



The Future of Outbound Dialling

What lies ahead for successful telemarketing?

Introduction	3
New dialling technology: the Nixxis Outbound Concept	5
General features	5
The Campaign & Activity concept	5
Multi-campaign allocation: outbound blending	6
Multi-wave activities	6
Profiling & database segmentation	7
Maximum abandoned call rate control	7
Black List management	8
Call-back rules	8
Full media inbound & outbound blending	9
Outbound activity planning.....	9
Call file management	11
The Future of Dialling	18
References.....	19
Nixxis Locations	20

Introduction

Even with the rise in popularity of Automated Digital Marketing based on advanced “SEO” (Search Engine Optimisation) and “SEM” (Search Engine Marketing) techniques, telemarketing and telesales are still considered by many as the most efficient ways to sell or rent a product or a service.

Over the years specialised call centres have tried to optimise their outbound dialling campaign operations. One of the key boosters of outbound campaign performance was the introduction of the **predictive dialler**. This dialler is based on advanced mathematical algorithms that attempts to limit agent-waiting time between two calls to the minimum.

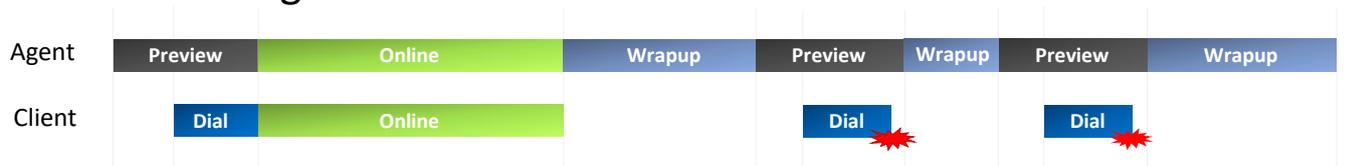
Like any powerful medication, and even though these diallers optimise agent performance, they can have notable side effects:

- In order to minimise the impact on dialler performance, they are **limited in the number of campaigns** that can be run in parallel (a few or sometimes even only one).
- Call centre agents can only work on a **single outbound campaign** at a time. If they need to work on another campaign, they frequently need to re-log to the correct campaign.
- The **End of call file** paradigm: At the end of a campaign, it becomes very difficult to address the last part of the database; the campaign becomes slow and global campaign productivity collapses.
- **Call file burning**: Diallers and call files are difficult to administer and many records are “burned” by the dialler; resulting in these records never being passed on to an agent.
- **Extreme abandoned call rates**: Many diallers do not check on maximum abandoned call rate, or check them when it is too late. Most countries have applied legal limits to those rates in order to limit “call-spam” as well as for “consumer protection”.
- **Call file segmentation/customer profiling** is not possible. One needs to split the campaign into multiple campaigns; each with its own call file to make file segmentation / customer profiling possible.
- **Small call files result in poor performance**: Diallers use mathematical algorithms that only provide accurate results when using “big call files” (several hundreds of numbers). In addition, enough agents (more than twenty) must be linked to campaigns and hundreds of calls must be made before they can work properly.
- **Impossible to work with multiple “black lists”**: A black list is a database containing phone numbers of people that do not want to be contacted via general outbound dialling. One is definitely not enough. The legal list is of course necessary, but what about those “bad payers” and those who are existing customers.
- **Manage multi - step campaigns**: In these campaigns, the outcome of the first step defines the next step in the communication approach. Simple systems cannot implement this and the workaround consists of implementing multiple campaign databases, and performing important database management manipulations.
- Multi-step, including **inbound steps** i.e. when customers are calling you before you are calling them, are difficult if not impossible to implement.

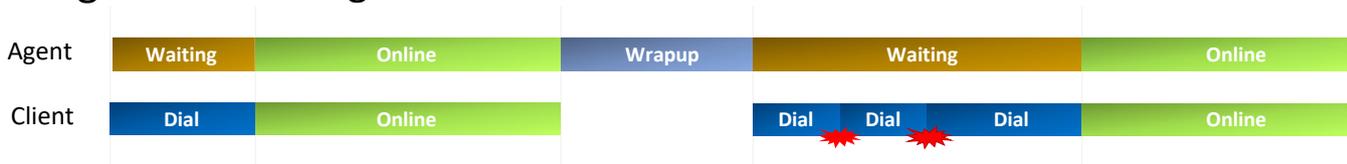
These side effects result in badly managed outbound campaigns and countless customer complaints; leading to a bad image for outbound telemarketing/telesales activities. This has forced many governments to implement directives in order to control outbound activities.

Today, progressively more countries are turning those directives into laws similar to the “Telephone Consumer Protection Act” (or “TCPA”) of 1991 in the United States of America.

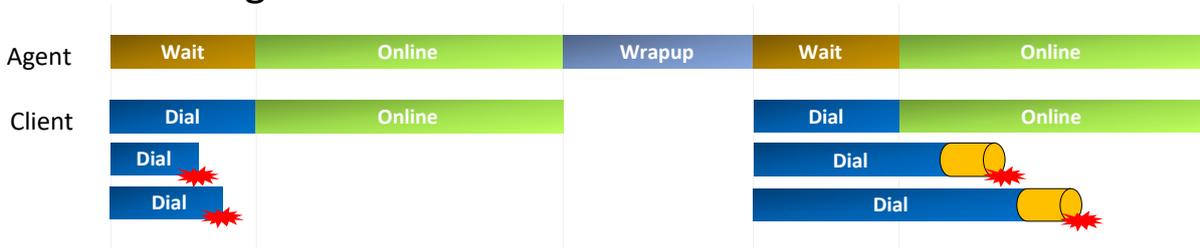
Preview dialing



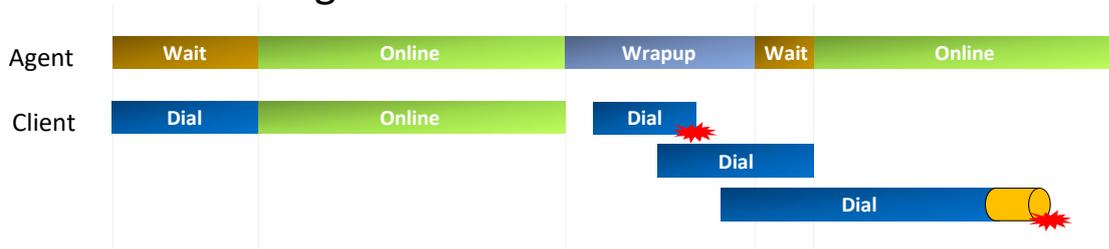
Progressive dialing



Power dialing



Predictive dialing



Predictive diallers will boost your performance, but can you manage the side effects?

: The call is not answered successfully.

: The call is answered successfully, but no agent is available to speak to the customer so the customer hangs up and the call is abandoned.

New dialling technology: the Nixxis Outbound Concept

In our search to find a solution to the above dialling side effects, Nixxis has implemented a number of new features with the following main goals:

- *Improving agent performance.*
- *Reducing campaign costs.*
- *Getting more positive results out of the same amount of records.*
- *Be prepared for new legislation and government directives.*

This section will explain the different features and functionalities that have been added to the dialler. These features are directly related to the above goals and provide solutions to the list of inconveniences mentioned above.

General features

The Nixxis dialler can have an unlimited number of campaigns that are active at the same time. The dialler has a complete set of dialling modes:

- **Preview Dialling:** View the customer record before dialling.
- **Progressive Dialling:** Dial the next customer as soon as an agent becomes available.
- **Power Dialling:** Dial on a maximum number of lines to achieve no wait time when the agent becomes available.
- **Restricted Power Dialling:** Power dialling, but with quality control on the maximum call abandoned rate.
- **Predictive Dialling:** An advanced algorithm predicts when an agent will become available, when the dialler needs to start dialling, and how many lines are required in order to minimise the time between two calls as much as possible.
- **Reversed IVR:** Bundling an IVR with the dialler allowing the user to broadcast messages without agent intervention (also called "Unattended" mode).
- **Call-backs only:** Limiting the dialler to dial only call-backs that are still in the system, no other records are dialled.
- **Search Mode:** The agent performs a search on the client database for the record to be dialled.
- **Workflow Mode:** This mode allows the workflow engine to perform the calls and implement a complex business logic that allows multiple checks and actions to be made (more information on Nixxis workflow engine in our dedicated Reference note).

Dialling modes can be changed without agents having to log out of the system and administrators or supervisors can add or remove agents from the different teams that work on certain campaigns. The changes are immediate and the next calls are distributed according to the modified settings.

The Campaign & Activity concept

At Nixxis, instead of viewing a campaign as a quick and temporary transaction to be done with a customer, we prefer to see it as a **global customer interaction umbrella** comprising a number of steps that must be taken in order to reach **campaign objectives**. If your objective is to have *250 customers contacts* and *160 appointments* by the end of the day, these clear and concise campaign objectives will define where and through which path your campaign needs to go.

The different steps that are taken in a campaign in order to reach the specified objectives are called **activities**. Each activity has its own setup and parameters and can be either an inbound or an outbound activity run via a single, or different media channels (phone, email, chat, SMS, Fax, snail mail Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube, Instagram, etc...).

All activities that are defined in the framework of a campaign will be saved in the same **global campaign database**.

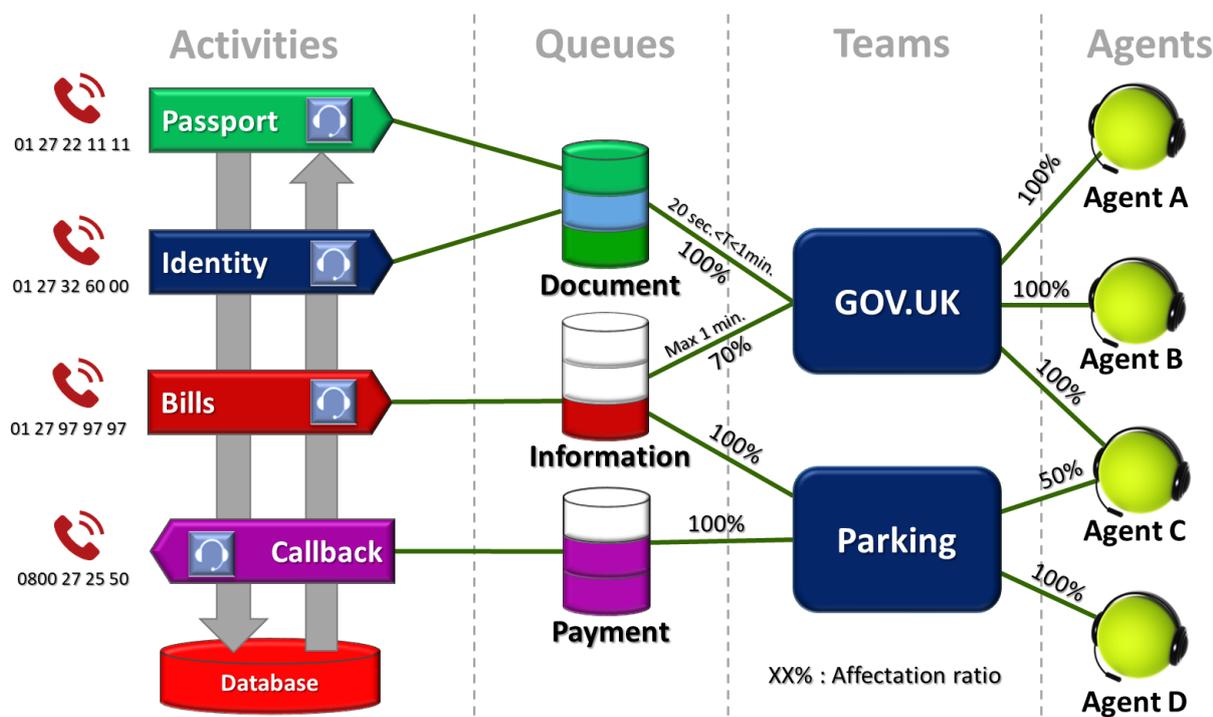
In fact, every campaign within Nixxis Contact Suite has its own database.

Results emerging from the various interactions across different activities of the same campaign are **simply and immediately consolidated** in the global campaign database. The result of each activity can influence the next step that will be taken in the global customer approach. The **call qualification or status** (call outcome) given by the agent, or automatically by the script for example,

can define the next step that will follow in the specific customer interaction (e.g. stop calling that customer record; call the record again in the same activity or in another activity, etc...).

Furthermore, the powerful **embedded workflow engine** can perform various complex tasks (conditional branching, parameter adjustment, etc...) in order to get to the necessary objectives.

Overall, the objective is to transform your **own business logic** into small organised and segmented steps allowing the system to perform in the **most efficient way**.



The Activities are "feeding" the database as the campaign performs along the way.

Multi-campaign allocation: outbound blending

Everybody understands that as you are multiplying campaigns and activities, you will find a number of smaller "jobs" to be executed by people of varying expertise in order to reach the different campaign objectives.

In order to do this in an efficient way, the Nixxis dialler allows agents to work on more than one campaign and on more than one activity at a time. This is known as **outbound blending**.

Using team allocation, the Supervisor(s) or Administrator(s) will then decide on which activities (and as a result of which campaigns) the agents will work.

Due to statistical distribution, blending your agents on multiple smaller outbound activities will highly **improve their productivity and efficiency** by increasing the amount of positive results out of the same amount of records. Furthermore, this way of working will **improve agent motivation and concentration** by providing them with varied tasks instead of the same tedious campaign for hours.

Multi-wave activities

Next to Activities that will feed the common shared database, the different activities defined in a campaign can also **influence each other**. Each call qualification or status (call outcome) can indeed branch to an "activity change". This activity change will define through which activity the next customer approach will be executed. A call qualification or status can also specify that a specific record must no longer be dialled, and that is not solely due to "black listing". For example, when a prospect you were planning to

call contacts the call centre via an inbound number, you do not want the prospect to be called again as this will appear unprofessional on your part.

Profiling & database segmentation

The powerful combination of **activity filters** and **activity opening hours** allows you to perform **easy profiling** and **database segmentation** within a campaign. You can define different activities on the same database, but each of these will only take certain records into account. The different activities can be linked to **different agent teams**, each with their own agent profile.

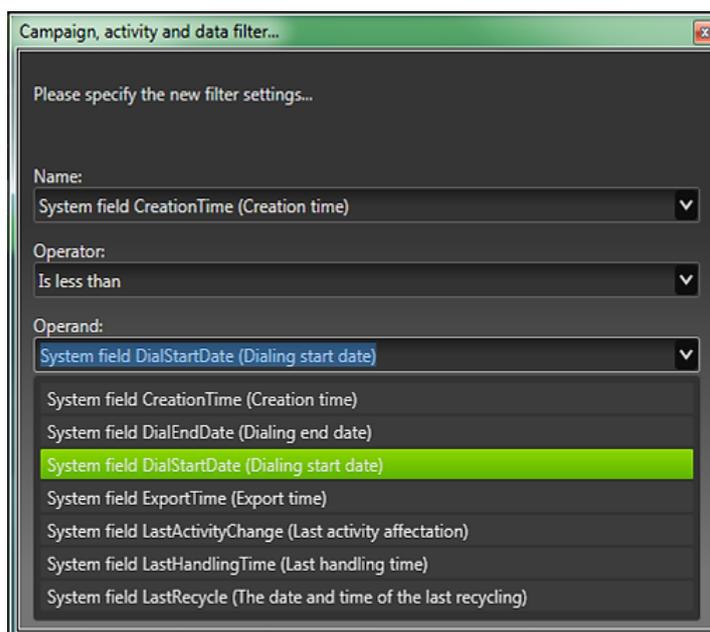
This will enable you to stop calling the wrong customer at the wrong time and allow you to start doing intelligent customer profiling and database segmentation with ease.

Usage of Filters

On each activity (“sub-campaign”), specific filters can be implemented. These will allow **selecting** the “to be dialled” records from the common database.

We can actually distinguish **system parameter filters** (e.g. last dialling status, last agent that called the record, last call qualification or status...) and **database filters**. The database filters work on all the defined **user fields specified** during campaign setup, or added to the database along the way.

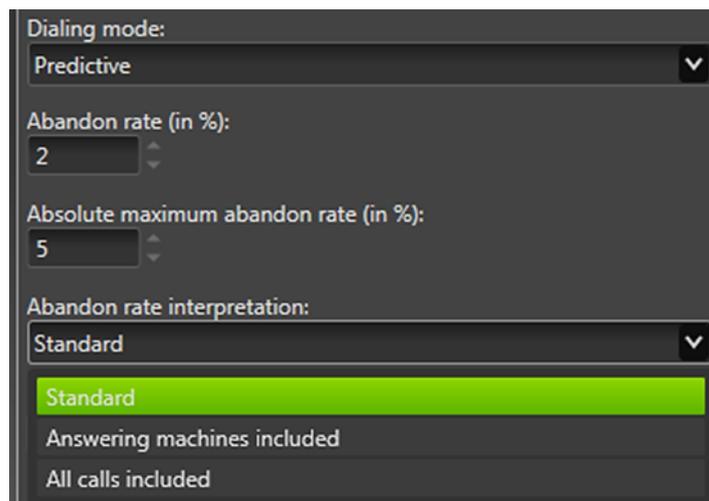
Different filters can be linked together using **logical operators**. These filters can also be used to have different agents or teams working on different segments of the database, without the need to split the database over multiple campaigns and in doing so, avoid fragmenting the information further.



Filters allow selecting only the part of the database that you want that specific activity to work on.

Maximum abandoned call rate control

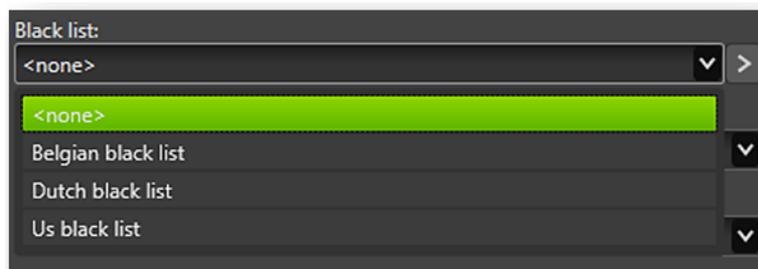
The Nixxis dialler aligns with the European and US based directives on outbound dialling. For restricted power and predictive dialling, the **maximum abandoned call rate** can be defined. As soon as the dialler might exceed the maximum abandoned rate, it will slow down automatically. The maximum abandoned rate can be set activity per activity and can be adjusted during production. The dialler will immediately adapt to the new figures.



Nixxis Predictive dialler has both the target & maximum abandon rate parameters that can be specified.

Black List management

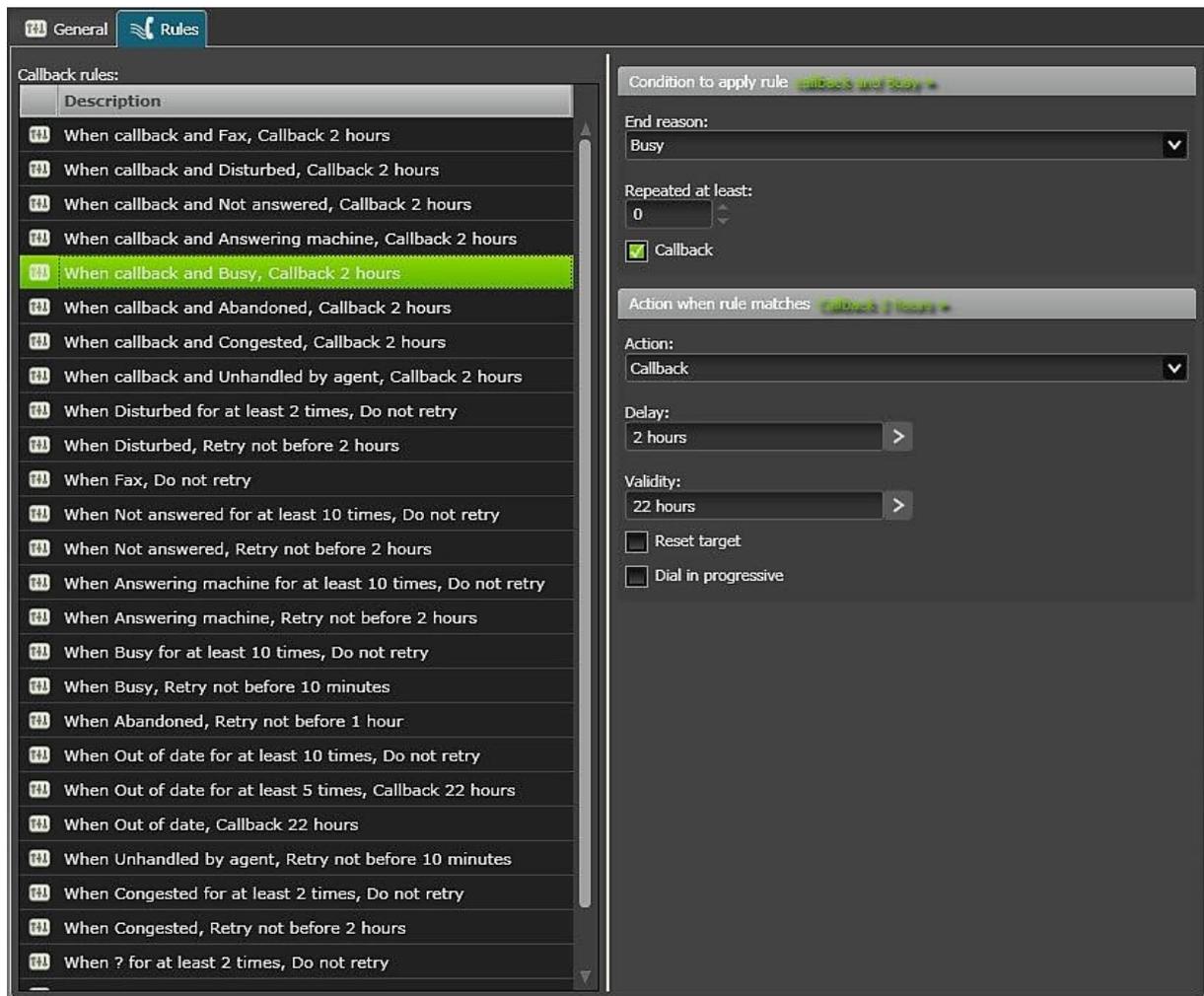
Several black list categories can be maintained on the Nixxis dialler. Black lists across all campaigns or for **specific campaigns** can be defined. If a phone number is listed on a selected black list, the record will not be dialled and will be qualified as “black listed”.



Multiple black lists based on multiple legislation need to be managed in parallel and automatically.

Call-back rules

Extensive and unlimited sets of call back rules can be defined. A call back rule-set will define **how the dialler should act** for the next dial attempt, depending on the result of the previous tentative dial. Rules can be based on the tentative result (e.g. the dialler can act differently if the previous attempt was a “no answer” or when it was “busy”) and on the number of already executed trials. Every activity can have its own set of call back rules. This ensures **full flexibility** in the way the dialler performs.



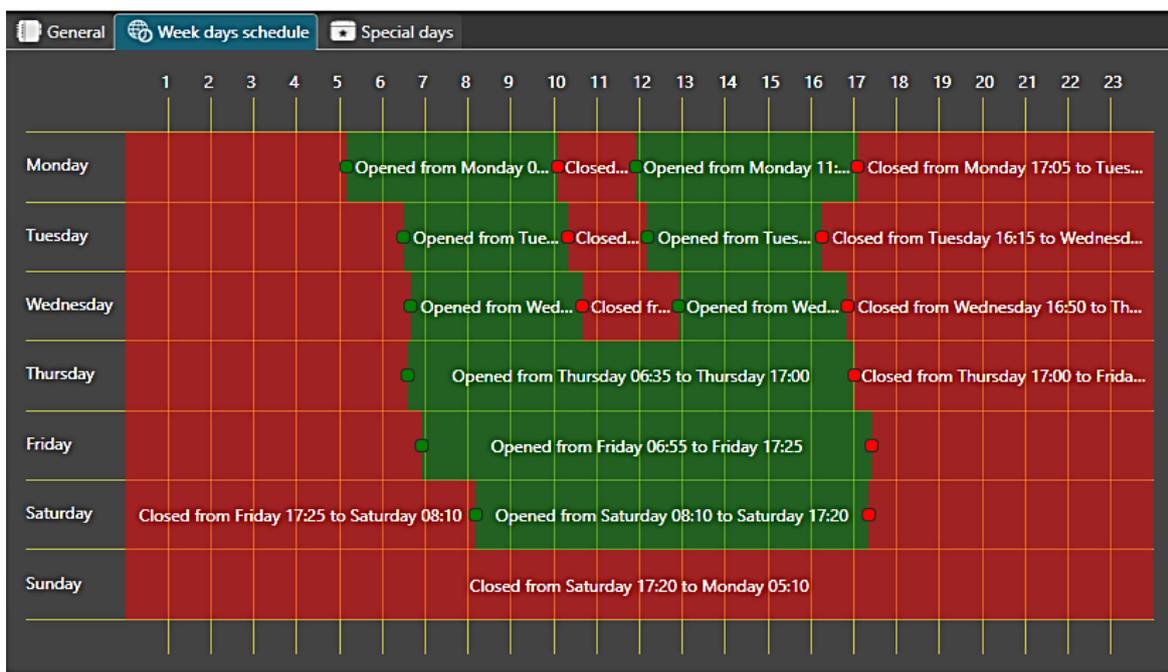
An extensive set of Call-back rules will ensure the dialler performs exactly as expected for the activity considered.

Full media inbound & outbound blending

In order to boost agent productivity even further (and further to the explained outbound blending), agents can be blended on **various inbound activities** and **different media channels**. NCS allows you to define how many simultaneous sessions an agent can handle per media channel.

Outbound activity planning

Further to traditional opening hours for inbound campaigns or activities, you can also define **opening hours or planning for outbound activities**. This will prevent the dialler to dial records outside of the selected timeframe.



Have each outbound activity running at a time when it makes most sense for you and when reachability is maximal.

You can even specify **dialing mode changes** (from predictive to progressive) based on the planning.

Call file management

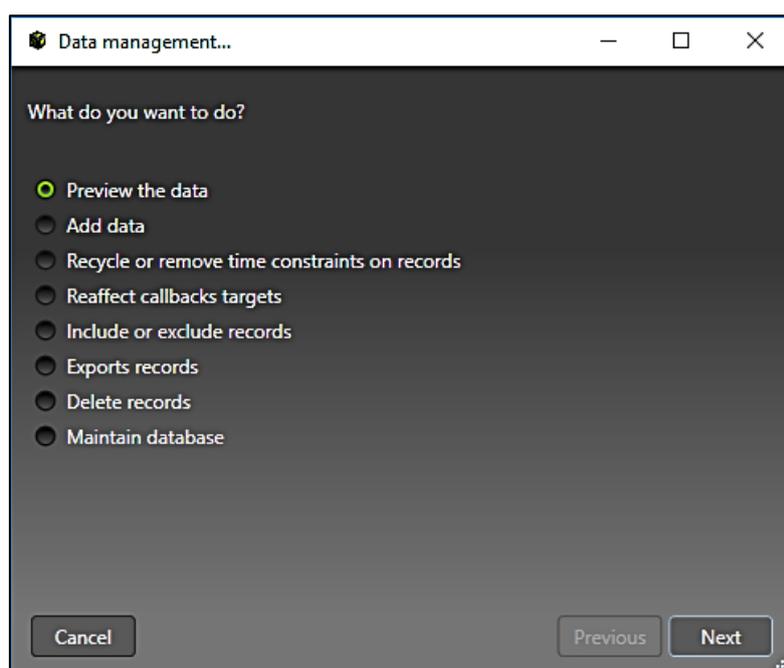
A complete set of **call file management features** are made available on campaign level. They allow you to:

- view customer data / files
- add / import files
- to recycle files
- reassign files to different agents
- exclude / include files
- to export files
- to delete files
- assign customer files to a specific activity
- modify the maximum number of record attempts by record.
- And many more...

Also, agent details for personal call-backs can be changed using this extensive call file management tool. One can easily link records to a certain activity and change the maximum number of attempts on a record per record basis.

The data management assistant

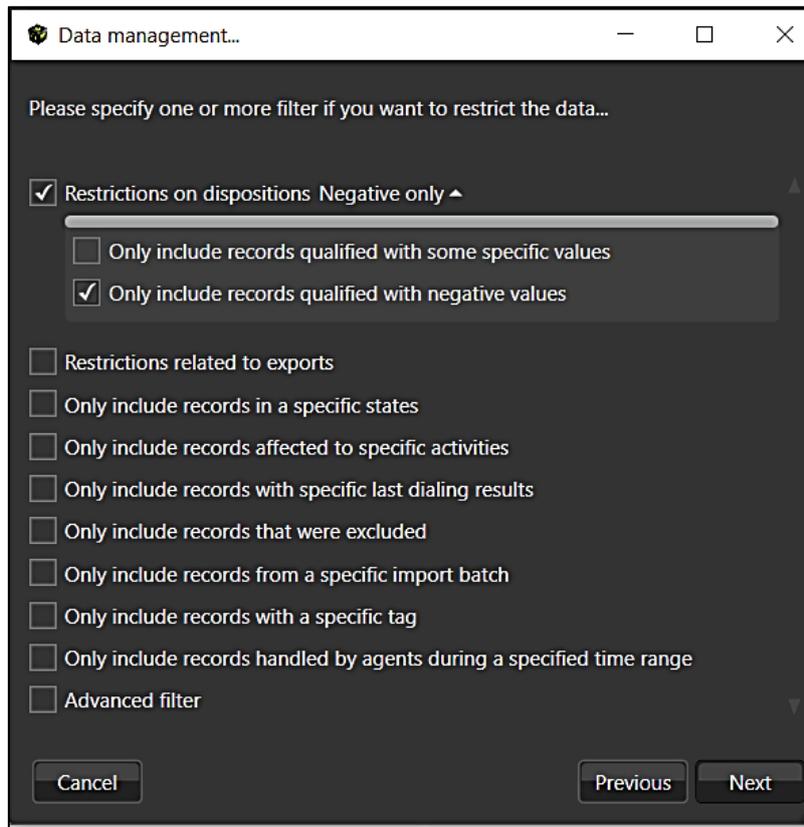
When you decide to work on databases, the system provides you with an extremely advanced database management wizard allowing non-technical staff to perform complex tasks on databases and customer records.



Integrated assistant allows performing complex operations on data in a secured and controlled way.

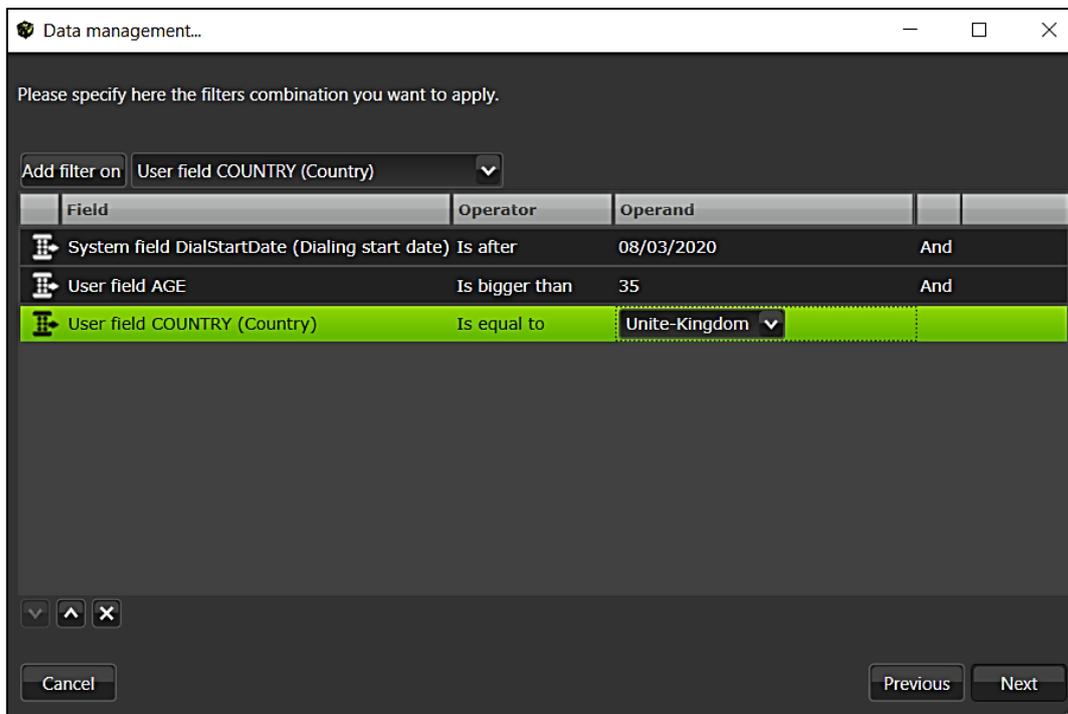
Action filters

Any actions that are taken on the database can be limited by the use of filters that will define the segments of the database that will be affected by this action.



The filters can be combined with each other in order to concern only the selected records from the database.

The advanced filters allow you to build complex expressions taking into account conditions that can be combined in "And" or "Or", not only on system fields but also on user fields of the database.



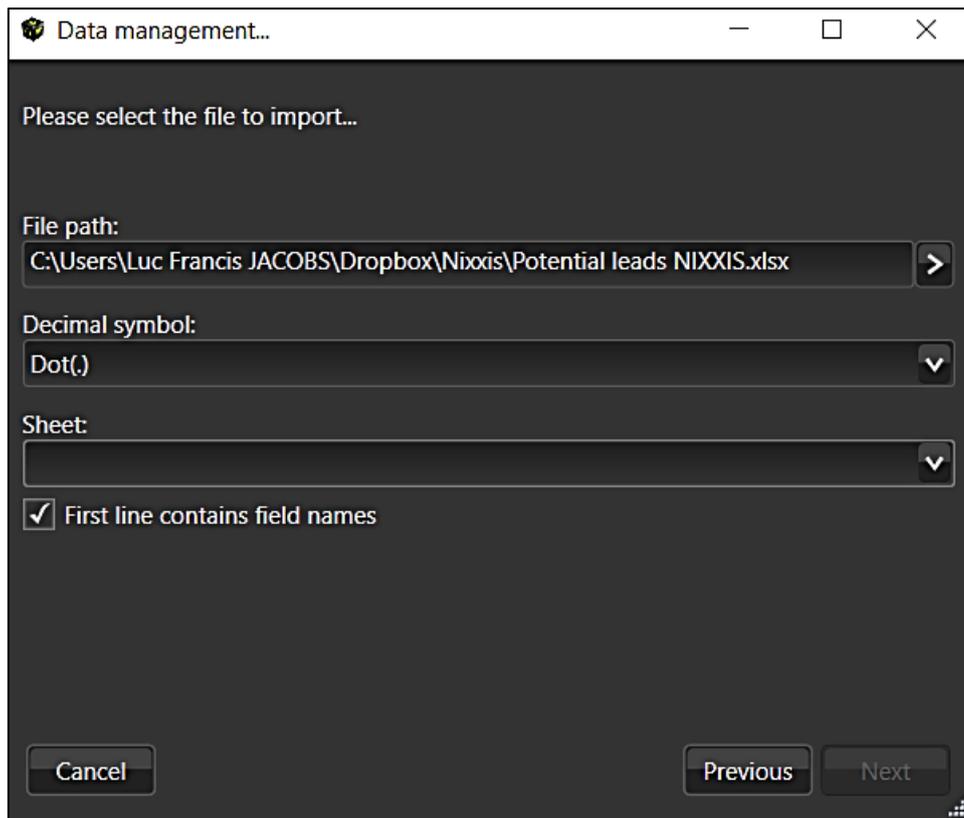
Advanced filters allow you to define complex logical expressions.

It is therefore very easy to follow the guidance of the wizard, not only to add records to production but also to reassign reminders, to include or exclude records, or even to recycle or remove time constraints. .

Importing files

Besides the automatic injection of records into the database or synchronization with your CRM or ERP, it is also possible to manually add records to the system database using the "data import" wizard.

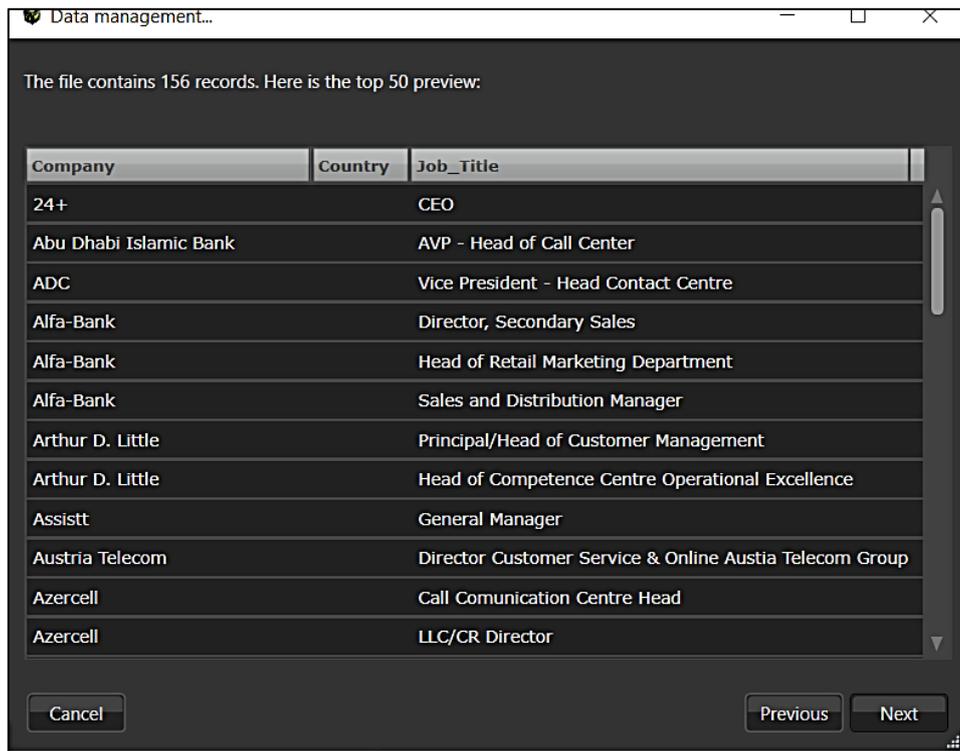
The file format that you can use is of type .xls or .csv depending on your choices. You just have to specify the location of this file.



First screen of the wizard for "adding data".

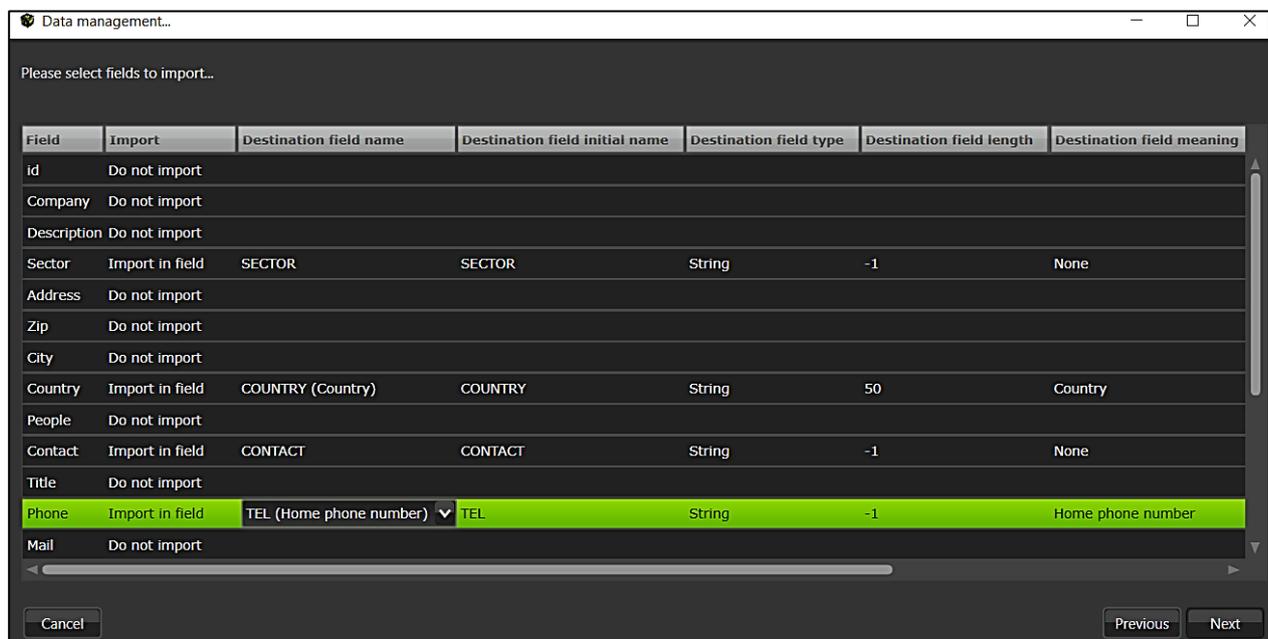
If you indicate that the first line contains the name of the fields, the system will automatically assign this line to all the fields it finds in the imported file.

You then get a first screen where you can view the first 50 lines of data that will be imported into the database to make sure that this is the right file.



You can view the first 50 lines of the file to import.

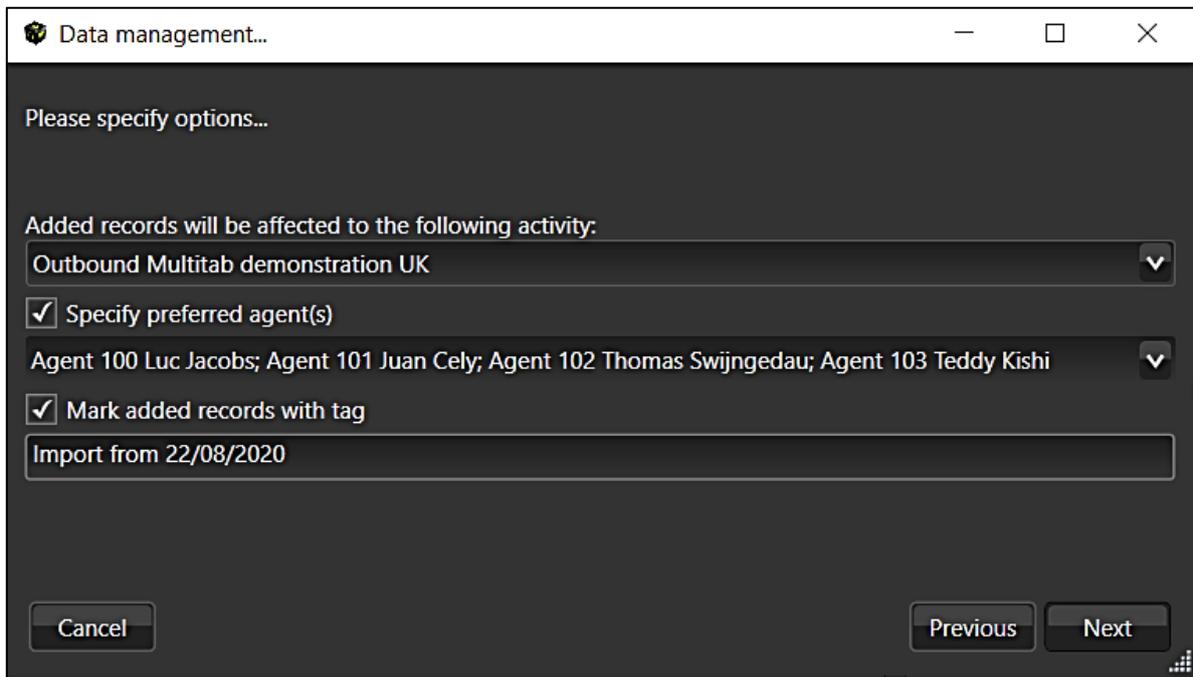
Then, you can perform a mapping of the fields to import with the existing fields in order to define what goes where and in what format. You can decide not to import, to import into an existing field, or to create a new field with the same or a different name that you choose.



Field mapping allows you to create new fields at the same time.

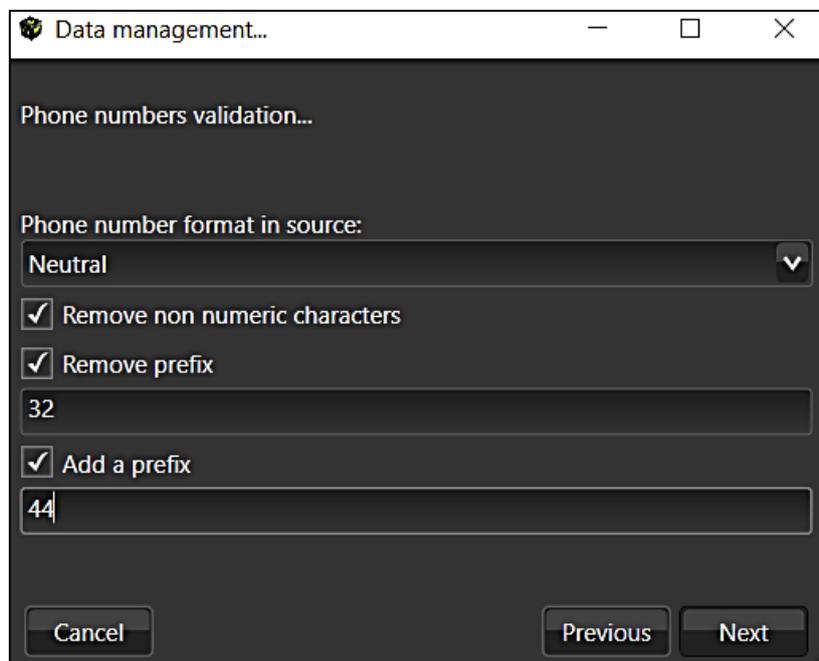
It is then possible in the next screen to already assign the imported files to a specific activity and also the agents who can process these interactions.

A "tag" or a specific label can then be associated with this import in order to be able to quickly isolate the imported records and possibly use them for other actions.



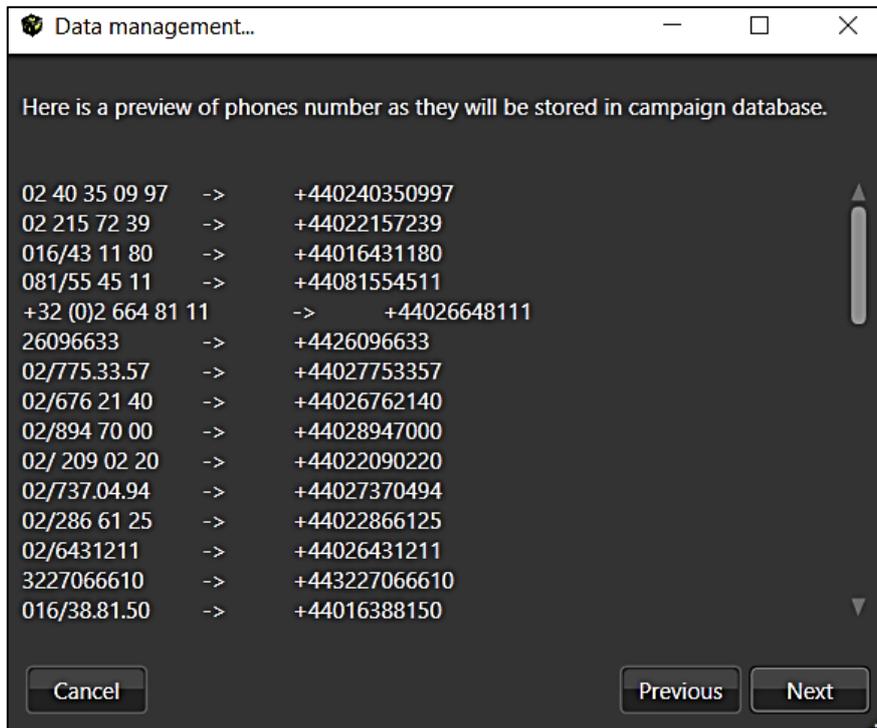
The records can be added to a specific activity, associated with certain agents or be tagged.

If the telephone number format must be changed for operational reasons or for the operation of the telecom part (see the operator's wishes), you can also perform group operations on them.



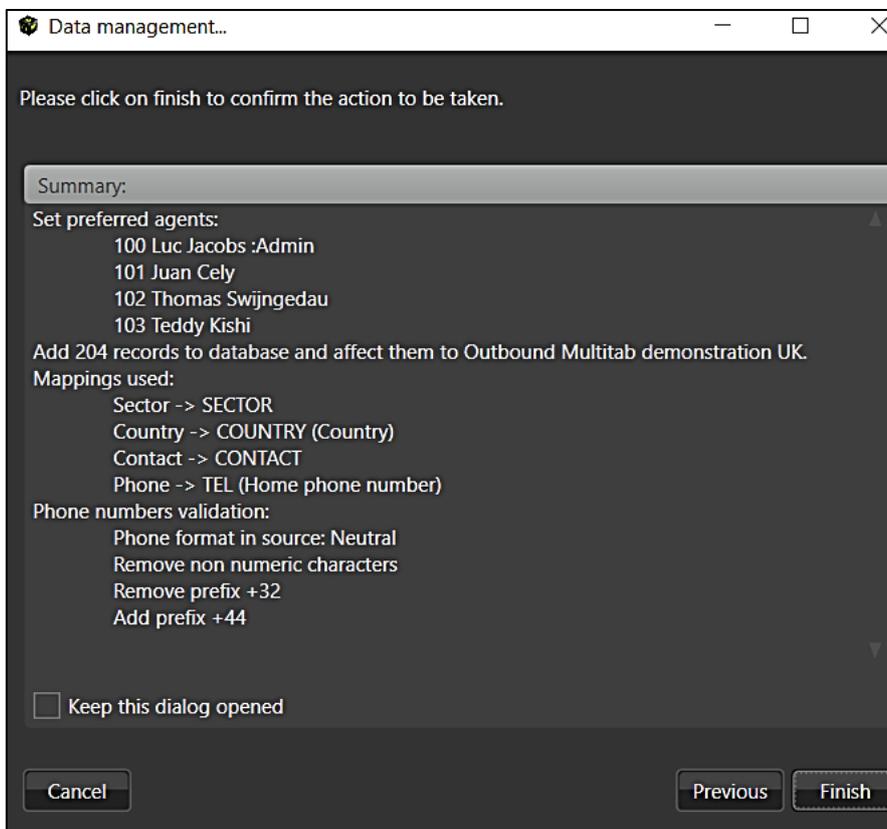
Group actions can be defined on phone numbers.

The system then indicates to you in a specific screen the actions it will take on the telephone numbers in order to allow you to validate it or not. At any time, it is also possible to click on "Previous" to correct each of the actions from the beginning.



Actions on the phone numbers are shown to you on the screen.

Finally, the system will indicate to you in a summary screen, what it will perform as actions on the records to be imported and here too, you can, using the "Previous" button, correct each of these actions in order to achieve the desired result.



Summary of the actions that the system will take in order to achieve a perfect result.

Any action on the data is immediately taken into account by the dialer and makes it possible to influence the production situation in real time.



Supervisors have a real-time view of the situation of the production bases.

Supervisors have real-time monitoring tables to monitor not only the state of production but also the situation of call files. This will allow them to give the alert quickly enough when the daily records start to run out.

The Future of Dialling

The proposed and future list of additional features offered by the Nixxis dialler will always focus on agent and campaign performance whilst respecting the new regulations and governmental directives. Agent performance is boosted with **intelligent outbound blending** and campaign performance is boosted using **activities, filters, activity opening hours and agent/team allocation per activity**.

This way of segmenting and profiling records will become even more important in the future.

Legal restrictions will put further limitations on outbound activities. Abandon rate controls and black list restrictions will limit the dialling speed of future diallers. It will become more and more important to get **equal, or even better results with smaller and ever more expensive call files**.

Profiling and **segmenting** call files will be crucial to optimise campaign performance whilst staying in line with present and future legislation.

Diallers will need to adapt the dialling strategy according to campaign objectives and **add or remove agents automatically** according to the set objectives.

Furthermore, the dialler will need to analyse call results, agent productivity and segment the database based on that analysis. Agents will be profiled and work on comparable prospect profiles. The dialler will **adapt its strategy automatically** as the campaign goes on.

Those steps are already possible in today's version of the Nixxis dialler by using **our workflow engine** in an intelligent way instead of having it entered manually by a supervisor or administrator of the system. A lot of time and campaign performance can be gained by automating that work. As the dialler will adapt its behaviour continuously, the **gain on campaign performance will increase drastically**.

In the near future, **voice analysis** will allow for the detection of the **emotional sentiment** of the prospects we are dialling. Based on these emotional details, the dialler will be able to **select agents** who know how to best manage the emotional behaviours of the various dialled persons.

At Nixxis, **quality in the call centre world** is the philosophy behind everything we do, whether it be a script development or a technical implementation. We hope it will be the same for you.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any comments regarding this document. We can be reached via mail at info@nixxis.com.

We wish you a successful and productive customer contact centre future.

References



Nixxis Locations



Corporate Headquarters

54 Avenue Louise
B-1050 Brussels

Belgium	+32 2 3070000	Italy	+39 06 94803617
Argentina	+54 11 53528223	Japan	+81 3 45209652
Australia	+61 261 452465	Mexico	+52 55 36877100
Austria	+43 720 884020	Morocco	+212 660 297 945
Bahrain	+973 16198075	Poland	+48 22 3072165
Brazil	+55 61 37172952	Portugal	+351 30 8803633
Bulgaria	+359 2 4925088	Romania	+40 316 300642
Canada	+1 613 6999163	South Africa	+27 11 302 1200
Chile	+56 3 5332619	Spain	+34 91 1238668
Denmark	+45 89881909	Sweden	+46 8 52500440
Finland	+358 9 42450470	Switzerland	+41 31 5280514
France	+33 1 76431067	The Netherlands	+31 33 763 03 03
Germany	+49 30770191489	United Kingdom	+44 203 6086734
Greece	+30 21 11983751	United States	+1 202 3791191
Hong Kong	+852 58084194	Vietnam	+84 4 73014512
Israel	+972 2 3721678		

www.nixxis.com
sales@nixxis.com