



MACINTOSH RETAIL GROUP DELIVERS CROSS-CHANNEL STRATEGY WITH PROGRESS PACIFIC TO ENSURE A SEAMLESS CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

Cross-channel integration is fast becoming a competitive necessity for today's retailers. With the rapid adoption of web and mobile technologies, customers have more control than ever when it comes to choosing when, where and how they make a purchase. Those retailers that can deliver a seamless experience—enabling consumers to easily move between online and offline channels—will quickly set themselves apart from the competition.

Macintosh Retail Group (MRG) recognized this new reality early on, developing a cross-channel business and technology strategy focused on providing customers with the best shopping experience possible. With more than 1,000 stores located across the Benelux and UK regions, as well as numerous Web shops, MRG boasts powerful retail and product brands, including **Brantano**, **Dolcis**, **Jones Bootmaker**, **Manfield**, **Invito**, **Scapino**, **PRO 0031**, **Steve Madden** and **Intreza**.

“By accelerating MRG’s transformation to cross-channel retailing, we could shift our focus from being a product-centric to a customer-centric organization to better compete in an industry where consumer attitudes shift on a daily basis,” explains Kris De Moor, Group ICT Director for Macintosh Retail Group. “We wanted to give customers the ability to purchase all products both online and in retail stores and give them the freedom to experience the Brand on his/her terms. By making customer-centric loyalty programs and special product offers available across all channels, we will be able to deliver a one-Brand experience to the customer. And by providing our store staff and customer service agents with access to the same real-time product and customer information - regardless of where or how a purchase was made, we can ensure superior customer service.”

Comprised of numerous best-of-breed systems, MRG’s IT infrastructure did not have the flexibility to support its ambitious cross-channel initiative. Its separate systems for ERP, point of sale, logistics, and web back ends were not designed for the kind of instant, efficient management of cross-channel retail that Macintosh required.



Macintosh
Retail Group

CHALLENGE

Deliver a cross-channel strategy to enable a seamless customer experience

SOLUTION

Modernizing its existing Progress OpenEdge-based ERP system using the Progress Pacific platform, comprised of Progress Rollbase, Progress OpenEdge 11.3, Progress OpenEdge Mobile, Progress OpenEdge BPM and Progress Corticon products, for faster time-to-market

BENEFIT

Will have the flexibility and agility to capitalize on opportunities much faster than the competition; will enable consumers to easily move between online and offline channels to optimize the shopping experience; will ensure superior customer service with access to real-time product and customer information, regardless of where or how a purchase was made

PROGRESS® PACIFIC™ - A PERFECT FIT

MRG explored its options, including application integration or a complete rebuild, but concluded that overhauling all of its ICT systems would be far too time consuming, costly and risky. Instead, they opted to modernize their existing Progress® OpenEdge®-based ERP system using the Progress Pacific platform, comprised of Progress® Rollbase®, Progress OpenEdge 11.3, Progress OpenEdge Mobile, Progress OpenEdge BPM and Progress® Corticon® products, for faster time-to-market.

“Progress really understood our vision and where we wanted to take our business. We were confident they had all of the tools and expertise required to make that vision a reality,” said De Moor.

MRG has relied on the Progress OpenEdge Integrated Development platform [IDE], ABL and database for over 15 years to support business growth and remain competitive. “Progress OpenEdge has scaled with our business over the years, enabling our company to adapt to whatever market and business changes came our way, like new acquisitions, competitive pressures and organizational changes,” explains Tore Van Grembergen, Project Manager for Macintosh Retail Group.

With over a decade of development time and millions of lines of code, MRG’s OpenEdge-based ERP system is critical to managing the company’s operations. With Progress Pacific, the company could realize its cross-channel strategy while retaining its existing investment in OpenEdge. And MRG would be able to modernize and add flexibility and agility to their current software infrastructure without the level of risk normally associated with such an ambitious project.

“Progress Pacific was the perfect fit for our business. To strengthen our market position in the fashion and home decoration sectors, we needed a solution that provided minimal disruption while enabling us to modernize and stay one step ahead of competition. The Progress Pacific platform allowed us to reuse all of the invaluable logic within our OpenEdge ERP system while also enabling us to rapidly develop new applications that work perfectly with our current infrastructure,” says De Moor. “Progress Pacific also gives us the ability to refactor our code by separating out the process flow, rules and policy management, and our IP/business logic which means our systems can evolve in a far more agile manner.”

Key to MRG’s choice to adopt Progress Pacific was the ability to see the solution in action. During a proof of concept, Progress demonstrated the ability to develop key functionality within one week that worked smoothly with the existing MRG back end. “The ability to actually use Progress Pacific and see the ease of development and performance with our own eyes was extremely powerful,” says Van Grembergen.

TRANSFORMING ITS BUSINESS IN THE CLOUD

Progress Pacific is giving MRG an entirely new approach to application development, with the freedom and the power to rapidly innovate. Using the existing logic of its OpenEdge application, Rollbase to develop a modern cloud-based front end, and OpenEdge BPM and Corticon for business process and business rules management, MRG is transforming its entire ERP system, enabling the company to seamlessly connect the physical stores, online shops and marketplaces with the back office, customer service and warehouse in real time.

“Today’s retailers must be able to quickly anticipate developments if they are to stay ahead. This requires technology that seamlessly integrates processes and data, which is exactly the strength of the Progress Pacific platform and technologies. Macintosh Retail Group is using this technology to support strong online and offline shop formats that enable it to extend its leadership position,” says De Moor.

“The true value of Progress Pacific is that collectively it is enabling us to do everything we want to do; there are zero limitations.”

Kris De Moor
Group ICT Director
Macintosh Retail Group

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Tore Van Grembergen
Project Manager
Macintosh Retail Group

With Pacific, MRG is service-enabling its ERP system as well as other existing applications and adding additional features. The company will be able to expose applications to employees and, in some cases, to customers to enable real-time access to information. For example, extending its ERP system to external users means shop employees and consumers will be able to check inventory and availability in real time.

Progress OpenEdge BPM gives MRG the ability to provide continuous process improvement by standardizing business processes, facilitating collaboration, defining and managing workflows and automating processes. BPM also enables Macintosh to handle exceptions at the process level. So if something goes wrong, BPM will initiate a process for escalation, raising a red flag to notify the appropriate individuals that there is an issue before it turns into a larger problem. Replacing its existing hard-coding approach for managing business processes, the company will have far greater flexibility when it comes to creating or changing workflows. And the ease of use of the solution means product owners and business managers can make changes on their own, reducing change cycles from weeks to minutes.

With the Progress Corticon Business Rules Management System [BRMS], MRG is able to take BPM a step further by enabling business experts to define and maintain the decisions that guide a system's behavior. Progress Corticon gives MRG increased flexibility over hard coding with the ability to manage business rules separate from application code so that IT and business managers can quickly innovate or respond to change and opportunities. For example, with tens of thousands of products offered in varying sizes, styles, and colors across a variety of sales channels including retail stores, web shops and third-party sites like Amazon, MGR will have the flexibility to immediately react to competitive pressures and create and modify promotions across individual or multiple channels to increase revenue and gain a competitive edge.

Using Pacific Mobile, the company is developing a mobile solution for Motorola scanners. Integrating with Rollbase, the mobile app will be used in MRG's retail locations to track information and activities, like real-time stock movements.

De Moor is quick to point out however, that the benefits of Progress Pacific go well beyond any single technology. "The true value of Progress Pacific is that collectively it is enabling us to do everything we want to do; there are zero limitations."

Progress Professional Services has also played a key role in designing MRG's new architecture, implementing the solutions and providing invaluable expertise, advice and training. "We realized we couldn't affect such a large change as quickly as we wanted to by ourselves," explains Van Grembergen. "Working with Progress Professional Services versus another delivery partner gives us access to the most knowledgeable resources in the market. They have introduced us to invaluable best practices and ensured close and ongoing cooperation with Progress' Corporate Product Management and Engineering teams. Our collaboration with Progress is enabling us to rapidly drive innovation across our business. By working together with Progress Professional Services we were able to complete the first phase of our project four times faster versus doing it on our own. With Progress Professional Services we are able to really push the limits, and that's exciting."

While the modernization project is in the early stages, MRG believes Progress Pacific will deliver a significant competitive advantage for the company. "Becoming a customer-centric organization will be essential to maintaining our success. Progress Pacific is giving us the flexibility and agility to capitalize on opportunities much faster than our competition," says De Moor. "This project is all about enablement. The industry, technology and expectations are moving and changing at such an incredible pace that we know there are things coming our way we can't begin to anticipate. But with Progress Pacific, we are confident that we have the technology in place to succeed, no matter what the future brings."

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ABOUT MACINTOSH RETAIL GROUP

Macintosh Retail Group is a large-scale non-food retailer listed on the Euronext Amsterdam Stock Exchange, specialized in the distribution of consumer products and services in the sectors Living and Fashion. Customers are being served online and in almost 1,000 shops. www.macintosh.nl/en

PROGRESS SOFTWARE

Progress Software Corporation [NASDAQ: PRGS] is a global software company that simplifies the development, deployment and management of business applications on-premise or in the cloud, on any platform or device, to any data source, with enhanced performance, minimal IT complexity and low total cost of ownership.

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