

Sefton Metropolitan Borough Council Reducing costs and increasing efficiency

Area of cost saving: Council Tax bills and Housing/Council Tax Benefit letters

Many Local Authorities mail new year Council Tax bills separately to Housing/Council Tax Benefit letters because their back office systems generate separate print runs and it simply isn't cost effective to match the output together manually. The time frame between the two mailing runs often means bills and letters land on doormats on different days. As a consequence, this generates a large volume of unnecessary customer service calls, visits to Council offices and additional incoming written communication many of which just require a simple clarification response.

Sefton Metropolitan Borough Council's Revenues and Benefits service is managed by Arvato and both parties were keen to improve the service. However, due to the complexity of the project they could not find a supplier able to offer the service.

Thanks to Gandlake, Sefton and Arvato managed to tackle these issues by quickly merging the two print streams together. This allowed the associated documents to be combined into a single mailing so that the recipient receives all the necessary information in one envelope. This has provided an immediate reduction of envelopes and postage required, generating a mailing cost saving of 90% each year.

Receiving the two documents at the same time removes confusion and significantly reduces unnecessary contact from the customer. With less customer contact, Sefton Metropolitan Borough Council has more time to focus its skills on other areas of the business and towards those in genuine need.

Business Benefits and Savings

- Housing Benefit claimant mailing saving of 90% every year
- Ongoing savings
- Better customer communication
- Reduced citizen confusion
- Reduced call centre traffic
- Reduced incoming mail
- Fewer council office walk-ins
- Less unnecessary contact (NI14)
- Improved perception of council
- Less environmental impact

In addition to annual billing, this same functionality can be used every day for daily Council Tax Bills and Benefit letters as well as mailings from all departments across the Council. This results in even greater savings and further enhances the image of Sefton Metropolitan Borough Council.

In summary, the whole communication process is much slicker, costs are reduced and the perception of the council is enhanced.

"The Gandlake solution saves us money and at the same time increases customer satisfaction."

Jeremy Marshall, Project Manager
Arvato Government Services(Sefton) Ltd

Sefton Metropolitan Borough Council used the Gandlake solution to design its outgoing annual billing documents and to condense them into a single mailing for annual billing 2009/10.

Mail Items: Council Tax Bills, Direct Debit letters and Housing Benefit letters

Objectives: Improve customer communication, reduce citizen confusion, reduce call centre traffic, save money, meet NI14 target

Sefton Metropolitan Borough Council mailing figures:

Council Tax bills	119,511
Housing/Council Tax Benefit claimants	26,241
Total pieces of mail	145,752
Housing/Council Tax Benefit letters eligible to be matched	23,663
Housing Benefit letters mailing saving	90%
Total mailing saving	16%

This is exactly the sort of innovative thinking we look for from our ITsuppliers."

Jeremy Marshall, Project Manager
Arvato Government Services(Sefton) Ltd

Many councils throughout the UK are using Gandlake software to realise the same cost and efficiency savings as Sefton Metropolitan Borough Council.

If you would like to find out how this technology can work for you please call us on **01635 524404** or visit www.gandlake.com.

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