

UNIQLO

UNIQLO is Japan's leading retailer of casual clothing and the 7th largest apparel specialist retailer in the world. Since the opening of a single shop in Hiroshima in 1984 they have grown to over 630 stores across Japan. Uniqlo offers well designed, casual basics at prices that everyone can afford. UNIQLO is not a conventional clothing brand. They offer a wide range of well-made, logo-free basics, aimed to give you the choice to create your own sense of style.

UNIQLO launched in the UK during the Autumn of 2001 and have eight stores in the UK open; with aggressive growth plans for the 2006 and beyond.

THE BUSINESS IMPERATIVE

When UNIQLO launched in the UK they required a solid foundation for their operation and sought advice from a leading specialist Retail and Supply Chain consultancy, Itim, to develop a 'greenfield' solution for EPOS and store systems, credit card transaction solutions and a data network to support the applications.

THE SOLUTION

Itim developed an overall strategy for UNIQLO with suggested 'best-in-breed' solution providers across each element. Itim themselves developed the EPOS solution and worked in partnership with the Logic Group to develop the Chip and PIN solution.

TFM Networks (a Tiscali Business Services partner) were then introduced by The Logic Group at a time of consolidation. Having deployed the first phase of stores in the south

east of England UNIQLO realised that their network cost base, of ISDN links to stores and an international leased line to Japan, was not sustainable. UNIQLO asked TFM Networks to design a solution that would speed up transaction times and reduce costs overall and give greater certainty with regard to variable call charges.

TFM Networks recommended a fully managed Tiscali MPLS IPVPN solution to connect all the stores and run the EPOS and credit card transaction traffic.

THE BUSINESS IMPACT

The managed Tiscali IPVPN service from TFM enabled UNIQLO to move from using an ISDN system for all transactions to solely using an ADSL network for payment connectivity and On Line Authorisations over IP. Whilst this brought immediate cost savings, The Logic Group completed the solution by managing the translation of store payment transactions over IP into X25, a service accepted and preferred by the Bank. This resulted in further cost savings and reduced transaction times.



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WHAT THE CUSTOMER SAYS

Since deployment the relationship has become increasingly interactive and informal as TFM has become an integral part of the UNIQLO team. It's a very pragmatic relationship, with TFM looking beneath the surface and view issues from UNIQLO's perspective and because they know us well they can be increasingly pro-active and intuitive in our actions and recommendations.

We don't have the time and resources to manage our suppliers minute by minute. The nature of the relationship we have with TFM Networks means they act as extension of UNIQLO.

The new system has not only dramatically reduced our costs by nearly 90% per store per year but has also enabled a much faster transaction time. In addition, we now have full visibility and understanding of costs

The solution has enabled a much-improved service level and single points of failure have been removed. It is vital for us to get this right now, in line with our expansion plans for 2006. Most importantly, these changes at the centre have noticeably improved staff and customer satisfaction in each of the stores.

Mark Bulmer, Property & IT Manager, UNIQLO.

TFM NETWORKS

A Virtual Network operator providing innovative class leading solutions to the retail and hospitality markets. Making best use of network technology whilst keeping value at the forefront of the solutions. For more information call 01844 296530

