

Dukes Bailiffs implement award winning AI-based visit scheduling solution

Founded over thirty years ago, Dukes Bailiffs is a privately-owned, family run Enforcement Agency. With over 80 employees, approximately 80% of their business focuses on the collection of Council Tax, Business Rates, Parking Charge Notices and Sundry Debt within Local Authorities. Collecting in the region of £30 million worth of debt in the last year alone, the company are committed to delivering greater social value through carbon footprint reduction and ethical collection practices.

Their Enforcement Team consists of a Head of Enforcement, supported by two Enforcement Managers and four Senior Agents who have day-to-day contact with Agents. This is supported by an Allocations team, responsible for allocating work out to Agents.

Scheduling enforcement visits

In the past, Enforcement visits were typically scheduled with Administrators spending time manually allocating cases using postcodes, and Agents spending up to an hour each day route planning for the following day. As well as being an inefficient use of Agent and Administrator time, there was no mechanism in place to ensure repeat visits were made at different times of the day to try and improve the chances of achieving a successful visit outcome.

Innovation

As a company committed to investing in technology and continually improving and innovating, Dukes knew that

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Having implemented Visit Genius we are seeing an increase in visits and as a result, an increase in collections. These are our two main KPI's and it's great for our clients to see we have the capability to turn more cases around without impacting the quality of our work, we are able to maintain our standards whilst getting more collections on their behalf as a result.

Ricky Baker,
Head of Enforcement, Dukes Bailiffs

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there had to be a better way to schedule visits and optimise their resources. Following ongoing discussions with long term technology partner Destin Solutions, a visit scheduling and routing system which Dukes have branded Visit Genius, was developed.

Artificial Intelligence

Visit Genius was built from the ground up and uses machine learning, algorithms, mapping technology and data from multiple sources to automatically inform the best schedule and route for Agents. Using Artificial Intelligence it can automatically prioritise customers who have not been visited within a certain time frame and ensure Agents make visits within an optimal time block when a debtor is more likely to be present.

Ricky Baker, Head of Enforcement at Dukes Bailiffs, goes on to comment “we essentially wanted a system that would take away the need for Agents to plan and optimise their own routes. We wanted to make it as effective as possible not just in terms of travel times but trying to ensure debtors would be in, when our Agents called round. We didn't want to be in a situation where we were returning cases to our clients where three out of the four visits our Agents did with a specific debtor, were all at a similar time of day.”



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Improving Productivity

Dukes spent a lot of time collaborating with Destin to scope out the requirements of what was needed ensuring that the system supported their unique and high standards for practicing ethical enforcement activity. Dukes now have a system that makes each visit far more productive by staggering the times of visits. Furthermore it allows the Agents to plan their visits for the week rather than a single day. Scheduling visits over a longer time period gives the technology more data to work with, helping it to overcome potential issues. For example cases typically change over time, Agents may get caught up on calls and plans may need to be rescheduled. The more information Visit Genius has to work with, the more it learns and automates the process of rescheduling in the most logical way.

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Integration and reporting

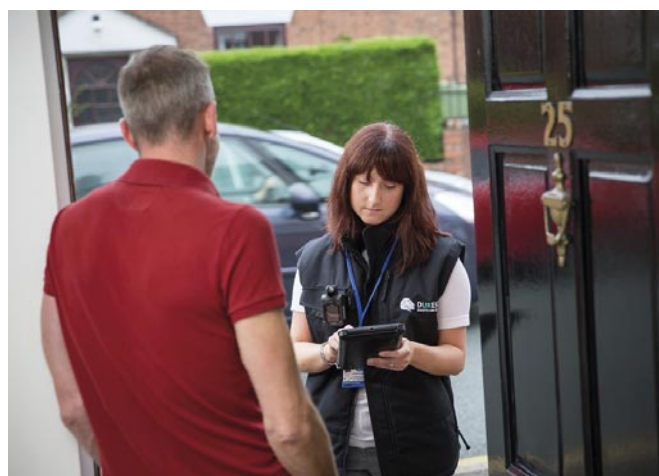
Visit Genius also integrates with the Civica Collect debt recovery system automatically updating Civica Collect with outcomes achieved using Visit Genius. It also comes with in-depth reporting capabilities so management can see at a glance, a breakdown of what Agents are doing. For example hours completed by Agents, how many visits have been agreed or postponed, how many visits are completed during the day and start and finish times of Agents. This all helps with predicting work time on caseloads as well as providing a

comprehensive management reporting tool to help manage staff performance and benchmark any best practices.

Award Winning Technology

Both Dukes Bailiffs and Destin Solutions have been recognised for their work on this project winning the 'Digital Business Transformation' award in the 2023 Credit & Collections Technology Awards. As part of the submission Dukes identified that since implementing Visit Genius they have achieved an increase in monthly average visits of 144% through strategic routing. In addition they have recorded a 100% reduction in 'unlocatable' cases by identifying hard to find properties such as caravan sites.

It has also helped boost Dukes' green credentials by reducing Agents' fuel costs and carbon footprint thanks to their ability to now schedule visits in a more focussed and logical way. Following implementation, Dukes have achieved a 14% reduction in fuel costs despite there being a 26% increase in the number of Agents they employ.



Conclusion

Ricky goes on to conclude *“working with Destin Solutions has been really good, they really know their stuff when it comes to data and coding. They have been one of the most responsive companies we have ever worked with and it's great to work with people who can take your ideas, expand on them and make really helpful suggestions on how to take things to the next level.”*

The solution continues to evolve and plans for future development include integration of Waze, a sat nav tool that incorporates real time traffic updates, so that Agents can use Visit Genius as a navigational tool as well as a visit scheduling and routing solution.