

Retail Manager

For several years we've been working our way down the high street quietly revolutionising the way some famous retail operations manage their store communications and control. These retailers told us what they wanted to achieve, and we built an award-winning Retail Communications and Control system that revolutionised their store communications.

Now innovative retailers like The Body Shop, New Look, Mothercare, Vision Express, House of Fraser and many others are living the dream of reduced costs and increased store effectiveness - thanks to Retail Manager.



Solution

Retail Manager produces win-win-win situations - costs can be reduced while increasing store effectiveness and improving the customer experience.

It's very often easy to spot problems in retail communications - usually a mixture of different unmanaged communications (fax, phone, email, reams of paper) to and from the stores defeating attempts to co-ordinate and manage activities across the estate, while the lack of a targeting mechanism for store comms means everybody gets everything, whether they need it or not, and very often on paper. Getting meaningful feedback from stores, whether tracking compliance or asking for feedback or opinion, is similarly difficult and excruciatingly slow. The net result is often people too busy doing the wrong thing and the customer suffering for it.

Until Retail Manager though, it was difficult to devise a solution. People tried email, which often added to the confusion, while intranets usually ended up as collections of out-of-date documents.

Retail Manager, designed and built from the ground up to solve retail communications problems, has proved to be an effective solution. Retailers using Retail Manager have sharpened their communications and action management with their stores, and stores get what they need when they need it. Admin loads in-store have typically decreased by 30%.

Net result is better co-ordination and less store admin. Customers benefit from a well-executed brand experience and informed assistance in-store. A quiet retail revolution.



How does Retail Manager make such a big difference?

Retail Manager revolutionises communications with stores. It uses the most modern web technologies, so all you need in your stores is a web-browser and a connection to a network, either your own or the internet. Similarly head office people need a browser too. Retail Manager infrastructure requirements aren't huge – most of our customers have adapted with little or no problem.

The next piece is the Retail Manager software itself. As noted above, it's all browser-based. Retail Manager is an integrated package, with modules working together. Together we can customise it to exactly fit your visual/branding standards and operational processes.

Here are some of the functions built-in to Retail Manager, and how they improve the communications picture:

Planner

The planner is an always accurate, paperless, store diary. It enables store managers, head office and field management to publish actions, information and key dates. Compliance can be viewed at any time, so head office and field management can manage by exception rather than contacting the whole estate to establish the status of requested actions.

Plan-item publishing is often controlled by a gatekeeper at head office – often an operations manager. He or she can fine-tune actions across the target stores to level out workload peaks or make room for urgent tasks. Planner works with the Store Details database below, to help target the right actions at the right stores at the right time.

Planner gives everyone an unprecedented view of tasks, their status and their problems. Workload can be managed across the estate. Better for everyone, including the customer.

Content Management

Non-technical people can easily publish Microsoft Office and PDF documents, and if they are allowed to, make them available to stores. Content Management has been specifically designed to be used by Retail Operations personnel with no help from technical staff.

Content Management works with the Store Details database below, to help make content pinpoint accurate.

Huge savings are likely here as paper, printing, duplication, distribution and rework costs become things of the past. Information is much more timely, so better results can be expected too.

Store Details Database and Picker

The Store Details Database is a collection of important store data. Attributes range from high-level product and trading information to opening times, keyholder details, window sizes and address information.

The Store Picker works with the Planner, Content Management and Survey modules to allow proper targeting of actions and messages to appropriate stores. This allows fine tuning of actions to small subsets of stores. It also prevents irrelevant information and impossible tasks winging their way across the estate, so less time and effort is wasted dealing with them.

Survey Tool

The Survey Tool enables operations staff or other management to create and publish surveys to targeted stores in the estate quickly and easily. As surveys are completed their results can be analysed in real-time.

People using the Survey Tool have been amazed as their response rates have exploded and their timescales shrunk. For the first time they have received meaningful feedback from stores in time to act on it. This has meant that actions and tasks could be improved, and information gathered from the 'sharp-end' quickly gathered, analysed and acted upon.

Business Forms

Processes that use paper forms are slow, prone to error, expensive to maintain, and waste peoples' time. We have electronic Incident/Accident forms, Health and Safety check-lists, Travel & Accommodation requests (to name a few), ready to go for instant processing. If you have other processes that need the paperless treatment we can quickly design the forms and workflows for you.

Ask the Expert

Ask the expert enables the store to ask questions. Simple text questions can be directed to head office departments or designated experts. If a question and answer is likely to be of use to others then it can be copied into an FAQ area for future reference.

This builds up a knowledge base so stores can get answers to common questions very quickly. Soon the knowledge base gives people answers without them having to ask the question! The experts can publish once and not have to answer the same question over and over again, so they are happier and more productive in their expert role.

Reporting

Comprehensive reporting lets you see who's read what, who's reacted to what, and who's completed what. Reporting is useful from a task perspective, to make sure action is being taken, and increasingly for compliance, where it's important to demonstrate that information has been acted upon.

Security

Security enables the application to present only relevant function and data to each user, according to their specific role within the business. You can be sure that the right stores, and only the right people, can see information in Retail Manager.

Summary

Retail Manager is award winning software that is powering many successful retail operations in the UK. Retail Manager revolutionises communications and action management between head office and stores. It creates a win-win-win situation, where costs are lowered, staff are freed up and customers get a great experience.