

# Case study: Virginia Hayward

Hampers reach the correct destination  
with QAS Pro On Demand



## Background

Virginia Hayward Ltd was established by the Hayward Family in 1984 and remains a family owned and run business. Its mission is to find the best of local, national and international produce for inclusion in its gifts and hampers. Its peak trading periods are around occasions such as Christmas, Valentine's Day, Mothers'/Fathers' Day and Easter.

Virginia Hayward supplies hampers to consumers and corporate customers. Customers can purchase hampers directly through its website online, via email, post, phone or fax. It also operates a hamper fulfilment service for a number of household-name retailers including John Lewis, Sainsbury's and Selfridges. Each year, the company mails around a quarter of a million hampers to business and private addresses throughout the UK and internationally. Its large warehouses store up to 175,000 finished hampers at any time and are responsible for the quick and efficient despatch of gifts.

Virginia Hayward  
Hampers & Gifts

**"We are one of the biggest hamper suppliers in the UK, and to maintain that level of service, QAS Pro On Demand is crucial."**

**Alex Walker**  
Marketing Manager  
Virginia Hayward

## Situation

When customers place an order for a Virginia Hayward hamper via the company's website, they are required to enter their own details, as well as the address of the recipient. Inputting the recipient address correctly is vital to ensure that the gifts are sent to the right person and get there on time. This applies to both Virginia Hayward's direct customers and its fulfilment operation for key retail partners.

Virginia Hayward's marketing manager Alex Walker explains, "If someone enters an 'SP' postcode as 'SL', they are actually talking about

an address at the opposite end of the country."

The situation is further complicated by the fact that for corporate orders, one customer may be responsible for as many as 300 recipient addresses. For these large orders, Virginia Hayward's data entry team will input the supplied recipient addresses.

With so much potential for error, the company needed a contact data management solution that would accurately validate address information.

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### Solution

Virginia Hayward uses QAS Pro On Demand to help guarantee that the hampers reach the correct destination. The software enables customers to enter their own address correctly by submitting just their house number and postcode. Perhaps more importantly, when they are entering the recipient addresses, they can enter the segments of the address that they know and the software will return the best matches.

As the solution is on demand, the data is validated via a secure web link to Experian's data centres. This has proven to be a more cost effective solution for Virginia Hayward as all the data, hardware and software is hosted by Experian, all that is required is a link to the internet. This also means that internal resource doesn't have to be dedicated to updating the software and data further down the line.

QAS Pro On Demand integrates into Virginia Hayward's sales order processing system, Mailbrain.

### Results

According to Alex Walker, the Experian QAS solution has proved simple to deploy and use, making it easy for customers to register on the website and place an order. On the previous revision of the site, Experian QAS products were used only to help customers enter the correct recipient address, but now, customers can also use it to ensure they enter their own address details correctly.

"It works perfectly. Wherever there's a form on the website where the customer needs to communicate an address, we use QAS Pro On Demand. There have been periods where we have run the website without QAS Pro On Demand and given the customer the opportunity to enter their own address, and it causes problems. If you could see what some

people choose to enter for their own address; it's incredible. Our 250,000 hampers could end up anywhere if the data was not validated by QAS Pro On Demand."

"We are one of the biggest hamper suppliers in the UK, and to maintain that level of service, QAS Pro On Demand is crucial. We couldn't offer the level of service on the scale we do without Experian QAS."

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