

CITY OF MARIETTA, GA

DATA QUALITY SUITE MODERNIZES MAILING OPERATIONS FOR MARIETTA, GEORGIA

The City of Marietta, Georgia, is one of metropolitan Atlanta's largest suburbs. Its Customer Care Department mails approximately 44,000 utility bills every month, all of which have to be addressed, sorted and delivered to businesses and residents. Much of that mail was handled manually, creating a significant burden on time and resources.

The United States Postal Service (USPS) asked the city several times to meet the Full-Service Intelligent Mail automation requirement for bulk mail. Knowing that the USPS would eventually mandate compliance as a qualification for receiving discounted automation prices, the city took action to find the right software solution.

Recently, a new innovation provided the solution they needed—Data Quality Suite (DQS) by CentralSquare Technologies (previously Superion). DQS enabled the city's mail room to automate operations that previously had been handled manually—from sorting and reporting to removing duplicates and updating addresses.

“Every morning, mail room staff had to manually pull out billing statements that were going to the same address, and mail them together. Sometimes there was a whole stack of bills to thumb through,” said Jeremy Waite, IT Systems Manager. “Now sorting takes place automatically.” Adds Brent Cheshire, Mail Clerk, “What used to take close to two hours of sorting, or more if only one person was available, now takes only about 30 to 40 minutes.”

The city considered established workflows during their software search. Disrupting these workflows with new software was less than optimal. “With DQS, we were able to keep our current workflows. We could continue to print bills and have our vendor customize bill layout, and sorting happened before it even got to the layout software,” said Waite. “We were able to keep all that in place, which was a big win.”



CentralSquare DQS also helps the city to actually improve data quality. It enables verification, standardization and consolidation of address information using the USPS presort function. APIs powered by Melissa Data improves mail deliverability by using clean, correct and complete address data.

A significant amount of mail was returned as undeliverable before the city implemented the DQS solution. Utility customers' bills often came back as undeliverable due to misspelled, incomplete or incorrect address information. “With our daily DQS report, any misinformation shows up and gets fixed right there before the bills go out that night,” said Jasmin Thigpen, Customer Service Manager.

In the past, responsibility for generating the USPS Coding Accuracy Support System (CASS) report that certifies the accuracy of mailing data fell to the city's IT team. They also had to update data manually, so the CASS report often went undone. “CASS reporting is part of the DQS software now, so anyone can run it at any time,” said Waite. “So, we know that's going to save us time in IT and overall.”

Companies that implement DQS and adopt Full-Service Automation practices could see substantial savings in postage costs depending on their current level of USPS process automation. In this case, the city was already receiving some USPS discounts because it had previously met some full-service automation requirements. However, its progression toward modernization—underscored by the early adoption of DQS—positions the city to meet future USPS requirements and respond effectively to the increasing demands of a growing community.

