

Manchester University drives mailroom efficiencies and automates package delivery

Client profile

University of Manchester manchester.ac.uk

- Largest single site university in the UK located in the city of Manchester.
- Largest student population of 39,000 students and 10,400 staff.
- The Residences Directorate is part of The University of Manchester, providing a comprehensive service to all students of the University, administering and allocating over 8,000 bedrooms in University owned or managed accommodation.
- Aims to help support the student experience by providing efficient and effective accommodation services and facilities.



Moving from manual paper to digital tracking

For any university with a large student population, delivering mail and packages into students' hands can be challenging. Like many others in the UK, the University of Manchester relied on a porter, who manages the post and keys for a hall of residence using pen and paper, to deliver student packages. As storage space became limited, Manchester turned to Pitney Bowes to help manage the growing volumes of inbound student mail with a more professional, efficient system.

Business challenge

Student mail and package volumes for Manchester were a growing challenge for the management of the student Halls of Residence as well as for the students looking to receive those packages in a timely manner. The highly manual process was managed by pen and paper and the reception team had to manually log all deliveries. They completed paper slips, which were subsequently delivered to the relevant mail box. Some of the mailboxes serve up to 10 students. There were often problems with parcel slips being mislaid and packages going missing. In addition, the storage required for parcels that were sitting uncollected for extended periods was presenting another set of problems with storage space.

'The amount of time saved is considerable. Now, it only takes 30 seconds to log a mail item and notify the student. Our old paper-based system took at least twice the amount of time, not including delivery of the slip to a mail box', says Norma.

'The parcel slips we used were put into mail boxes and would often go missing, causing annoyance to our residents. When the resident then queried a delivery at reception the procedure for checking through manual records was very time consuming', explains Norma Daniels, Residences Administration Officer.

The whole manual process was time consuming and also reliant on

students collecting their packages in a timely manner to free up space in the mail room for the next delivery. The halls of residence needed an electronic/digital solution to automate the communication and package tracking process to save time and money, eliminate storage issues and increase efficiency as well as enhancing the student experience in halls.

Solution

Manchester turned to Pitney Bowes and SendSuite® Package Tracking and Delivery Software was implemented to streamline mail and package delivery.

'With SendSuite, our residents know immediately when they receive a package', says Norma. 'They can immediately collect their items from the mailroom. This is essential with ongoing storage issues'.

SendSuite Tracking software automates package handling for the University and ensures full accountability for parcels until they are picked up by students. Barcode readers, electronic signature capture, and tracking and reporting functions have brought post operations into the digital age to meet the expectations of today's students.

Each delivery is scanned with a handheld barcode scanner upon arrival at the Halls of Residence. If a package does not have a barcode, then SendSuite Tracking software will generate one. Scanning items brings them into the SendSuite Tracking system, and they are immediately assigned to their recipients. An e-mail is automatically sent, informing students that they have an item for collection. A label is produced for each package – upon which a number is printed to identify where the item is stored in Reception.

Students come to the reception and show their e-mail, which includes the location number of the package, to the Reception staff. The staff members retrieve items and collect a digital signature from each student on the SendSuite Tracking Signature Pad, confirming the transfer of ownership from the Reception to the student and completing the delivery.

Any items not collected can have a reminder e-mail sent to the student, asking for the item to be collected or it will be returned to sender after a certain amount of time.

Technology used

- SendSuite® Package Tracking and Delivery software

Benefits

The system is dramatically more efficient and boasts many overall improvements. Queries are dealt with instantly through searching the database by student or tracking number. An image of the signature can be provided along with the date and time for each delivery made by the Halls.

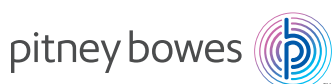
Time savings as well as a reduction in the number of staff needed to manage the process also have been great benefits for the overall management team. 'The amount of time saved is considerable. Now, it only takes 30 seconds to log a mail item and notify the student. Our old paper-based system took at least twice the amount of time, not including delivery of the slip to a mail box', says Norma.

At peak mailing seasons, like the Christmas holiday, the need for extra storage grew and created additional problems. With the SendSuite Tracking system's efficiency in notifying students of items for collection, storage issues have diminished.

'SendSuite has eliminated the need for excessive storage of parcels and packages because the students are just more responsive to pick up when they get the digital reminders, so everyone is happy', says Norma.



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