



Australia and New Zealand's leading assistance company improves processes and customer care with the Google Maps API.



At a Glance

What they wanted to do

- Replace outdated mapping solution
- Find an intuitive option with accurate data and advanced functionality
- Easily integrate mapping capabilities with current database functionality
- Elevate customer service
- Enable real-time dispatch, tracking and communication with customers and service providers

What they did

- Integrated Google Maps API with their MIDAS call centre incident system to provide real-time dispatch and tracking of service providers to help people in need
- Deployed the new solution in stages to ease change management and accelerate adoption
- Worked closely with their network team to integrate service provider data with information flowing from Google Maps API

Company

Allianz Global Assistance helps people, anytime, anywhere. The company's diverse services span insurance and emergency medical assistance solutions for travel, property assistance services, specialised patient assistance for pharmaceutical companies, roadside assistance services to car manufacturers, and health insurance to students from overseas. In Australia and New Zealand, Allianz Global Assistance (formerly Mondial Assistance) helps millions of people every year by connecting those in need with complex networks of service providers, from locksmiths to emergency medical personnel.

Challenge

Especially for roadside assistance services, reassuring customers and swiftly dispatching and tracking roadside assistance service providers is a daunting task but something the team at Allianz Global Assistance do every day. As an example, a customer may have lost his wallet and the security code required to re-start his Harley Davidson while crossing the vast Nullarbor Plain. Or, a panicked mother may have accidentally locked her baby in the car in one of Brisbane's busiest shopping areas.

"Our call centre helps hundreds of people in distress every day – and positive customer relations are the core of the business," explains Dean Peck, senior business solutions analyst and project manager for Allianz Global Assistance in Australia and New Zealand.

To offer a rapid, attentive response, customer service assistants (CSAs) require minute-by-minute mapping data to pinpoint the customer's location and find, dispatch and track roadside assistance service providers sourced across diverse networks. Information on thousands of service providers is stored in an incident call centre system, MIDAS. Until recently, another software was embedded within MIDAS to equip call centre team members with geographic

What they accomplished

- Delivered the mapping solution with fluid, simple functionality, familiarity, visual nature, easy pan and zoom, and improved data accuracy
- Made life easier for their customer service assistants
- Integrated call centre system with Google Maps API to enable extremely rich functionality
- Delivered real-time, visual dispatch, tracking, and communication among CSAs, customers, and service providers
- Improved data accuracy enriched service to both metropolitan and remote areas
- Accelerated service delivery
- The ability to reassure distraught customers by quickly identifying incident locations through features such as Street View

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data. The issue: the current software was long outdated.

“The Google Maps API was almost a foregone conclusion due to its familiarity, reliability, accuracy, flexibility, ongoing innovation and relationships with other data providers. It met all our requirements and provided virtually limitless integration capabilities.” —Dean Peck, senior business solutions analyst and project manager, Allianz Global Assistance in Australia and New Zealand

“The software we were using had reached its end of life,” says Peck. “Additionally, it was slow, clunky and lacked vital functionality such as intuitive ‘grab and drag’, pan and zoom and the ability to view street-level details when on the phone with customers.” Australia and New Zealand’s leading assistance company improves processes and customer care with the Google Maps API.

Peck spearheaded the replacement project. The requirements definition team included “super users” within the call centre, subject-matter experts and the networking team who provide integration services and ensured that service provider data worked seamlessly with the mapping information fed from Google Maps API. Of paramount importance were cost-effectiveness, and the ability to integrate the new mapping solution with MIDAS in innovative ways. Reliability, advanced features and data accuracy also topped the list.

Solution

After considering a range of map providers and open-source solutions alongside the Google Maps API, the Allianz Global Assistance team unanimously selected Google. “The Google Maps API was almost a foregone conclusion due to its familiarity, reliability, accuracy, flexibility, ongoing innovation and relationships with other data providers,” says Peck. “It met all our requirements and provided virtually limitless integration capabilities.”

Peck realised the need to both deliver cutting-edge technology and smart, transparent change management strategies that would ease the transition for 150 users accustomed to the current software. In collaboration with the Roadside and Health and Property business lines, the solution was implemented by experienced in-house developers using an agile methodology. The Development team split their backlogs into manageable tasks that could be accomplished in several two-week sprints. Scheduled review demonstration sessions allowed CSAs to assess the product and provide feedback in order

About Google Maps for Work

Google Maps API for Work makes it easy for companies to include fully interactive Google Maps on their public and internal websites. The Maps API helps your customers and employees make the right business and purchasing decisions by visualizing important information on a familiar map.

For more information visit:

<https://www.google.com/work/maps/earth/>

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to make efficient and informed adjustments.

The project was rolled out in several phases, with the first phase virtually mimicking the functionality of the previous solution to gain buy-in and raise user comfort levels. Following this, developers used the Google Maps API to overlay the incident address from MIDAS and integrate detailed service provider information and coverage areas, presented in a simple interface in rich and colourful detail. Once this baseline was established, the team further developed the automated dispatch functionality leveraging the Google Asset tracking API product, enabling our customer service assistants (CSAs) to more efficiently track and manage roadside assistance provider jobs.

The use of different shading layers allows CSAs to quickly see which providers offer the needed services within the right coverage area. They can calculate travel time and distance to the incident with great accuracy, and overlay traffic information to warn service providers en route if they are about to encounter any problems that could impact their arrival time.

Once the call centre has all the information in relation to the incident, these details are fed to our roadside assistance providers on the road, who are equipped with proprietary consoles for viewing the incident details. The Google Maps API tracks the whereabouts of every roadside assistance provider in real-time, so CSAs can update the customer on the providers arrival time.

Results

According to Peck, CSAs are enjoying the ease of the new solution and how simple it makes their job. “The fluid, simple functionality, familiarity, visual nature, easy pan and zoom, and the improved data accuracy all help CSAs to improve customer service – a huge win,” he says. Precision is also important in serving both customers in remote locations, where service providers may be scarce, and in heavily populated areas where one service provider might own the contract for one side of a road and another provider serves the other side. All other company and product names may be trademarks of the respective companies with which they are associated.

Allianz Global Assistance finds Street View in Google Maps helps elevate the level of customer service. While on the phone with customers, through Street View, CSAs can see exactly the surrounding identifications points while the customer is explaining

where they are located, for example, “Yes, sir, I see that you are describing the southern section of the car park.” Street-level details like this are also relayed to the service provider network so they are more informed about the incident and the precise location of the customer.

In the future, the solution may be extended to other service offerings. Customers may be able to press a single button on their phone and utilising GPS, automatically alert the company of their location.

For Peck, the rewards are plentiful. “Business analysts and developers often work behind the scenes and don’t see the results of their efforts. This project has made us realise that we can genuinely make a difference,” says Peck. “But for Allianz Global Assistance the solution with Google Maps API is making a positive difference to CSAs, the business overall, and most importantly to customer satisfaction”.