair visitors for the success of all shows and intends to systematically build and manage a close relationship to this customer group.

ViVa – The three dimensions of „Visitor Value" at Messe München

MMI is aware of the increasing value of international trade fair visitors. This value is subject of continuous measurement and management

Value for the corporation

Value for the visitor

Value for the exhibitor

MMI wants to improve the added value for the trade fair visitor. Therefore there is a permanent search and implementation of methods, solutions and services to broaden this spectrum.

Core objective of MMI is to actively build the prospering platform of bringing exhibitors and visitors together. Therefore the value of the visitor for the exhibitor is permanently measured and communicated

From a today´s perspective one can say that not only the formerly set objectives were met but even more positive effects could be achieved.

To bring forward one of the main success factors: It was managed as a business project with the broad involvement of all parties and a clear focus on the business processes; more than just buying some software and servers. And with the same time completing the project and experiencing the effects of the new organization there are new ideas and challenges coming up what you can do more to deliver better services to your visitors.

The main **objectives** of ViVa can be summarized as:

- *__Standardize__ business processes and systems*
- *Build a strong platform for successful __Cross-Selling__*
- *Intelligent __Integration__ the CRM system with the surrounding systems*
- *Automatically build and deliver __Visitor Relevant Content__*
- *Demonstrably __Reduce Cost__*
- *Manage __Cross-Channel Marketing Campaigns__*
- *Centralize __Data Management__ and Data Care*
- *Align the __International Communication__ with corporate goals*

2 Objectives

The objectives of the Visitor CRM Project have been developed in a joint effort of all involved business units of Messe München, especially all Project Groups, all Marketing Departments, Finance & Controlling and Business Development, Corporate Strategy and IT.

2.1 Standardization

Until 2008 a variety of software systems (internal and external) were used to collect visitor data and to manage the various communication channels. The objective was to implement ONE best of class system and procedures (see also "cost reduction" and "cross-selling") and replacing a bunch of systems while adding important functionality at the same time.

2.2 Cross-Selling

One objective was improving the cross-show communication by clear rules and possibilities of using the visitor data for one show to attract visitors for another exhibition.

2.3 Integration

Better and smoother integration of a centralized visitor management system with all the other required and already installed systems by using modern web-service architecture (SOAP).

2.4 Visitor Relevant Content

One core goal was to read and understand the visitors "digital body language", which means to track all communication actions of Messe München and the individual reaction and behavior of each visitor as a base to deliver the right contents at the right time and frequency.

2.5 Cost Reduction

Although it was clear to everybody that investing into a new system and redesigning all involved business processes will cost money, management´s objective was clear the opposite: Save 1,5 million Euro within the first five years.

2.6 Managing Cross-Channel Marketing Campaigns

Another important objective was to plan, build and run integrated marketing campaigns using all the existing channels in the visitor communication. In the old scenario there was nearly no connection between E-Mails, Web platforms, SMS, Fax, Print campaigns and the usage of social media platforms.

In the new model all channels should be tightly nested with each other (e.g. sending after 3 days an automated booking form if someone showed interest for a conference by downloading the pdf-program after reading an newsletter article)

2.1 Centralized Data Management

One of the most important objectives was to redesign the entire system and process approach of a centralized data management. As mentioned under the point of "standardization" all different data stores should be pulled together into a central CRM. One major part of the new data management should be a complete new set of data care mechanisms like e.g. De-duplicating, data enrichment, postal correction and Data Quality Management.

2.2 Alignment of International Communication

Last but not least: the international communication (planned and performed by the foreign representatives of Messe München) should be managed by the new scenario as well. The most important sub-objectives were: strictly using the approved corporate design, synchronizing all communication steps, recording of all activities in the central visitor history and re-regulating all legal aspects with data rental and data usage.

3 Actions

The entire Visitor-CRM initiative was managed as one big business project by a small dedicated team. The team was accompanied for the whole project time by a consulting company specialized in "Trade Fair Customer Management". The major project modules have been:

3.1 Strategy and Conceptual Work

All business units have been involved in a workshop series over 6 months. All processes and requirements were modeled with an UML-modeling tool (Enterprise Architect). Best practices were identified (in the trade fair industry but also in other industries) and evaluated if they should not be integrated in the requirements.

3.2 Tender Process

A 90 page specification and requirement document was sent to selected vendors. The three best bidders were invited to present their solution in front of all stakeholders (business units, marketing, procurement, management, IT). All defined business use cases should have been demonstrated by the vendors. The complete tender process went over 5 months.

3.3 Technical Implementation and Integration

The basic functions could be implemented in only a few weeks. But the complex SOA integration took some other months. Especially the performance of synchronizing 100.000s of visitor data and the optimization of the data model after the first campaigns was an issue to be solved.

3.4 Pilot Project and Corporate Roll-Out

The roll-out followed an agreed plan with several business units. One show after another switched to the new system, everyone using the ongoing experiences with the new system (20 shows and project groups in ca. 12 months).

3.5 Organizational Changes

The new system alone couldn´t have brought the success alone. More important were the change in approaching the market and redesigning all relevant processes.

As an important result a new function was implemented. The new department "Central Visitor Management" is directly reporting to the Top Management. In each of the five business units a dedicated "Online Marketing Specialist" was installed. The responsibility is the entire campaign management and the data quality. The operational data care team was allocated within the front office unit.
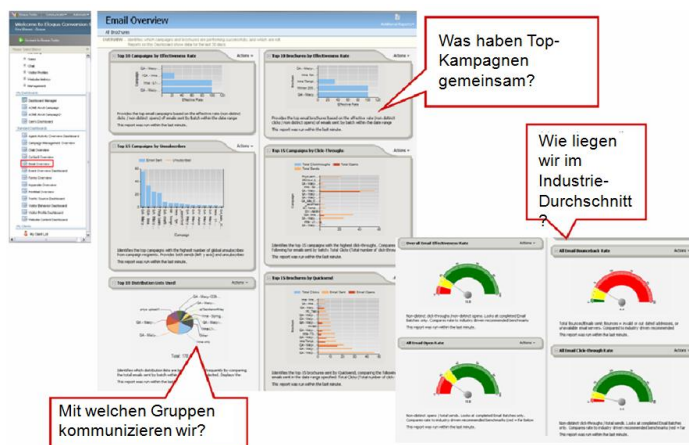
4 Results

The Visitor-CRM-Project ("ViVa") exceeded the expectations of all stakeholders. For a better understanding several results are explained by applying the same structure as in our objectives mentioned above.

4.1 Standardization

Until 2008 a variety of software systems (internal and external) were used to collect visitor data and to manage the various communication channels with them. Messe München implemented ONE best of class system and successfully replaced 5 other systems.
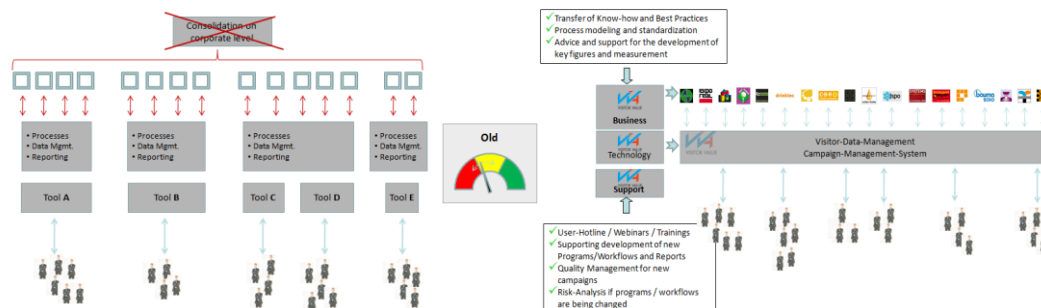
Standardized reportings with common operation figures allow to compare success overall business units.

4.2 Cross-Selling

The results of cross-selling were better than expected. But the major issue was convincing the different project groups to share "their" data with others. One example:

In February 2009 Messe München decided to start a completely new show for bicycles named "BIKE EXPO" (see also www.bike-expo.com). The show should be in July 2009.
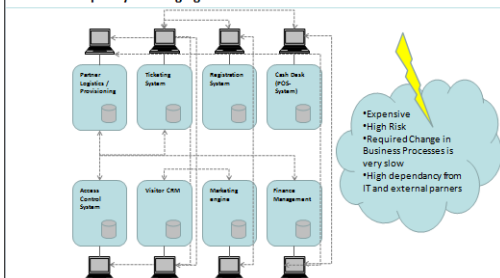
Through extensive use of cross-selling the first edition of the show ended up with 29.000 visitors, whereof 15.700 visitors have been cross-selled and marketed visitors from other shows of Messe München.

4.3 Integration

A modern web-service architecture (SOAP) is used to integrate the new ViVa-System with the other required systems. For example following systems have been integrated by now:

Integrated System	Sample of exchanged information
Registration System	Company Data, Personal Data, Area of interest, …
Ticket system	Ordered Ticket Types, Payment method used, additional products purchased (e.g. catalogue, parking), …
Access Control System	Date, time and location of visitor´s entries and exits; recordings of attempted misusage, …
Postal Delivery System	Grouping by area codes, Porto optimization, barcode print-in for automated bounce management
Web Platform	Tracking Scripts, Landing-Pages, Microsites, Framed Content, Viral Marketing
Finance Systems (SAP)	Billing Status of Loyalty Cards (to be renewed yearly)
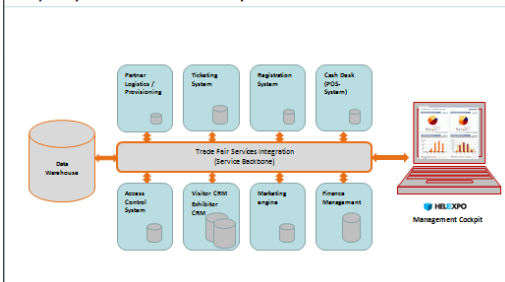
4.4 Visitor Relevant Content

With ViVa Messe München is now able to record all relevant behavior of a visitor, online and offline. Here is sample of recorded and tracked events:

- *What newsletter article has been read by the visitor?*
- *What websites have been visited in which sequence?*
- *On what stands was the visitor scanned by the exhibitor in which sequence?*
- *From whom was he invited or recommended (Guest Tickets or Viral Campaigns)*
- *Whom did he invite or recommend?*
- *From which social media platform (e.g. LinkedIn, Facebook, and XING) was he forwarded?*

Depending on the behavior (mixture from implicit AND explicit triggers) a complex scoring model is built. Further marketing campaigns and even content is tailored to this scoring model. For example a visitor of a sport fair with a shown interest in snow boards will receive other content than a person who showed interest in Skiing.

4.5 Cost Reduction

The objective of cost reduction is measured regularly together with the controlling department. The figures of the first year 2009 even exceeded the original plans by 14%. The main cost drivers have been:

- *Reduction of external cost by eliminating five other service providers and software systems*
- *Synergy and scale effects by developing new function modules which can be re-used and shared with other business units (i.e. "Tell-a-friend-function") and by sharing visitor relevant knowledge across the organization*
- *A clear revenue increase by marketing individualized advertisements to exhibitors and media partners*

## 4.6 Managing Cross-Channel Marketing Campaigns

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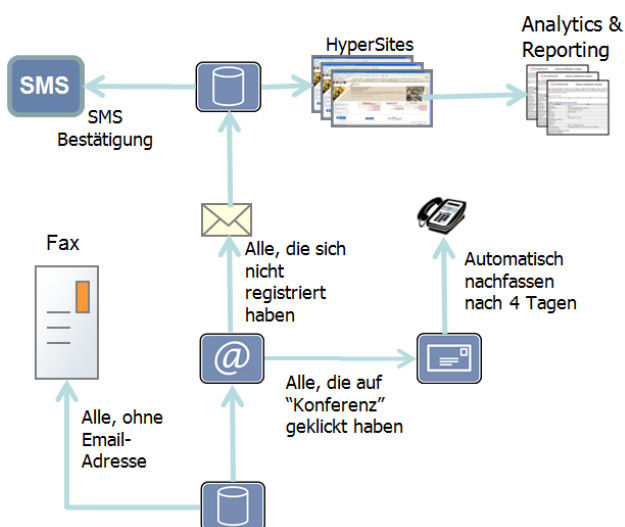
In the new model all channels are tightly nested with each other (e.g. sending after 3 days an automated booking form if someone showed interest for a conference by downloading the pdf-program after reading a newsletter article). The complete communication history can be seen from one single point (*e.g. show me all communications with Mr. Tom Miller in February 2010; show all email communication with SIEMENS concerning the bauma show*)

4.7 Centralized Data Management

One of the most important objectives was to redesign the entire system and process approach of a centralized data management. As mentioned under the point of "standardization" all different data stores now connect with the central CRM. With the introduction of ViVa a complete new set of data care mechanisms like e.g. De-duplicating, data enrichment, postal correction and Data Quality Management has been implemented.
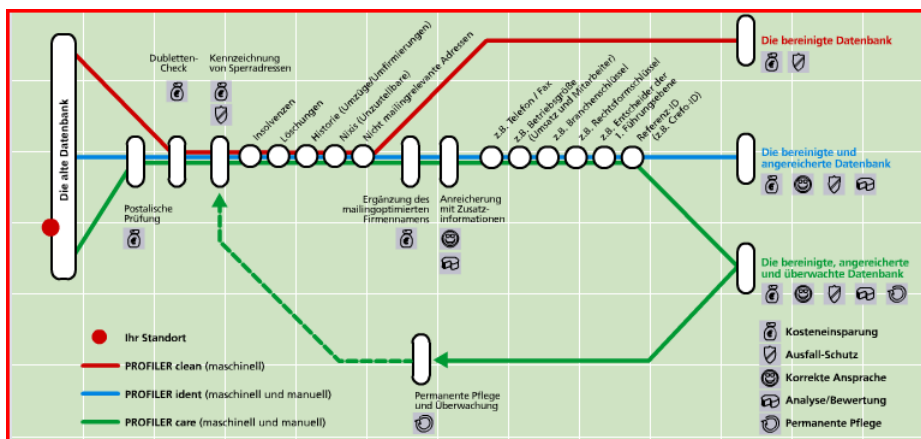
To better manage data quality over time an index was introduced (DQI = "data quality index").
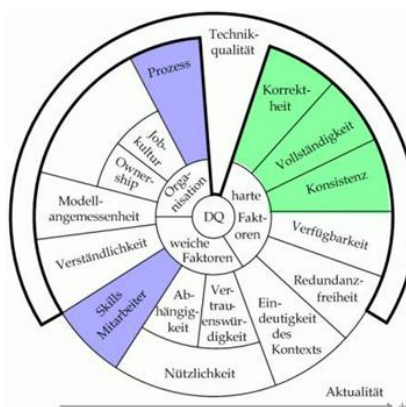
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Synchronisierung der internationalen Besucherkommunikation

Datenverfügbarkeit und –qualität verbessern

Konsistentes Markenbild und individuelle Anpassbarkeit

Einheitliche Verfahren und Standards

Erfolgsmessung mit einheitlichen Kennzahlen