

Success Story

GK/Retail for Depot



The customer

_Leading retailer of home accessories, furniture, gifts and decorative items

The project

_Store solution for over 140 branches in Germany and Austria

The challenge

_Rapid roll-out of a standard solution including Payback connection and central gift-voucher server



Standard software improves responsiveness

Gries Deco Company opts for GK/Retail for its branches

Gries Deco Company GmbH has more than 200 successful branches in Germany, Austria and Switzerland. Since 1995, the retailer has been operating its own line of stores under the DEPOT name, selling a wide range of goods,

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appealingly presented according to continually changing themes and styles of living. This approach has helped the Niedernberg-based company to become one of Germany's leading importers and

retailers of trend, lifestyle and home accessories as well as exclusive pieces of furniture. In the years ahead, the retail chain is keen to further expand its activities at home and abroad, and plans to open around 80 new branches annually in addition to more shop-in-shop units. In

early 2009, Swiss retail giant Migros purchased 49 percent of the shares in Gries Deco Company GmbH, thus opening up new growth opportunities for the organization.

New IT for DEPOT

In 2007, to lay the groundwork for its path to future growth, Gries Deco Company GmbH set out to find a new store solution which facilitated process integration, contributed to harmonization of the existing IT systems and was user-friendly enough to enable employees to learn it quickly.

After an intense period of evaluation, GK SOFTWARE AG was selected as technology partner to provide the store system. Hans-Dieter Christ, COO of Gries Deco Company GmbH explains why: "We were impressed by the sheer range of functionalities, the technical business concept, the software architecture and the possibility of controlling all checkouts centrally. In addition, the software was so easy to work with – the fact that our checkout staff found it intuitive to use contributed significantly to our decision." In November 2007, the project started with the blueprint phase, closely followed by a short development phase.

Because DEPOT was so committed to GK/Retail Standard, the first pilot was installed by early March 2008. An essential factor in the success of this project was the collaborative relationship between the various members of the project team. Starting in April, a service provider had implemented GK/Retail in each and every DEPOT branch within the space of just three weeks. This clearly demonstrates the impressive speed with which a standard solution can be adapted to the requirements of an SME. From now on, new functionalities can also be integrated into the checkout system and automatically shared with all relevant systems. Hans-Dieter Christ concurs: "With GK/Retail, we have chosen a standard solution that





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Opening up new opportunities

GK/Retail enabled DEPOT to rapidly take advantage of new customer loyalty opportunities. The company has been a Payback partner since 2008, and all activities relating to the acceptance of Payback cards are now fully supported directly at the point of sale.

Furthermore, all DEPOT branches as well as the brand's webshop sell and accept gift vouchers. The new system has simplified all voucher-related processes, making them much easier for checkout staff to handle. Each checkout immediately checks any vouchers presented on the online central gift-voucher server. The system identifies and rejects any vouchers which have expired or are invalid, thus preventing input errors or fraudulent redemption..

A firm grip on all systems

In addition to the new POS solution, which runs on IBM SurePOS-500 hardware, the DEPOT solution includes the back-office application, GK/Retail Enterprise Storemanager and them GK/Retail Enterprise Cockpit. GK/Retail Enterprise Storemanager offers DEPOT significantly simplified business processes by enabling all store-level systems to be managed and parameterized centrally. This means that the POS systems can be configured and adapted to the latest demands without having to be programmed individually. Additionally, software updates can now be time-controlled and distributed automatically. The GK/Retail Enterprise Cockpit provides a comprehensive technical overview of all the systems in place. Any malfunctions, such as hardware problems, loss of connections or processes that have

not been fully completed, can be identified immediately for rapid rectification.

Furthermore, as a third-level-support partner, GK SOFTWARE AG is always on hand to solve any problems. Its specialists can access the relevant system remotely and swiftly eliminate any technical glitches. In addition, the low call-out rate clearly demonstrates that the GK SOFTWARE AG solutions used in the DEPOT stores are stable and reliable.

Intuitive checkout solution saves training time

Gries Deco Company GmbH was particularly pleased that the new solution immediately received positive responses from the company's employees. Since the touchscreen based solution guides checkout staff through ergonomically designed, self-explanatory templates, very little training is required. Those involved have reported that checkout staff are all in agreement that the new POS software's intuitive approach and its clear menu layout have made their work much easier.

The checkout solution's benefits became apparent very soon after implementation: "We are already seeing clear evidence that the checkout software has improved workflows. We have also been able to allocate staff more effectively to provide better customer service," says Hans-Dieter Christ. With the new store solution, the company has laid firm foundations for its ambitious expansion plans. In fact, it is already preparing for the next step, which involves the seamless integration of GK/Retail with a new ERP system.



About GK SOFTWARE AG

GK SOFTWARE AG was founded in Schöneck, Germany, in 1990 and has been listed on the Prime Standard of the Frankfurt Stock Exchange since 2008.

The company develops comprehensive software solutions for retail stores. Leading retailers such as Coop (Switzerland), EDEKA, Galeria Kaufhof, Jysk Nordic, Lidl, Netto Marken-Discount, Parfümerie Douglas, Tchibo, Thalia, Telekom Shops and X5 Retail Group have been working successfully with GK/Retail for many years.

GK SOFTWARE AG's retail solutions are currently being used in more than 30 different European countries, amounting to some 180,000 installations. The company has experienced considerable organic growth in recent years and employs approximately 560 people throughout Europe.

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