

Course work on how musicland stores were converted to the trans world entertainme...

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With the acquisition of Musicland by Trans World Entertainment (TWE), the company faced a challenge of integrating the outdated point-of-sale (POS) systems in 335 Musicland stores with the TWE's systems in a 1 month period. Full transition to TWE's POS system and employee training in all Musicland stores was given 90 days. The strict deadlines were dictated by the absence of documentation in Musicland, which required either a shift to a new POS system or an extensive and costly audit control.

To achieve the goals on time, TWE's CIO, John Hinkle, created project teams, responsible for the transition. Under supervision, Musicland's IT experts were mapping all the data to TWE's back-end system, which saved time in testing and validation. However, some of the data had to be loaded separately, in order to transform it into the proper format. Although the project required working 7 days a week, all the Musicland's stores were integrated on time, with all the minor post-integration issues fixed within a week.

Following the back-end integration, Musicland's stores were planned to be transitioned to TWE's POS system. It started with updating corporate systems, so that they can operate with additional data load. However, the major challenge was installing network in stores and introducing broadband connectivity. While networking was subcontracted, POS installations and trainings were done by 25 internal teams, who took a week-long training before starting. After 89 days all the stores came online and Musicland's system was shut down. The full transition was completed in 4 months, remarkable time for such a project. Its success was largely based on standardized and consistent processes. Good vendor relationships largely

contributed to cost reduction and timely project execution, as working closer together makes cooperation more efficient. Lastly, the use of internal staff for most of the work and “train the trainer” approach allowed establishing closer connection with the management and the staff from Musicland, thus contributing to the overall project success.

Source:

Mitchell, R. L. (2007). Systems in concert. *Computerworld*, 46, 48.