

# Goldsmiths

Business



Company: XcelleNetCustomer: GoldsmithsSubmitted by: MCC

InternationalDate: August 2000All businesses rely on the sale of a product or service to survive.

None more so than the retailer who watches potential customers walk in and out of its shops every day. The close of a sale is reliant on a number of factors – product availability, speed of service and good customer care all rank highly. A retailer’s underlying infrastructure is therefore critical to overall success. The Goldsmiths Group Plc has a heritage extending back more than 200 years. Founded in 1778, it is the leading specialist multiple retailer of quality jewellery and watches in the UK. With over 160 branches and stores recently opened in Canary Wharf and Dundee, it offers a comprehensive range of specialist services, from repairs and servicing to engraving, insurance and valuations.

With such an enviable reputation for quality and customer service, Goldsmiths wanted to maintain its position in the market despite the constant challenge offered by the competitive retail environment. It needed to feel confident that when a potential customer walked into its store, the desired gift or service would always be available in a fast and efficient manner. The company also wanted to ensure that communications between stores was maximised; it needed to share company data between branch sites, ensure customer requests were processed quickly and maximise the support given to till operators in-store to maintain good customer service. To fulfil these requirements, Goldsmiths turned to XcelleNet and its polling systems management solution RemoteWare. EPoS Systems Manager at Goldsmiths, Phil Sherwin explained, “ We had already worked closely with <https://assignbuster.com/goldsmiths/>

RemoteWare in 1996 to synchronize our Lotus Notes databases and were pleased with its performance. When we decided to upgrade our whole EPOS system in 1997 to an NT platform we decided the logical step was to implement the fully blown RemoteWare product.

“ Prior to choosing RemoteWare, Goldsmiths was using an IT consultant to design and write the polling software specifically for them. When anything went wrong it had no choice but to rely solely upon the consultant to correct it. Although it was a fairly reliable system, they were still experiencing a 10% failure rate, mainly due to the combination of software and hardware running over slow modem lines.” We wanted a flexible solution that would retrieve information from our branch stores in a timely manner. If we wanted to monitor sales transactions at a given outlet, we wanted to be able to set up a session and grab the file immediately, not have to wait until that evening.

Or even worse, if the polling failed, have to wait until the next evening before attempting to obtain the required information. Another issue was store replenishment. The value of jewellery in our stores is so great, we cannot hold more than one item of each piece in the store at any one time. As one product is sold, we need to make sure that our head office in Leicester knows to send a replacement out to the store immediately,” continued Sherwin. The move to XcelleNet’s RemoteWare was part of a whole system upgrade for Goldsmiths. “ Roll-out of RemoteWare was the easiest part of the transformation – in fact it proved almost trivial in comparison to the rest of the network! We now experience 99% connectivity – sometimes more, and we usually find the lacking 1% is down to something

completely out of our control, for example an internal system error or someone hasn't cashed up properly at one of the stores," said Sherwin.

RemoteWare is now utilised for all Goldsmiths current polling requirements – retrieval and dissemination of daily sales transactions on an hourly basis, store replenishment across all 160 branches on a daily basis, processing of special customer requests, and to facilitate all general communications between stores." We poll all the stores at about 5.00pm to retrieve sales figures achieved for that day. The data is pulled back to head office and then RemoteWare pushes the data back out to all the directors and regional managers as SMS text messages. The message illustrates how well each region has done during that day, compares to prior days, to current balance and to sales targets – all in one text message.

It also sends the figures out as an email to all store managers with details on each individual store. This feature is of significant value to Goldsmiths to ensure regions keep on track to achieve quarterly sales targets. To retrieve sales figures we can now connect up to stores at any time of the day.

Previously we had to set the stores into a polling 'mode' whereas with RemoteWare it is now running all the time. In fact, we can even poll the stores without employees knowing they are being polled," explained Sherwin.

RemoteWare has also improved Goldsmiths' methods of internal IT support and training with its ability to dial into branch sites and view remote stores from head office. Goldsmiths has an EPoS support desk of about 7-8 people that previously had to discuss problems over the phone or travel the country

to provide hands-on support. Now when a support call comes through it can dial remotely into the systems to identify the problem and fix it, or talk through fixing it with the till operator whilst watching the system at head office. This feature also pays-off when Goldsmiths install new software. In the past it would have had to post copies of the software on floppy disc to all 160 stores. Further time would then be spent supporting non-IT literate staff whilst installing the software.

RemoteWare now just sends the software to each store and support staff can install it remotely. With RemoteWare the problems have disappeared, reducing time and telecommunications costs to boot.” One of the most useful features of RemoteWare is the lack of maintenance it needs. We were used to coming in to work each morning and polling the stores missed, now there are never any missed. It also used to take up to 3-4 hours to poll our daily sales figures, now we just spend 30 minutes polling.

This frees up our time to spend on the more important elements of running a jewellery business,” said Sherwin. Looking to the future Sherwin concludes, “When we looked into upgrading our EPoS infrastructure we also wanted a solution that would future proof our network for expansion. With RemoteWare we know that as our business faces more and more demands, we will be able to cope. We already have projects in the pipeline with both our marketing and Internet departments. Marketing is hoping to build a large customer database to help target customers with new products and services. We are also hoping to embark on a large online catalogue that will hold images of all the products we sell – including those not available in some stores.

<https://assignbuster.com/goldsmiths/>

Working with RemoteWare we feel confident that both projects are more than achievable.”