



VISIT FLORIDA Finds Ideal Fulfillment and Call Center Partner in Global Response

Tourism is Florida's number one industry, generating 22 percent of the state's sales tax revenue and employing nearly a million Floridians. It's not by chance that so many tourists choose the state—it's in large part due to successful marketing by VISIT FLORIDA, the state's official tourism marketing corporation. A key reason for VISIT FLORIDA's success is their ability to respond quickly and accurately to over 100,000 requests for information each year. The business partner who provides the superior call center and fulfillment services that help them do that is Global Response.

THE SITUATION:

VISIT FLORIDA was looking for a partner that could provide call center and fulfillment services and that would match VISIT FLORIDA's culture of a corporate family.

THE CHALLENGE:

The process of transferring call center and fulfillment operations to Global Response was complex: It included moving 116 phone lines, all at the same time, which were currently being used by consumers and which had advertising linked to them. It also required setting up reports with specific metrics that VISIT FLORIDA needed to document for the Florida Office of Tourism and Economic Trade—reports it had not been able to get from its previous provider.

THE SOLUTION:

Global Response increased efficiency and decreased expenses through accurate reporting, address verification and complete integration with the call center.

Playing Two Critical Roles: Call Center and Fulfillment Center

Before engaging Global Response, VISIT FLORIDA was using an out-of-state call center for fulfillment.

"We left our previous call center because we were looking for more of a business partner than a vendor," says Heather Collins, Contracts Manager, VISIT FLORIDA. "We selected Global Response because we could tell from their capabilities and approach that they fit that description. We also liked their company culture because it's the same as ours: Staff members stay a long time and become part of a corporate family."

Global Response's ability to meet VISIT FLORIDA's needs for both a call center and a fulfillment center also played an important role in their selection. "The tight integration between the process of receiving requests and fulfilling them quickly and accurately with vacation guides was a big advantage for Global Response," says Collins.

Smoothly Managing a Complex Transition

"Global Response was a huge help in explaining all that had to happen on the back end to make it a smooth transition from a technology point of view," says Collins. "And we were blown away when we saw the reporting Global Response

could do for us. They can show me exactly how many calls come in, how many transfer to a live operator, how many vacation guides are mailed domestically, and how many bad addresses and duplicated requests are removed. Nobody had given us that before. And they also showed us examples of what they're doing for current customers so we could see how it was working in practice."

Collins accesses the reports that Global Response custom-built for VISIT FLORIDA via a web portal. "As a state-funded agency," she says, "we're required to report monthly to our Board of Directors. When I do, I know the information is current, not three months old. We also analyze it by month, find peaks in demand, and manage our workflow more effectively. Another benefit is that it helps us make an accurate estimate of how many vacation guides to print each year, which can reduce our expenses."

Increasing Efficiency, Adding Flexibility

Collins says the ratio of guides mailed to requests received has decreased, because Global does address verification to ensure guides are mailed to a correct, valid address, and removes duplicates. Global also prevents prank mailings, such as the time, before Global, when someone had 600 guides all sent to a store address. "The result is that our expenses have decreased and the numbers in



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— Heather Collins
Contracts Manager,
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About VISIT FLORIDA

VISIT FLORIDA promotes tourism to Florida through sales, advertising, promotions, public relations, new product development and visitor services programs. As a public/private partnership, VISIT FLORIDA serves more than 10,000 tourism industry businesses, including nearly 3,000 invested partners, more than 7,000 web affiliates, and major strategic alliance partnerships.

About Global Response

Global Response is an end to end solution provider for Fulfillment, eCommerce, Print, Mail, Customer Service and Order Taking. In business for over 37 years, the company is committed to exceeding each client's expectations through teamwork, innovation, and industry leadership.

the reports are true numbers,” Collins says. “For instance, Global reported that we mailed 92,798 guides in fiscal year 2010-2011, and I know that’s an accurate number; I have valid addresses for all those guides. By the way, that’s a third of the total guides we mail; that means Global Response helps us fulfill a huge part of our mission.”

Collins also credits Global Response with reducing expenses and increasing efficiency for VISIT FLORIDA. “We’re more efficient—we’re not mailing another guide to someone who doesn’t need it, because they requested one within the last 30 days,” she says. “That’s a cost savings right there.” She says Global Response also bundles mailings to get the least-expensive postage rates. Global Response’s flexibility in accommodating new requests has also benefitted VISIT FLORIDA on several occasions. “Sometimes in the tourism industry, we move so fast that no one thinks through how something is actually going to get done,” says Collins. “But we know we can rely on Global. For example, last year we stopped operations in our Canadian office, so we needed to start taking website requests for French travel guides that they were handling. Global Response was able to modify procedures quickly to take care of that. They’ve shown on several occasions that they have the flexibility to adapt to changing circumstances.”

Creating the Right First Impression

Collins credits Global Response with creating the right first impression on consumers inquiring about a trip to Florida. “Global is the first interaction consumers have with us, either because Global fulfills their website request for a guide or because they call and get the automated system with Global recordings,” she says. “The tone and clarity of those recordings is great, and the way the process is set up ensures callers don’t abandon the call too soon. That wasn’t the case before, when callers would often miss parts of the recording. And there’s no three- or four-week lag time between calling and getting the guide; I know guides are going to be mailed within 48 hours. Consumers aren’t calling me to say they ordered something six weeks ago and don’t have it. The details of the phone interaction and the mailing may not seem like a big deal, but getting them right makes all the difference in the impression we create.”

For Collins, the dependability of Global Response may be the biggest benefit. “The biggest compliment I can give a vendor is saying I never have to call them,” she says. “Well, I never have to call Global Response. Everything works like it’s supposed to, and if there’s a problem, they’re proactive about calling me. They’re a true business partner that we can rely on.”



Global Response

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