

Past JETRO Client

Personalized Marketing for Individual Customers



Building One-to-One Relationships with Japanese Consumers

Interview with Mr. Paul Cross, President of Asia Pacific Responsys (Australia)

April, 2013 - With the rise of email, social media and smartphones, the marketing landscape is changing rapidly every day. Companies have to consider the best way to reach their audience using the right channel, at the right time, in the right place.

Responsys is a cross-channel marketing software company that provides innovative new technology that revolutionizes how businesses can engage with their customers. Having already established offices in Europe and Australia, Responsys is now focused on building its presence in Japan. Responsys' **President of Asia-Pacific, Mr. Paul Cross**, sat down with JETRO to discuss the company's expanding business.

MARKETING AS A ONE-TO-ONE RELATIONSHIP: EVERY CUSTOMER IS DIFFERENT

While many marketing companies work with the aim of simply reaching the largest audience possible, the Responsys solution enables marketers to provide the most relevant communications using profile, preference and behavioral data. The result is a highly individualized approach to communicating with consumers across a variety of digital channels including email, social media, mobile, display advertising, and the web.

Responsys works with companies who have regular communication with their customers and are seeking to better engage them. Relationship focused companies are the ones who can really get the most value out of the Responsys Interact solution, Mr. Cross noted.

Responsys works across all industry sectors and particularly with companies in the travel, retail, telecommunication, technology, software, and financial services industries.

For example, a travel company using the Responsys technology can email or SMS a customer throughout their trip, sending updates on their flight information or offering to reserve a hotel or rental car. Retailers can also send alerts to customers when a sold-out item they wanted is back in stock again, as an example. With Responsys technology, “every individual can be communicated with uniquely, because every person is different,” stated Mr. Cross.

OPPORTUNITY IN JAPAN: ABUNDANCE OF DOMESTIC & GLOBAL MARKETERS

Having already expanded to the Australian market, Responsys has developed a highly-trained team in the Pacific region. Entering the Japanese market was a natural progression of that success. “If you’re a global company and you provide global technology, it makes absolute sense that you should be in the Japanese market,” explained Mr. Cross. “It’s a fantastic market for anyone interested in marketing technology or services. It’s big, it’s dynamic, it’s full of smart people, and it’s full of marketers who really care about doing great marketing. They also are very focused on how technology can help them.”

As Mr. Cross observed, Japan’s market includes a wide variety of companies thriving at both the domestic and global levels. Responsys’ products have to be viable for use in any market, no matter the scope. “The domestic market in Japan is very unique in its approach to marketing,” Mr. Cross continued. He stated that Japan has a strong culture, and as a result, how marketing works is unique to the country. “It is important to understand where the digital channels we work with fit into those [localized] marketing strategies, so that we know how to help Japanese marketers to be successful.”

ENTERING THE JAPANESE MARKET

The approach Responsys took when preparing to land in Japan was to talk to other global companies who are successful in the market. Responsys talked to local marketers and stakeholders to understand their views on the Japanese market.

Responsys also spoke in detail with JETRO representatives in both Tokyo and San Francisco, and found it particularly valuable to be able to seek impartial advice from JETRO Tokyo’s technology consultants. Mr. Cross noted that he and his team were able to ask how other companies had managed Japanese market expansion in the past, and judge how to proceed accordingly. “I think that’s one of the most important things JETRO can provide. Answering questions, validating what we’re thinking, and being an impartial advisor,” he commented.

“LOCALIZATION” FOR THE JAPANESE MARKET

Responsys spent time laying a foundation in Japan: finding local partners, meeting marketers, and building their brand. Most recently, the company opened a Japanese version of their website. “It was a big first step in localizing our marketing concept,” Mr. Cross emphasized.



Mr. Paul Cross,
President of Asia Pacific,
Responsys

The solution Responsys is introducing to Japan is the **Responsys Interact Suite**. This software enables marketers to provide the most relevant communications using profile, preference and behavioral data. The result is a highly individualized approach to communicating with consumers across a variety of digital channels including email, social media, mobile, display, advertising, and the web. As a Software and a Service product, all global markets access the same technology and a Japanese language interface is currently in development.

One challenge is adjusting for differences in Japanese mobile platforms. While Japanese consumers are quickly migrating towards smartphones, Japanese cell phone (“keitai”) technology functions on a platform unique to Japan. Changes to the Responsys platform had to be made to allow for Responsys to support *keitai* email, ensuring that they could reach all Japanese consumers.

RESPONSYS’ OUTLOOK IN JAPAN

Responsys’ Japan office is led by Sales Manager Mr. Nozomu Suzuki, and Mr. Cross makes frequent visits to Japan to meet key stakeholders. The Japan office currently has a staff of four people, handling sales, technology, and customer support. They plan to expand as customer demand increases. “[The Responsys Japanese team] ensures that our decisions make sense for the market, and are practical and useful for users,” said Mr. Cross, noting that it is very important for their customers to feel they have a local team they can rely on for high quality support.

“We’re extremely confident in the Japanese market,” Mr. Cross said with enthusiasm. “It has everything that we look for in a great domestic market, and we’re very confident that global Japanese companies will understand this technology and apply it to their offices around the world. It’s up to us to provide the Japanese marketers with the best products, so they can do the best marketing.”

ABOUT RESPONSYS

Responsys is a leading provider of email and cross-channel marketing solutions that enable companies to engage in relationship marketing across the interactive channels customers embracing today - email, mobile, social, the web and display. With Responsys solutions, marketers can create, execute, and automate highly dynamic campaigns and lifecycle marketing programs that are designed to grow revenue, increase marketing efficiency, and strengthen customer loyalty.

Responsys' New School Marketing vision, flexible on-demand application suite, and customer success-focused services aim to deliver high ROI, increased levels of automation and fast time-to-value. Founded in 1998, Responsys is headquartered in San Bruno, California and has offices throughout the world. Responsys serves world-class brands such as: Southwest Airlines, LinkedIn, LEGO, Orbitz, United Airlines, Dollar Thrifty, Qantas, Avis Europe, Deutsche Lufthansa, UnitedHealthcare and American Family Mutual Insurance Company. For more information about Responsys, visit responsys.com

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San Bruno, California, USA

www.responsys.com

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Employees: 1,000

CEO: Dan Springer

Japan Office

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Year founded: 2013

Employees: 4 (as of April 1, 2013)

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**Note: The opinions contained in this article are based on the experiences of the interviewee. They are not representative of all experiences in Japan or working with Japanese companies, and do not reflect the opinions of JETRO.*

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