

iStyle Apple Premium Reseller - Middle East

Case Study



Background

iStyle is the largest Apple Premium Reseller in the Middle East. They started back in February 2005 by setting up their first store in Dubai in the UAE.

iStyle part of ABM (Arab Business Machines LLC), a daughter company to the MDS group which is a global corporation consisting of hundreds of companies located worldwide. iStyle has currently 9 stores across the Middle East.

Business Need

iStyle, the Apple Premium Retailer in the Middle East has selected HansaWorld as its business management software to help with its expansion plans in the region. iStyle aims to have over 40 stores in the Middle East by 2010.

At the beginning of 2008 iStyle started with its two-year project to set up 40 Apple stores across the Middle East region. Prior to that iStyle had 3 stores in the UAE and each one of those stores was running on a standalone HansaWorld Express system.



iStyle was very satisfied with the product and the level of support offered by the HansaWorld office in Dubai.

They were looking for a single corporate solution for 4 showrooms in the UAE, for 4 stores in Saudi Arabia and for one more in Lebanon; all of which were to be open within the first few months of year 2008. They needed a system that would allow them to manage this vast operation and provide visibility and informative data to enable them to make better and faster management decisions.

Before deciding to go for HansaWorld, they looked at PayGo, which is only a point of sale system; Great Plains, but this software does not run on Mac; Xsilva, which was not suitable for multi-branch location, there was no local support and they were unsure whether the software would fit their future business plans.

"There were several reasons we went for HansaWorld. HansaWorld runs besides Windows and Linux also on Mac platform and can be run as easily and effectively in multi-store environment as in single store. HansaWorld is also capable of handling the different legal and taxation requirements for all the countries where we operate, which was very crucial need for us," says Mr. Ghassan Bendali, Deputy General Manager, iStyle.

He continues "We need to have a good view about the overall operation and sales data in stores, and with HansaWorld's wide area networking capabilities we can log in from anywhere and get a birds eye view of all the showrooms real-time. We were also looking for a flexible system and HansaWorld can provide us this, as the software can be customized and changed to our needs."

One more important reason they went for HansaWorld, was because it provides the capability to work in offline mode. This allows them to continue to serve their customers, even in the cases where they lose internet connection.

Solution

iStyle has implemented HansaWorld Enterprise front and back office system including Accounts, Point of Sale, Inventory, Purchasing and CRM for 12 concurrent and 18 Point Of Sale users.

Implementation for phase 1 started in January 2008 and was finished in May 2008. Phase 2, which includes implementation of Hansaworld CRM at all stores and implementation of HansaWorld in Saudi Arabia showrooms, will be completed in October 2008.





Multi-company set up enables each country where iStyle operates to have the right currency and taxation set up. They also use barcode scanners at the stores to easily track and sell the items all allocated their unique serial numbers. This reduces the risk for error, where barcodes are entered in the system manually. iStyle also manages central purchasing in HansaWorld, where it is possible to look up from main warehouse the stock levels for each stores and then distribute the stock accordingly.

iStyle decided to outsource the hosting of their system to HansaWorld ASP in Sweden. They did it for several reasons mainly for speed, stability, security and leaving the experts to focus on the hardware while iStyle focuses on their business.

Benefits and results

“HansaWorld has given us the possibility to get more information of the whole operation quicker. Running a few reports allows us to get up-to-date information about the sales values for all the showrooms. Our users are more consistent and make less errors, as they don’t need to double-capture data,” says Mr. Bendali.

He continues, “We can also serve our customers better, as same customer is recognized in all the branches. All information about customers is shared in a single system and with HansaWorld CRM we can pre-define through which communication channel and how often we want to be in contact with customer.

iStyle has managed to reduce the time spent on getting the overview of inventory and stock needs for each store dramatically, where ordering processes are automated between the main warehouse and stores.

“We now have a system, which is accessible remotely from anywhere in the world, which we didn’t think was possible. I can have all relevant information at my fingertips in a matter of minutes” says Mr. Bendali.

Future

The solution was implemented over many phases to allow iStyle to benefit from HansaWorld in a short space of time. Two phases have been completed and there are 2 more planned phases: Phase 3: Loyalty Scheme system to identify and reward VIP and repetitive customers; Phase 4: Introduce a central company where the other Apple Premium Partners (who are normally served by iStyle) can register their sales and follow up on the status of their orders.

With the growing number of showrooms, there will be a need to manage the maintenance and warranty of items sold. For this iStyle has plans to implement HansaWorld integrated Service order module, which will give better control to the service department.

iStyle is also considering using HansaWorld’s web shop and CMS module to have a fully fledged & integrated e-commerce solution in addition to maintaining the content of other aspects of the website.



About HansaWorld

HansaWorld is a business solutions provider with 20 years of experience in the international software market. It is our ambition to stay ahead of change and constantly offer customers more efficient ways of running their businesses. With close to 70,000 installations worldwide, we have the experience to be your future-proof software partner combining global knowledge and local representation.