



A Micronet Company

Card and Gift Retailer Goes Wild for Computerlink Point-of-Sale Solution



Established in April 2002 and headquartered in Melbourne, Australia, WILD Cards and Gifts has grown rapidly to become the country's largest group of card and gift stores, with 36 franchises across Australia and plans to reach 45 stores by 2009.

This growth saw WILD named on BRW magazine's 2006 Fast 100 list and ranked 13th in a listing of Australia's top franchises.

Running blind without a reliable point-of-sale system

Owners and franchisors Lawrence and Sandra Boyle realised they needed to invest in a solid technology infrastructure to ensure future success.

Each WILD franchise was using standalone cash registers to process sales, and inventory was managed manually. These inefficiencies were costing customers, time and money.

"As a group, we were unable to track changes in the marketplace," said Lawrence Boyle. "We could not determine key sellers or products that weren't moving. With only basic reporting functions, we were really running off gut feel."

"It quickly became apparent that we needed a more sophisticated point-of-sale system with analytical and reporting tools to provide an accurate reflection of what was happening in our stores and the wider marketplace."

Computerlink has the answers

The Boyles worked with a group of franchisees to create a list of required features for a new point-of-sale (POS) solution and select five suitable candidates.

"We had long discussions with each company on our shortlist," said Boyle. "We wanted to work with a company that could act as a single point of contact and supply all hardware, software, training, support and updates."

After extensive analysis, WILD selected Computerlink as its technology partner. WILD worked with Computerlink to customise its Computerlink POS application to meet the group's unique requirements.

After a successful pilot in one franchise in June 2006, WILD began to roll out the system to other stores. New stores now implement the application before they commence trading and WILD expects all franchises to have the Computerlink solution installed by the end of 2008.

Each franchise with the ComputerlinkPOS system is fitted out with touch-screen POS terminals and a pre-loaded inventory file from head office. The database at head office holds data for all stores. Each franchisee can download the latest product and price information and also maintain local data, such as unique product lines for local communities.

"The key to the success of the system was that we started by identifying what we wanted to achieve rather than fitting our business to what was available in the marketplace," said Boyle.

Computerlink provides initial training to each store one month before the implementation. When the system is rolled out, a Computerlink technician is on site to ensure everything runs smoothly for staff and customers. This is then backed up by comprehensive support material and a 24x7 technical support centre.

"As with any new technology, there's a learning curve, but once that's over there's no going back for store owners, they just love the system," said Boyle.

Competitive advantage with detailed reporting

ComputerlinkPOS's advanced reporting features have boosted WILD's ability to analyse sales in detail, leading to more informed ordering, more accurate inventory management and an improved ability to identify best and worst sellers and seasonal trends. Head office can



also analyse the performance of each site, ensuring it can quickly identify and correct any issues.

"The reports enable us to identify what's hot in the marketplace and assess the sales of products from each supplier," said Boyle. "This has added value to each franchisee's business and proved invaluable when planning new stores. Now when we order stock, franchisees can be confident they're getting the best of what is currently selling, not what suppliers would like to sell us."

"The ability to analyse our sales from any angle really levels the playing field between us and the major retail chains."

Effective POS system boosts growth

Having an advanced POS system in place has enabled WILD to continue meeting its ambitious growth targets, and boosted sales for franchisees.

"The ComputerlinkPOS system has played a large part in the group's growth and our emergence as the number-one retailer in this sector," said Boyle. "When we install the solution in stores that were previously using cash registers, we see a measurable increase in sales."

The efficient in-store technology environment, which has greatly increased transaction speeds, is also central to improving customer satisfaction.

"Customers who see old-fashioned cash registers immediately think the store is behind the times," said Boyle. "This is a disadvantage in a competitive shopping centre environment. The Computerlink system ensures we provide the best possible shopping experience every time."

Flexible system for future initiatives

WILD plans to continue working with Computerlink to develop and enhance the POS system to meet its expanding business and customer expectations.

"In the next 12 months, we'll integrate our customer loyalty program with the POS system," said Boyle. "ComputerlinkPOS will allow us to integrate the program with a scanning facility and built-in software so customers receive and redeem points in line with their actual expenditure, which will make it much more personalised."

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In August 2007, Micronet Systems acquired Computerlink. Micronet is a leading developer of software solutions for the retail and wholesale industries. For customers like WILD, the merger will mean increased personal support across Australia, as well as the ability to access Micronet's extensive suite of advanced software solutions as the business grows.

Computerlink Australia specialises in developing point-of-sale, inventory management and debtor control software for the newsagency, bookshop and retail industries. Since 1973, Computerlink has supplied clients with software, hardware, point-of-sale peripherals, installation services and on-site training, backed by superior technical and software support.

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