

Customer Story



Industry	Business Issue	Solution	Benefits
Telecoms	Improved customer retention in a saturated residential broadband market; better support for multiple operational, service, sales and marketing areas to further improve business efficiency and effectiveness.	SAS® Enterprise BI Server SAS® Information Delivery Portal SAS® Enterprise Guide® SAS® Integration Technologies SAS® Add-in for Microsoft Office SAS Education	SAS impacts the bottom line by supporting TalkTalk's quarterly 'net add' customer position; more targeted cross- and up-selling improves margin and increases revenue; handling huge data volumes; speed and efficiency improvements, measurable savings in man-hours.
Focus			
Customer Intelligence			

TalkTalk uses SAS to retain more customers and increase revenue



TalkTalk has evolved its SAS® analytics and reporting platform to support multiple areas ranging from customer insight to diverse activities in operations, customer service and finance

With 4.8 million UK customers under its TalkTalk, AOL Broadband and TalkTalk Business brands, TalkTalk Telecom Group PLC is a leading provider of fixed-line broadband and voice telephony services. Through a combination of organic growth and acquisition - notably AOL, OneTel and Tiscali - the business has achieved notable success. Since 2003, that success has been supported by a SAS® platform that has been extended over time to cover multiple areas and help TalkTalk maintain its market position in an extremely competitive environment. "SAS has become ingrained in our business," says Nabeel Maqsood, SAS Consultant - Data Strategy, Customer Lifetime Management. In the past, he says, SAS helped TalkTalk move fast "in terms of speed to market, to meet competitor offers quickly. Today, the competitive landscape's changed and SAS supports our focus on customer retention.

"An important measure is ensuring the company's quarterly 'net add' position is favourable, and SAS supports a great deal of that; outbound lists for churn reduction, for example. Every customer we 'save' affects that net figure, so SAS is having a direct impact on the bottom line in terms of customer numbers. We can also create more successful cross- and up-sell campaigns, to sell broadband to voice-only customers, for instance - so we're also increasing margin and increasing revenue from our customer base."

SAS adds value at multiple points: to access, integrate and store data from multiple internal and external sources; to provide management information; in analytics and customer insight for Marketing and campaigns; and other areas including Finance and Collections. In essence, SAS helps TalkTalk view its business and make decisions from a customer rather than a systems perspective. And today, the emphasis is firmly on retention, with SAS helping TalkTalk contend with the fact there are "probably fewer than 50,000 new broadband customers coming into the market each year," Maqsood says. "There are some opportunities to get people who've come out of contract and are shopping around, 'switchers', but it's even more important to hold on to what you've already got. The whole retention / cross-sell / up-sell piece is critical these days, including exploring ways to increase revenue from your existing customer base. These issues are key to our thought processes and decision-making, and SAS plays a big part in all that. All cross-sell, up-sell, re-pricing and modelling work for direct marketing is done in SAS."

“ SAS helps us to create more successful cross- and up-sell campaigns, to increase margin and increase revenue from our customer base. ”

Nabeel Maqsood, Customer Lifetime Management

More Targeted Campaigns

Alongside ad hoc campaigns created by analysts to meet a specific brief, SAS underpins a large number of automated trigger campaigns, with feeds provided to partner companies who provide fulfilment. “Processes run daily,” Maqsood continues. “We track and analyse various areas relating to customers, then create and send a file to the third party who issues the email or prints and mails the customer communication.” SAS predictive models inform campaign targeting by, for example, scoring customers to reveal those most likely to switch providers. The opportunity is to contact them with timely and appropriate offers to pre-empt their leaving. Indeed, SAS supports what Maqsood calls “the whole campaign management piece”, working with multiple agencies including outbound calling, with outcomes logged and provided back to TalkTalk for analysis. “We have processes to pick up these returns, then update our campaign management tables, so we have a whole history of contacts, which customer featured in what campaign, and outcomes. We can learn a great deal, like ensuring we treat customers in the right ways.”

Analysts use inputs provided by Maqsood’s team, transformed into activity-specific data marts, for SAS modelling and forecasting, including customer segmentations and churn modelling. This informs TalkTalk’s ongoing contact strategy: who to contact, when, and in what form. “That whole plan is executed through SAS,” Maqsood adds.

Delivering the Right Customer Experience

TalkTalk is also keen to enhance the customer experience wherever possible; this can involve Maqsood’s Data Strategy team liaising with an external company on the right time to arrange an appointment with a customer to deliver a specific in-home set-up. “In a marketplace like this, it’s all about making sure you deliver a positive customer experience,” he says. “We can help bridge issues or gaps in our processes.” Another recent development involved SAS supporting TalkTalk’s mobile phone option: “The entire mobile reporting suite is in SAS, with areas of the business including the Fraud team, Marketing and Collections using that information to gain new insight,” Maqsood says. “All revenue reports, executive summaries and more are produced in SAS.”

In addition to having a positive impact on TalkTalk’s ‘net add’ position for customers, SAS also enabled the business to remove manual processes and repetitive daily tasks, leading to significant man-hour savings. “Here’s a simple example,” Maqsood says: “We recently set up a process to report on new sales from one web portal, and that alone saved a person in Operations two hours each day.” He says the key advantages of SAS are clear: “SAS gives us an integrated solution, with the latest upgrades meaning additional speed gains and faster throughput of jobs. We can develop models and put new processes into place faster - for example: a new marketing campaign will take only a day to put together, from start to finish. That’s what marketing campaigns are all about: processing, analysing and summarising data. SAS is synonymous with rapid development, and our ability to deliver quickly is key to our success. Of course, SAS enables us to deal with very large data volumes. And without a doubt, the underlying flexibility, choice and rigour of SAS analytics is of real benefit to TalkTalk.”

SAS gives TalkTalk THE POWER TO KNOW®