



↑ **12%**
first-year bookings

↑ **£150,000**
reactivating lapsed renters

About the client

Founded in 1961, Quality Cottages is a Welsh family business and has grown into a pan-Wales agency specialising in quality properties. Their main marketing objective is to increase direct bookings and renter loyalty whilst maintaining high occupancy and yield for their cottage owners.

The problem

Quality Cottages (QC) were running several different systems for the brands within the group - Quality Cottages, Quality Unearthed and Quality Villas.

They wanted to consolidate this data as there was anecdotal evidence that customers would buy from several brands, and they wanted to validate this hypothesis. They also had challenges with their booking engine for the property rentals that created duplicate customer records each time an enquiry or booking was made.

It became increasingly difficult to identify previous customers accurately and no way of linking their previous stay details. Marketing communications compromises were made and limited to batch email broadcasts preceding seasonal events such as Easter and Christmas.

Quality Cottages also had no accurate way to monitor lapsed customers and had no reactivation programme in place.

"We needed to improve our marketing communications and leverage the data we held on our renters to provide more personalised and relevant messages."

"This helped massively to grow average stay value and reactivate lapsed renters"

Gareth Robinson, General Manager

They had traditionally been a business with around 60% loyal returning customers but it has become difficult to easily segment their audience based on their booking history, preferences and requirements.

QC were also under consistent pressure from the cottage owners to achieve desired rental incomes and customer demand for their properties. The holiday rental market is highly competitive and difficult to command marketing exclusivity from the owners without the results to support it.

How we solved it

The Hive Marketing Cloud customer success team undertook a data integration process to ingest the Quality Cottages booking and customer information as well as website traffic data into a Customer Data Platform (CDP).

This created a single view of the customer for marketing along with dynamic segmentation based on recency, frequency and monetary value as well as cottage type, location and stay preferences, etc.

We created several automated journeys to promote conversion from prospect to customer, grow customer loyalty and value, and targeting lapsed customers.

Finally, we created some standard reports and a dashboard so that Gareth could monitor progress, return on investment and analyse customer behaviour.

The results

The Hive Marketing Cloud was an instant hit. Gareth and the marketing team were immediately able to pull historical reports about customer behaviour and this started the segmentation process to define the audiences they wanted to talk to.

The team who dealt with the cottage owners were able to build complex occupancy and yield reports more easily to show the value they were adding with marketing and promotion. This enabled more effective property acquisition.

The QC marketing team were able to finesse the welcome journey that the Hive Customer Success Team had created and immediately saw a 5% improvement in conversion from website browsers into renters.

A reactivation journey was also created that targeted towards each of the group brands and the relevant lapse criteria for each. Personalised messaging was created that referenced the last property the client stayed in and was keyed to their specific lapse event. This one journey resulted in successfully re-booking over £150,000 in rental revenue and represented over 1500% ROI.

"We were astounded with the superb results achieved by this one simple focused activity."

"We have traditionally spent a lot on advertising with paid search marketing to help us maintain our targets and occupancy levels."

"The job will be more efficient now and our budgets should go a lot further, adding value at both the beginning and end of the funnel."

Tim Rees, CEO

The team at QC have also built several journeys targeted to specific segments and seasonal demand variations that have seen an increase in turnover in excess of 10%.

Tim and Gareth are now keen to investigate how the Hive Marketing Cloud can help with the transactional messages required before and after the booked stay to increase customer satisfaction, loyalty and future booking value.

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