Torex®

BLUME 2000

"What we particularly liked about Torex is that this provider also performs field service tasks in addition to implementation, meaning we were able to get the hardware, software and service from a single source."

– Phillip Ralfs, Head of IT & Organisation

Knowing the company

Blume 2000, Germany's largest regional plant and flower retail chain, has a particularly strong presence in northern and central Germany, with '2000' referring to Hamburg's former zip code. The company with headquarters in Norderstedt employs a staff of 1,500 (including franchise stores). Over 200 stores are supplied several times a week with fresh flowers from four hubs based in Moorburg near Hamburg (also the central depot), Berlin, the Rhine-Main region and Weimar. About two-thirds of the branches are run by the retailer, and the remaining shops are operated by franchise partners.

Defining the strategy

After more than ten years of smooth operation with Torex POS, flower retailer Blume 2000 decided in late 2009 to introduce a completely new POS and store management system. The new system was required to meet the present-day demands of the retailer, provide extensive options for promotional offer handling and include a store merchandise management system.

In addition to changing the software application, the operating system was to be upgraded from

Windows NT to XP at the same time. The third technical change involved replacing the low-performance ISDN-W connection linking the head office with the 200 national stores and switching over to DSL. What the company needed was a partner able to perform all projects – upgrading the POS system, performing the operating system switch, providing the required hardware, as well as subsequent field service for all IT components – from a single source.

Choosing the solution

The comprehensive approach of Torex prompted Blume 2000 to have their existing software supplier implement the changeover to the new system.

Torex adapted the user interface of its POS solution to fully meet the requirements of Blume 2000 while maintaining the familiar look and feel, which allowed the staff to use the new solution with hardly any training.

The IT and POS system switch in the stores started in early 2010 and was completed by September. It was performed in a staged and grouped manner. In order to be able to provide optimal support, each group

Blume 2000

comprised stores located within relative proximity to each other. Also, as the stores receive fresh goods every other day, the project team had to schedule its work so as not to interfere with these deliveries.

Whereas in the past a migration of this scale would have required the technicians to visit every single store, this changeover "went very smoothly", as remarked Phillip Ralfs, Head of IT & Organisation at Blume 2000, deeply impressed. First the new version of the POS solution was remotely transferred to the POS workstations in the stores from the central server. Next, Torex supplied the Blume 2000 IT team with memory sticks containing the new operating system for each store. All they had to do was plug these sticks into their POS over-night. The following morning, the new software was fully installed and 'ready to go'.

Each store has one to three POS systems, which are connected to the back-office POS server. The back-office solution was only installed on this server, so besides a few monitors no further hardware resources needed to be purchased. As a result, the highly economical migration process incurred minimal investment costs.

> **"Torex POS offers everything a modern POS solution needs: Numerous options for promotional offers as well as extensive store merchandise management functions."**
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> **– Phillip Ralfs, Head of IT & Organisation**

Achieving results now

The new Torex POS system in Blume 2000 offers real-time transparency and thus facilitates the efficient management and analysis of business processes, from payment transactions and warehouse and price control through to profit centre and store management. The current version of the POS solution empowers the company to implement various promotional offers, including rebates, 3-for-2 offers or a 'happy hour'.

In light of the short shelf-life of the goods in the flower business it is important to maintain a high level of flexibility in managing and handling stock. So while the Blume 2000 head office performs many goods- and merchandise-related tasks centrally, the stores also have sufficient leeway to make many decisions locally. As about one third of the stores are run by franchise partners, the company also uses the store merchandise management functions of the POS solution. This allows stores to perform merchandise planning on a local level. The POS and store management system from Torex allows them to individually adjust their inventories to customer demand and launch promotional activities, among many other features.

To learn more about Torex, please visit www.torex.com

About Torex

Torex is a European market leader for store systems in Retail, Hospitality, Convenience and Fuel markets. We provide outlet and head office technology to our core markets globally, through a mix of software, hardware, consultancy, implementation and maintenance and services. Our technology ranges from Point-of-Sale to solutions which help our customers deal with merchandise planning, business analytics, loss prevention and multi-channel trading. 1,150 Torex people help over 6,000 businesses serve their customers every year, in over 30 countries.

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