

POS Software Paves The Way For Store Expansion

▲ A comprehensive POS system enables National Jean Co. to apply policies consistently across multiple stores.

by Julie Ritzer Ross

Most retailers experience growing pains when expanding from one or two stores to several. For National Jean Co. (Williston Park, NY), a comprehensive POS system is minimizing the challenges of expansion, as well as supporting it.

National Jean specializes in upscale denim apparel and related accessories, such as T-shirts and sweatshirts. Its target market is young men and women in the 15- to 26-year-old age bracket. The retailer currently operates four stores in the Long Island, NY area. A fifth store is scheduled to open in Boston in July 2004, and plans for a sixth store are in the works.

About two years ago, management of National Jean evaluated its existing POS system and deemed it lacking. "It was great for two or three stores, but we were in expansion mode and planned to be for the foreseeable future," said Helen Kim, a member of National Jean's management team. "We knew that in order to properly run multiple stores, we needed a system that would allow us tighter control at the checkout counter and easier access to information about day-to-day operations."

After evaluating several solutions, the company chose Run.It Point of Sale, a Windows-based POS application from Run.It Systems (New York). "We liked the fact that this solution was designed for installation by single- and multi-unit independent retailers and would give us the same information as larger retailers can get, without a matching price tag," Kim recalled.

System Aids Policy Enforcement

National Jean deployed the system in late February of



Systems automation is the rule for rapidly expanding retailers like National Jean Co.

has definitely improved the enforcement of policies governing transaction-related functions. "We have rules dictating what jobs employees can and cannot perform at the point of sale based on their levels," Kim explained. "For instance, only people of a certain standing are supposed to accept returns from a customer without a receipt or grant someone a discount for a reason other than

2004, going live one store at a time to ensure a smooth transition from the old POS software to the new. The Williston Park store has seven POS terminals on which Run.It resides; other stores have two terminals apiece. Most terminals are from Dell (Round Rock, TX).

Kim claimed that while it is too early for the retailer to be reaping the full benefits of the system, it

Installation Profile

Technology User: National Jean Co. (Williston Park, NY), a retailer of upscale denim apparel and related accessories, operates four stores in the Long Island, NY area. A fifth store is scheduled to open in Boston in July 2004, and plans for a sixth store are in the works.

Problem: In order to properly run multiple stores, the company needed a POS system that would enable tighter control over procedures at the checkout counter, as well as provide easier access to information about day-to-day operations.

Solution: National Jean installed Run.It Systems' (New York) Run.It Point of Sale, a Windows-based POS application that has built-in controls, making compliance with company policies automatic and consistent from store to store. The new software also enables National Jean to collect, store, analyze, and manage information on sales, customers, inventory, and cash flow.



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CASE STUDY

POS Software ■ Store Operations

the fact that he or she has a coupon or the item is on sale.

"Our original system did not allow us to build in control of functions by level, so it was hard to achieve complete adherence to our policies. By contrast, the Run.It program has built-in controls, so compliance is automat-

"[Automatic compliance is] essential when your store count is increasing."

Helen Kim, National Jeans



ic. That's essential when your store count is increasing," says Kim.

The new software also permits National Jean to collect, store, analyze, and manage information on sales, customers, inventory, cash flow, and the like. A wide range of available reports contain information on what merchandise is selling and which products are not moving quickly, who is buying from the stores and how often, how many of a given item are in stock, and when re-orders are warranted. Other reports indicate whether current cash flow supports open-to-buy, what vendors offer the best terms, and which associates generate the highest sales volumes.

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Helen Kim, National Jeans



An intuitive user interface helps associates navigate the POS screen.

stated. "So, we're far likelier now to base our decisions on real data. We are going to wait until the system has been in place for an entire year to determine its impact on overall operations, but we are sure that between the controls and the easier access to information, the software will foster our growth." □

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