



CASE STUDY

Avanade Improves Customer Service for Swedish Retailer

Avanade's new in-store online retail system upgrades an older, bespoke system that was difficult to maintain and difficult to use. The new system improves customer service and reduces support costs.

Systembolaget has 410 stores in Sweden that sell alcohol. However, they are the only 410 stores in the whole country that sell it. The not-for-profit company has a legal monopoly on alcoholic liquor. The intention is to minimise alcohol related problems.

The lack of competition does not stifle innovation. In fact, the company is very proud of its quality control, well-trained staff and it's extensive product range. It offers over 3,000 brands of beer, wine and spirits from around 40 countries. Most shops carry only a fraction of the full range; the rest is available to order.

Replacing an old point of sale system

In 2006, Systembolaget decided to upgrade its point of sale system. There were two main factors behind this decision:

1. Their existing system did not allow stores to take chip and pin credit cards. Although rarer in Scandinavia than elsewhere in Europe, they are becoming more widespread.
2. The old system only had basic functions for ordering products that were not available in a given store. The company wanted to let customers order products in stores using a friendly e-commerce-like system. (At this time, the company has not started the process to decide if, when or how to start an online channel.)

The Avanade solution

In 2007, Avanade started work on the project, alongside contractors concentrating on other elements, and developed the entire customer service function. This included online ordering, inventory and search functionality. The system plugged into Systembolaget's back-end ERP software and the company's point of sale system, and the overall result was better service for customers and better systems



Systembolaget.se

OVERVIEW

Industry
Retail

Geography
Sweden

Solution summary
Implement a new in-store online ordering system to allow Systembolaget's customers to purchase their full range of products.

Technology

- Avanade Connected Architectures for .NET (ACA.NET)
- Microsoft SQL Server 2005
- .NET 3.0 with Windows Communication Foundation (WCF)

Benefits

- Rapid delivery
- Replace bespoke software with standard Microsoft components
- Improved customer service
- Integration with back-end ERP systems and a standard Point-of-Sales system

integration for the company itself.

Benefits

Avanade's solution is built on a foundation of standard Microsoft software including .NET and Microsoft SQL Server 2005. This standardisation is one of the main benefits, according to Johan Tömmervik, IT Director at Systembolaget. "Our previous system included a lot of bespoke enhancements and unique developments for us." The new system, in contrast, is more flexible, cheaper to maintain and easier to upgrade in future.

Avanade's ability to integrate different Microsoft technologies was vital. "The Microsoft offering is a complete offering," adds Tömmervik; "we don't have to pick solutions from different vendors." As he explains, Systembolaget's mission is to sell alcohol, not to be an IT shop. Building a solution, as Avanade has done, from standard components means that the retailer can continue to develop it using third-party expertise.

Tömmervik goes on to say: "Avanade has contributed very well to this present project because they have technically skilled consultants. They have been very customer-focused and they got things done very quickly."

About Avanade

Avanade is a global IT consultancy dedicated to using the Microsoft platform to help enterprises achieve profitable growth. Through proven solutions that extend Microsoft technologies, Avanade helps enterprises increase revenue, reduce costs and reinvest in innovation to gain competitive advantage. Our consultants deliver value according to each customer's requirements, timeline and budget by combining insight, innovation and the talent of our global workforce.

Additional information can be found at www.avanade.com