

Ben Sherman

Case Study

Eurostop systems lead to optimised staffing levels in store and better customer service for customers

Ben Sherman expands retail operations with support from Eurostop

Ben Sherman started making shirts in the 1960s from a small factory in Brighton. In 1963 he founded the Ben Sherman brand. Although best known for its shirts, Ben Sherman today presents a complete lifestyle product offering and has a presence in over 35 international markets.

Continued Expansion

Having been acquired by US Oxford Industries in 2004, the brand has some ambitious retail expansion plans. The global stand-alone store portfolio is fourteen stores. Chief Executive Miles Gray commented, "We've the appetite to be on the same retail level as Calvin Klein and Ralph Lauren in the next five years."

Proven Solution

To support these plans in the UK Ben Sherman required a new Retail Management and EPOS system. Eurostop was selected to provide the crucial systems that would enable the company to closely manage its growth.

Eurostop e-rmis retail management system was installed at head office in November 2003 and its e-pos till systems has been rolled out to the concessions as they have opened. All locations are linked by ADSL broadband enabling cost effective, real time communication and sharing of data between the concessions and head office.

Easy to use

The Group IT Director at the time had previous experience of the Eurostop systems; "When the company decided to look for a new supplier, Eurostop was the natural replacement. The solution was a proven system and Windows based, making it easy for staff to use and keeping training costs to a minimum."

One of the key reasons for selecting Eurostop was also its proven ability and fast implementation time "Given the customisation that we required, Eurostop's reaction time to the project was very impressive - much faster than any of its competitors. We have been very pleased with the tight deadlines that Eurostop has adhered to and their flexibility in assisting us to open six shops across the UK in as many weeks."

Flexible Reporting

The Eurostop system comes with its own report writer which has enabled Ben Sherman to design its reports so that data is viewed in a way that suits the company. They are now able to analyse sales, margins, stock turnaround and stock cover on its wide range of stock. At a glance they are able to see what is selling through and what colours and sizes are most popular.



Tailored staffing levels

The company also uses Eurostop's customer counting solutions, to measure footfall across its stores. Data from the footfall counter is linked to e-rmis at head office. Using the e-cubes Business Intelligence module, specifically designed for merchandisers, Ben Sherman analyses the data to monitor sales against volumes of customers and staff working on the shop floor.

Using the data has enabled Ben Sherman to ensure that staffing levels are adjusted to meet peak times, providing a more efficient service to customers. Similarly the company has been able to improve operating efficiencies by reducing the number of staff at quieter times.

Excellent Customer Service

Ben Sherman is well known for being a truly British brand and as such the company, in the UK, makes every effort to support other British businesses. This is another plus point for Eurostop. According to Ben Sherman; "Eurostop is small enough to care about its customers and large enough to deliver a robust solution. The people there are what really makes the difference and we have access to the principle directors."

The products are continually evolving and Eurostop works with its customers to ensure that pertinent functionality is included in its development schedule including specific features for retailers with multiple concessions.

When asked to summarise the Group IT Director at Ben Sherman said, "The Eurostop system works well and is good value for money. But what makes the company stand out from the crowd is its customer service. I can go home at night and at the weekend knowing that if there is a problem it will be dealt with timely and efficiency. It gives me great peace of mind to know that Eurostop is on the case!"



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Group IT Director

Leading Labels

Case Study

Out-of-town, multi brand fashion retailer reaps benefits from investment in retail system across its 23 stores in the UK and Ireland

Leading Labels is one of the largest out-of-town, multi brand fashion retailers in the UK and Ireland, with over 20 well established outlets and over 250 dedicated employees. Its large modern stores range in size from 5000 to 11000 sq ft, selling a big selection of top quality brands in ladies' and men's clothing at 'real' value prices.

Overseeing such a wide range of stock efficiently is vital to the success of the company's business operations. Unlike many store groups with a centralised warehouse and stock system, stock is mainly delivered directly to Leading Labels' stores.

To manage sales and stock across its stores, the company has recently invested in Eurostop's e-rmis retail system. Leading Labels has also implemented Eurostop's e-pos in all its stores to track sales at the till, recording data at its head office.

Leading Labels maintains margins thanks to Eurostop's retail management systems

According to Mike Thornthwaite, Financial Director at Leading Labels; "It is critical for us that we have the right stock at the right place at the right time. Since implementing Eurostop's system we have much better management of stock across our stores. We now have details from all our stores on one system which means that we have a complete picture. Previously with the two systems we spent a lot of time pulling the data together, which didn't always give us a very accurate view."

Up to the minute, accurate sales data

A key benefit of the Eurostop system is the ability to compare the reports from the e-pos system with the accounts reports, matching up records of stock sold and stock remaining. The head office team is now able to analyse the data and by integrating the system with its Sage 100 accounts package, post daily sales figures to the accounts.

"We are very comfortable with the integrity of the data," said Thornthwaite. "We are finding that the data is marrying up between the sales and accounts systems well and we can calculate very accurately profit margins. It is a much more efficient way of working - posting the sales figures to accounts used to take us a day a week in man hours, now we spend only about a half day a month in time."

Reducing stock surplus and wastage

Leading Labels also claims that communications between the stores and the office has been improved since using Eurostop's system. In the past order information from the stores could go astray, with the wrong stock then being delivered, creating stock surplus and wastage. More accurate stock information also means less time is spent administering stock at the stores, freeing up staff to work on the shop floor.

Another key area of Leading Label's business is the floorspace that is occupied by concessions in some of its stores. Eurostop's solution has enabled the company to handle till sales on behalf of some of its concessions. In terms of sales and stock replenishment this provides a much more accurate, up to the minute picture for both the concession and Leading Labels.

"We have found that using a recognised solution in the retail marketplace has not only given us credibility in the sector, it has opened up new business opportunities for us,"

said Thornthwaite

Meeting customer demand

Being able to analyse the data has also allowed the team to advise the buyers on hot sellers - and stock that is slow to move. The buyers make extensive use of the reports on colours and sizes - the data is used to identify popular items and make adjustments to deliveries as boxes are made up for stock replenishment.

Steve Wilkinson, Controller for menswear, buying and concessions at Leading Labels said; "The reliability of information from Eurostop is excellent. I can tweak orders to match demand - it reduces wastage and means that we sell more. We may deliver a large box to a particular store that can contain up to 24 or 30 items. If we have the right information on which sizes are selling, and in which colours, we can make sure that we make the box up to match that."



Wilkinson is also able to use the data to make informed business decisions. For example, analysing sell through figures on items against particular brands can highlight how well a certain brand is performing. A poor performer may mean an adjustment to the percentage of business that Leading Labels allocates to that particular brand.

"With accurate data to hand I can look at the order and brand mix, and work out which ones make more business sense," said Wilkinson. "Thanks to Eurostop I can make decisions with total confidence."

Building on success

Leading Labels claims that it is reaping the benefits of its investment in Eurostop systems with the efficiencies gained through better sales management information.

"We are very pleased with the system - it has definitely moved our business on significantly," said Thornthwaite. "We have traded well over what has been a difficult six months for the retail sector. Eurostop's system has enabled us to maintain our margins and we are now looking for ways to develop the system and get even more out of it."