



XKS Limited – Case Study

Home Bargains Runs iSeries Till System

A NorthWest based retailer, TJ Morris, trading under the name Home Bargains, is a glowing example of how the iSeries is used strategically throughout the whole business.

The Retailer

Home Bargains has over 80 stores positioned in prime high street locations primarily in the northwest, offering a range of low cost goods from cleaning products to confectionery and toiletries.

The objective of the Home Bargains stores is to offer low cost branded goods in attractive ambient surroundings. Stock changes in the stores from day-to-day, attracting customers to view the latest bargains on a regular basis.

Why the iSeries?

IT Director at TJ Morris, Tim Donovan explains why the company uses the iSeries throughout the business:

“Security and stability is paramount for us as a retail business, the iSeries guarantees this for us, which is why we are committed to the platform.

We are a growing business that has recently invested in a 32,500sqm distribution centre at Axis Park in Liverpool. We are cost conscious but are not prepared to cut corners that could impact on our day-to-day operation.”

Partnership Success

Up until fairly recently, the majority of TJ Morris' software development was conducted internally.

The development of technology is critical to the growth of a retail business and it became apparent that in order to focus on their core business, TJ Morris needed to relinquish some of the demands that I.T. placed on them.

This is where XKS fits in. XKS is a software development and support company serving companies UK wide, specialising in iSeries and AS/400 systems.

TJ Morris selected XKS to work on its I.T. development, as it was apparent from their customer base and history that they would offer a focused and personal service, which is what the retailer required.

“In XKS, we now have a skilled team dedicated to the development of our I.T. systems and we can now focus on the growth of our business.”

iSeries Versatility

TJ Morris runs its entire business on the iSeries and has worked with XKS to introduce the following systems to the business:

- Payroll
- Time & Attendance
- Access Control
- Point of Sale software
- Processing of credit & debit card transactions

The Integrated Point of Sale Solution

TJ Morris has built its business around the IBM Midrange platform, AS/400. This ranges from central servers at the company's head office to a server in each store to run tills and for processing credit & debit card information.

How the solution works

The system currently utilizes ethernet to contact the store based iSeries / AS/400 to the point of sale devices via a hub and 5250 emulation device, which in the case of TJ Morris is a LINUX box.

Written in RPG, the Till solution is not graphical and has no requirements for such enhancements. The tills are user friendly for both staff and customer with clear and explanatory displays. If required, the system can be offered as a graphical solution.

Latest Developments

The latest development to the till solution has been to install a Credit and Debit Card File Transaction and Authorisation module.

Transaction data is being collected using The XPOLL Management system, a polling solution developed by XKS and is being processed remotely at the XKS head office. This stage of development is currently being rolled out across all Home Bargains stores.

Through partnering with XKS, other retailers are now able to benefit from the technology that is crucial for our business to move forward.

