

HAWKIN'S BAZAAR

Tobar Deliver Slick
Customer Service Across
all Sales Channels

Challenge

To control both the b2c and b2b sides of the business in one system and to improve efficiency across the whole organisation.

Summary

Tobar Ltd is a complex multi-channel business, selling inexpensive and simple presents in both B2B and B2C environments. Tobar trade via mail order, wholesale, over the web and through a number of expanding retail shops. The retail shops and B2C catalogue and website trade under the name of "Hawkin's Bazaar".

The Tobar business is particularly complex because of the very different skills required to be successful in both B2B and B2C markets. The diversity of Tobar's operations had become increasingly difficult to administer with different systems controlling the different elements of the business.

Continuing growth made this arrangement increasingly inefficient. Tobar chose Maginus OMS in 2002 to effectively integrate all channels across both the B2B and B2C sides of the business. Since then turnover has almost doubled whilst staff numbers have remained the same.

Developing Multichannel Relationships

Maginus manages both B2B and B2C relationships, allowing Tobar to offer slick customer service by ensuring that whichever sales channel a customer uses there is access to relevant information such as stock availability, order status details, returns etc.

Quick Facts

www.tobar.co.uk

Industry

Gifts

Customer profile

B2B & B2C Multichannel

Maginus solution

Maginus OMS.

Customer benefits

- Picking errors reduced by 30%
- Sales order volumes increased by 20%.
- Catalogue production costs reduced by 40%.

Efficiency within the call centre has increased following the implementation of Maginus. Toby Templar, MD of Tobar commented "we haven't significantly increased the number of staff in our call centre yet they're now taking more orders faster and more efficiently. It really is a win-win situation as we've also been able to improve customer service levels as sales staff have immediate access to accurate information re stock availability, account queries, returns etc".

Stock Control a Major Issue

With the old systems, stock control had been a real headache. Maginus is designed specifically to control multi channel businesses and, with the same database controlling the whole business, including stock, the management at Tobar can optimise stock levels and gain full visibility of stock across the business.

Reducing Part Shipments

Reducing the number of part shipments reduces costs, improves profit and customer service levels. Part shipments inevitably incur more despatch charges, although they are sometimes necessary to maintain customer service. Maginus allows Tobar to give customers a choice if all products aren't in stock – to either wait until the stock is in or to choose part shipment. Operators have immediate access to PO details so they can accurately inform customers when the goods will be available to despatch.

Increased Volumes Through the Warehouse

Following the introduction of Maginus, Tobar expanded its warehousing facilities. The warehouse layout has been rationalised to increase picking speed and the use of barcodes scanners to route parcels and confirm picking has ensured that increasing numbers of orders can be accurately picked and despatched.

"The much improved stock visibility and improved forecasting with Maginus has allowed us to significantly reduce the number of products out of stock at any one time, which has contributed to a reduction in the burden of part shipments."

Toby Templar, Hawkins Bazaar

Maginus manages the transfer of stock from the bulk warehouse to the pick faces of the B2C warehouse, timely despatch of goods to the Hawkins Bazaar retail stores and controls the flow of stock around the business. Toby continued "increased efficiency in the warehouse has meant that we handle more orders with increased accuracy and reduced despatch time without having significantly increased staff numbers in the warehouse."

Reduction in the % of Returns

As a result of increased picking accuracy, the percentage of returns has fallen significantly. When products are returned they can be processed much quicker and the goods either returned to stock or to the supplier and the customers credited.

This technology is having a big impact upon the day-to-day running of the business. The company now has the flexibility to customise the look and feel of the website, while its peak end of season summer sale orders were dispatched within days.

Handling Seasonal Peaks

Tobar is a seasonal business with 65% of business in the 3 months leading up to Christmas. The scalability of Maginus and the ability to quickly and easily train temporary staff on the system is vital to allow Tobar to maintain customer service in this busy period. Toby continued "we can train temporary staff very quickly and they make very few errors – this is essential at the peak times".