



Gift Universe

Industry: Gifts & Gadgets

Sector: Store, Online Retail,
Wholesale & Distribution

Key Requirements: Store
EPOS, Stock Control, Accounts,

Mobile Warehouse Management, Returns, eCommerce Integration, CRM, Purchasing, Courier Integration & Stock Transfers

Gift Universe Group was founded in 2002 with their first store in Uxbridge under the name of Menkind, billed as a gift and gadget retailer for men. The company began trading as Gift Universe after the acquisition of their competitor, RED5, as well as RED5's wholesale business, The Source. Today, Gift Universe are one of the UK's leading and fastest growing operators in the gifts and gadgets industry, carrying out around 3 million transactions per year.

The company currently operates from more than 60 retail stores across the UK, as well as multiple eCommerce channels such as their own website and Amazon. They also distribute to some of the UK's top retail brands including John Lewis, Debenhams and many more. Gift Universe employs over 700 staff, which inflates to around 1000 when they open 15-20 more pop-up shops during their peak season around Christmas.



Here Paul Kraftman, Chief Executive of Gift Universe, and other key members of the Gift Universe team, tell us how they streamlined operations across the business and gained an end-to-end solution through implementing OrderWise Business Management Software in early 2017.

The requirement

Prior to implementing OrderWise, Gift Universe used 5 separate systems within their business. Paul tells us "The EPOS system that we had wasn't really fit for purpose in the modern multi-channel era and without an integrated accounts package, that also created a number of difficulties for us. We had to do something and I wanted an integrated end-to-end solution." This lack of integration resulted in endless duplication of data due to staff having to manually transfer information across the

disconnected systems, convincing Paul that it was time to look for a different solution.

Following extensive research, Paul concluded that OrderWise provided the most complete and comprehensive package, saying; "We looked at a number of systems and we quickly came to the conclusion that OrderWise provided a very good solution for us, especially for the warehouse operations, processing orders for wholesale and for the accounts part of the business too."

Another key requirement for Gift Universe was to find a solution to seamlessly link their back-end processes with a suitable EPOS system across their network of stores. Following a conversation with their OrderWise Business Consultant, the development of OrderWise Store EPOS was commissioned and Gift Universe happily progressed towards implementing OrderWise as their all-in-one business management solution.

The implementation

Upon implementation of their OrderWise solution, Paul admits it wasn't without its challenges, considering the size of the project and the migration from 5 separate systems. However, despite the scale of their operations, he noted that OrderWise ensured a smooth transition with minimal interruption:

"Considering it was affecting every single touchpoint of the business, it went remarkably well - we were never in a position where we stopped trading or couldn't operate; from day one we never had those issues."

To assist our customers with the implementation of their new software system, OrderWise has a team of Project Managers, Software Trainers and Implementation Specialists on hand every step of the way. On the installation process, Paul added, "The main thing I can say is customers never suffered - we got stock out to stores, processed transactions and we knew what was happening, so we were happy with how it all went."

Providing the complete end-to-end solution for Gift Universe, OrderWise was able to streamline and unite all areas of their business, greatly improving communication across locations and enhancing customer service through complete stock visibility.



The OrderWise solution

Through the Store EPOS module, Gift Universe have been able to utilise mPOS technology in their pop-up stores during busy periods. With the ability to process sales directly from a mobile tablet, Callum Harrison, Assistant Manager at Menkind in Leicester commented, "It really helps lower the queues and there's quicker sales on the shop floor."

“ *The relationship between the warehouse and stores has also improved massively. Using one system, it's a lot easier to find the right stock at the right time, accuracy is a lot better and it's easier to find the sales statistics for the week.* ”

Having implemented OrderWise Accounts to effectively manage their daily accounting processes, Gift Universe found the move to an all-in-one solution enabled them to see a far better flow of information across the business. The full audit trail has maximised visibility of transactions right across the company and, along with customisable grids within OrderWise, they found efficiency dramatically improved.

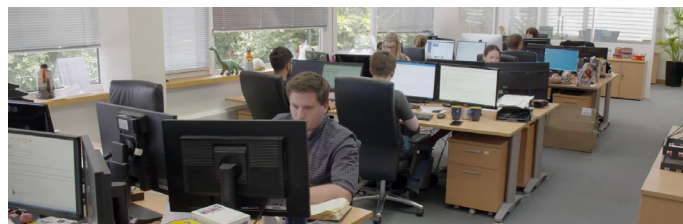
Warehouse management

A crucial aspect of any business is effective warehouse management. Gift Universe operate from a 60,000sq ft warehouse in Hull, which they use to fulfil to all retail stores, as well as their wholesale and eCommerce customers. Since implementing OrderWise, across unit picking and discrepancies, accuracy levels have improved from 86% up to an impressive 99.7%.



Regarding how OrderWise Mobile WMS Devices have contributed towards their excellent customer service, Chris Harrison, Stock and Systems Manager at Gift Universe, told us: "It's allowed us to ensure that gifting products are smoothly received into our business, processed through the warehouse, are then available online and in store, ultimately giving the service level to customers that they expect from us as a business." Returns have also been drastically streamlined, with batch and serial traced products being tracked straight from the system.

Kathleen Fisher, Returns Supervisor at Gift Universe, was particularly impressed on how easy it was to train temporary staff on the software, saying "It's a simple but very effective system. I found that the temps do pick it up brilliantly, just with an hour's worth of training."



eCommerce & retail management

With Gift Universe taking up to 200,000 orders per month, increasing to well over 1 million in peak season, OrderWise has provided the business with the transparency to effectively oversee purchasing activities and guarantee the right stock is delivered at the right time.

Nick Tulloch, Merchandising Manager, comments; "On the replenishment side, it's been life changing! Before, it was very manual and we almost needed a whole day to import replenishment levels. Whereas with OrderWise, you can import almost anything at all and there's also the option to have dynamic replenishment levels, which constantly change based on all the information from our stores."

What's next for Gift Universe?

With intentions to expand the eCommerce and wholesale parts of the business, as well as continue opening stores in various locations, Paul was confident OrderWise has the scalability to progress along with the company.

Paul summarised saying; "Our main aim is for our system to be something that works like an engine, so we can get on and run our business. To me, the biggest compliment is that we don't notice the software is there, it just works and functions effectively. That's what we look for with OrderWise, and when they have new developments we just seamlessly integrate them into the business."

“ *OrderWise is always very responsive, they certainly care about what's happening and are keen to resolve problems and work with us. We feel that there is a genuine desire there to be a long term partner with the business.* ”

For more information on Gift Universe you can visit their website at www.giftuniverse.com or view our video case study →

