

BUILDING TRUST THROUGH DIGITISATION

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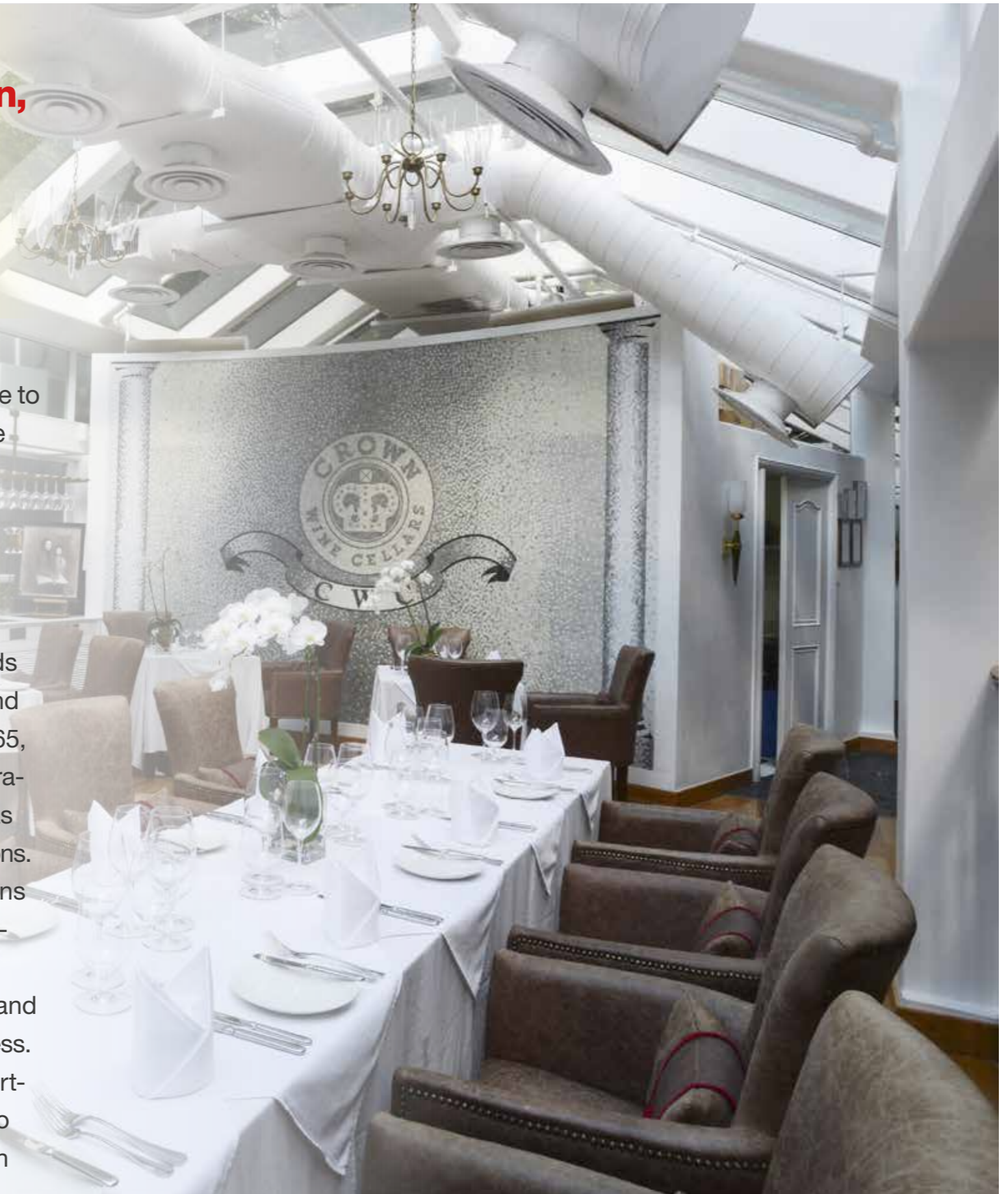
Undergoing a significant digital transformation, three leading executives at Crown Worldwide Group discuss how its diverse portfolio and customer-led approach has seen it remain ahead of the curve

Increased globalisation has led individuals to frequently travel, relocate to other countries and explore worldwide employment opportunities.

Providing significant momentum for the transport and logistics sector, Hong Kong headquartered logistics company Crown Worldwide Group provides exceptional transportation, mobility, relocation, records and information management, logistics and storage services. Founded in Japan in 1965, Crown now has a global footprint with operations in the key markets. This expansion has come organically and from over 50 acquisitions.

Whilst its world mobility business remains its largest, Crown works to support corporate and private customers moving domestically or internationally, designing and implementing tailored solutions in the process.

“We help customers find a home or apartment. We provide cross-cultural training to facilitate integration and productivity when





they get to the other end. We also have support programmes to help partners integrate into a new location as they often aren't in a position to work right away, as well as provide language training services," explains Chief Executive Officer, Ken Madrid.

"We also help them find the right schools for their children if required, as well as source hospitals and physicians. We provide compensation planning analysis to the transferee's corporate office so that they understand the cost of living and tax impact of moving employee from A to B."

Additionally, its relocation segment encompasses a one-stop-shop where Crown packs all household goods for customers and then ships, delivers and installs customer goods. The business even helps customers with visa and immigration requirements.

"We also provide these services for private individuals, which is increasingly becoming a web-driven service," adds Madrid.

Not one to rest on its laurels, the business often has to pay expense accounts for its corporate customers, particularly those moving to countries with complex currency regulations such as China and Brazil.

Setting the highest standards in security, safety and workflow efficiency, its record management capabilities provide storage

and destruction solutions for hard copy and digital files for corporations. With over 45mn cubic feet of storage worldwide, customers can reduce office cost by moving their corporate records from a high-cost office building to a professional information management company.

"A further element in our portfolio is our fine arts logistics business, where we transport and store precious works of art – we even moved the Mona Lisa once. From auction houses to collectors, to galleries and museums, it fits in very closely with a lot of the other activities that we do," adds Madrid.

"We concentrate our third-party logistics services in the Greater China region. We try to deal not with high-volume/low-margin-type goods, but specialise in high value segments such as cosmetics, high fashion and travel retail, all things that require a different level of performance and risk.

"In general, we operate in a logistics

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Ken Madrid, Chief Executive Officer

niche. We handle complex and difficult projects like hotels and workplaces. Recently, we have invested in growing the workplace relocations side of our business and it is growing rapidly. We have also extended to what we called 'workspace' where we are the overall project manager of a workplace project including design, construction and fit out."

Lastly, the company operates a wine storage business in Hong Kong. With storage located 20m underground in World War II ammunitions bunkers, this operation is dedicated to the meticulous handling, storage, long-term maturation and ultimate enjoyment of wine.

CUSTOMER DEMANDS

Providing real-time information and guaranteeing quality assurance to customers, Crown has invested in a systematic digitisation programme to overcome such complexities.

"Customer demands about the seamlessness and the quality of these processes are evolutionary. It continues to change and put pressure on us to invest more in the right types of equipment, technology, facilities etc.,"

observes Madrid.

"We hold advisory board sessions with our customers and talk about where we're both going. It allows us to create a better bond and ensures our services continue to meet our customers' changing needs."

Customers expect instant information - from the location of shipments, to the status of their visas. Crown has therefore overhauled its systems and processes with the customer in mind.

"Such on-demand, personalised access of information, with services such as Netflix and Amazon, have been translated into the corporate world," explains Patrick Kenning, Global Director for Crown Worldwide's Intelligence Hub.

"Digitisation and innovation is helping us differentiate ourselves, add more speed, offer more flexibility and provide a personalised approach through our various business models.

"The corporate customer increasingly expects business-to-business integration, for

Ken Madrid

Chief Executive Officer

Ken Madrid is the CEO for Asia Pacific, the Group CFO and a member of the Executive Board for the Crown Worldwide Group, a private company headquartered in Hong Kong. Madrid is responsible for over 100 operations located throughout Asia, Australia and New Zealand as well as the worldwide financial management of the Group. He is a key driver of the strategic development and overall management of the company. He joined the Crown Worldwide Group in 1991 as CFO and member of the Executive Board. In 1994, he was appointed Executive Vice President and in 2003, CEO of the Asia Pacific region. During Ken's tenure, Crown has expanded from an Asian based regional company to a global leader with offices in over 50 countries.

example. They don't want to come to our website and find information. They want to see it directly in their own HR system."

For private customers, Crown has consequently launched its Online Move Hub, where a portal is provided to enable customers to upload documents and transact the entire end-to-end process of moving house using their phone, tablet or PC.

"Here, we securely exchange documents with customers on a digital platform. We can look at a dynamic timeline about what cus-



tomers need to do and where their shipment is," says Kenning.

"Customers don't want to get home and make a phone call and reach a switchboard to speak to somebody. They want to go on their phone, push a button and see everything that they need.

"Our struggle is always building a personalised solution, linking it with the different data sources that are available and being able to provide this to customers on demand," says Madrid.

"We're not just a logistics company. Information is almost more important than the actual physical movement of

the goods sometimes. The challenge is trying to meet those technical demands.”

BUILDING TRUST

It's the global footprint, married with a digital strategy, that has made Crown truly unique. Whilst customers expect high-quality services, its ultimate aim is to simplify the relocation process for both private and corporate customers.

“The process of relocating is one of the three most stressful life events a human can go through, along with death and divorce. It's a very emotional experience. It's one thing to move a container of televisions. It's another to move somebody's life experiences for them,” reflects Madrid.

“We have had to look at how to build that level of trust with customers and deliver on their expectations, at the same time providing a digital experience to which we have all become accustomed.”

Across its private relocation

and corporate mobility business units, Crown has therefore implemented a number of digital tools to enhance the customer experience.

“Previously, when a customer relocated from home country to host country, we sent out a consultant. An appointment would be arranged, the consultant would visit the property and survey all household items. This required the customer's availability at their residence between working hours to complete an inventory,” explains Kenning.

“We've since launched a virtual consultation service, which is similar to a FaceTime conversation. The customer is using their smart device and enabling the consultant to digitally capture their household goods, offering flexibility by providing after-hours appointments through our regional service centres.”

By fully digitising this process, Crown has reduced carbon emissions and transformed its traditional, paper-led process. With all information captured through video technology, accuracy levels have also risen.

“At the end of the pilot for this initiative, we achieved a 5% increase against industry standards for the



Patrick Kenning Global Director for Crown Worldwide's Intelligence Hub

Patrick Kenning heads the global Intelligence Hub function, which is responsible for challenging the status quo and promoting Crown's innovation culture by encouraging ideation and exploring emerging technology opportunities that enhance the customer experience. Kenning has held several key front-line, customer-oriented roles throughout his 15-year career and has relocated internationally seven times.

Chris Davis-Pipe Group Head of Technology

Chris Davis-Pipe joined Crown in 1997 and is currently Group Vice President of Information Technology for Crown Worldwide. With his global team, he manages all aspects of Crown's information technology, supporting over 5,000 employees in more than 50 countries, across six Crown businesses. He develops and oversees the company's global I.T. strategy, including the implementation of company standards ranging from infrastructure management, security, business continuity and disaster recovery to procurement, deployment and support of Crown's core business applications. Davis-Pipe is currently overseeing a 40-member development team split between Hong Kong and Guangzhou, China, driving innovation in Crown's client-facing solutions and the digital transformation of Crown's line of business applications and back-office.



accuracy of a traditional household goods survey. We have carried out over 7,000 visual consultations to-date," says Kenning.

"There's environmental, accuracy and flexibility benefits, and customers love it because it is innovative and creates a very exciting dynamic."

"We're seeing this grow month-on-month as customers appreciate the convenience of this new technology driven process. It's an exciting part of our journey when we talk about the digitalisation of the relocation and mobility business," supports Madrid.

Furthermore, the company has

adopted a similar approach within its packing process. By photographing items to guarantee precision, a multi-language electronic inventory and the use of barcoding guarantees complete traceability.

"It's a really important and exciting proposition to be able to digitally capture everything about a relocation and then be able to follow up on any exception and feed that back to operations on the other side of the world so that we can identify where issues might have arisen

and allows us to create training exercises," says Madrid.

DATA DRIVE

Leveraging Microsoft Office 365 and associated tools to drive collaboration and communication, the company continually looks at ongoing trends across its operations, extending these benefits out to customers.

"We have some challenges around analytics in terms of data capture and ensuring we've got all the right data points collected along the journey," explains Chris

Davis-Pipe, Group Head of Technology.

"Part of our digitisation journey is to improve that. We utilise two reporting tools to provide data visualisation. QlikView is our dashboard solution, and we use SAP's BusinessObjects for reporting."

"Internally, we use predictive technology to forecast our private business and our web traffic, for example," adds Madrid.

"We can use machine learning to predict what percentage of web lead inquiries turn into booked business and this allows us to forward plan our utilisation and business revenues. The



other side is how our corporate users use it.”

Kenning adds: “We capture a lot of data with respect to our corporate customers as a part of our proposition. We feed back a lot on service delivery and demographic trends. Our clients typically have a selection of assignment policies within their mobility programme. We'll regularly advise and inform them of the trends that are happening within those policies. This can help them with some of their talent and diversity goals whilst keeping their business partners aligned on the activities of their mobility programme.

“We look at gender, age, family size, etc. and trend some of the information in terms of what geographies they're going into and map that against assignment duration, any terminations, and repatriation trends.

“A really exciting topic is return on investment mobility,” he continues. “Helping our mobility partners to share back to their stakeholders the measured value that the investment in an individual assignment or the mobility programme actually gives back to the individual and/or the business. It's something that we're actively working on and we're fueling it with predictive analytics given the increasingly available tools and advancements in this space.”

Additionally, within its information management unit, the business has adopted a

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—
Ken Madrid, Chief Executive Officer





number of programmes to further track information.

“Our data management systems allow customers to enter keywords that will link to indexed boxes or media and identify information storage where those keywords may exist. We’re able to then deliver those corporate memories back to an authorised customer and say, ‘these files or tapes are ones that happen to contain those keywords’. We keep track of who we’ve delivered them to and when we will get them back,” says Madrid.

“We also have a large programme where data can be scanned, digitised using optical character recognition technologies and indexed for keywords. We can also redact data digitally to provide information, however customers might need it. It’s exciting, being able to connect back with customers and have total linkage as we go through the information journey.”

UNLOCKING FURTHER VALUE

Taking its digitisation process one step further, Crown has placed significant investment in robotic process automation (RPA), and honed initial pilots within its financial services activities.

With over 10 processes running through its expense claim administration, including validation, invoice extraction, and file setups, the company has brought in a number of partners to guarantee best-in-class.

“We used a particular vendor for robotics and trained three of our staff, accrediting those individuals with a certification of RPA so that they can now build and maintain the robots themselves,” explains Kenning.

“It speaks to the training and development element, but also helps to cancel out some of that fear that’s always evoked with new technologies coming in, turning our people into robots, etc.”

Thoroughly enriching the roles of its people, Crown Worldwide Group will continue to unlock further opportunities to transform the business. Situated in over 50 countries, all of its segments encompass different characteristics, delivering a unique edge to its overall business model.

“In the mobility business, we see that information is a much bigger



part of the experience than ever before. We’re doing this both internally and externally with customers and seeing more investment on our front. It links us with customers in a stronger way, especially when we are integrating with their HR platforms,” concludes Madrid.

“On the records side, we will con-

tinue to push more into digitalisation. From integrating with the client’s records management system, to being able to provide digitalisation of records and performing complex transactions on those documents, storing or delivering them, we are meeting expectations that have never been there before.” ■

