

WESTCOAST FULFILS HP'S UK GROWTH AMBITIONS



Under a previous UK fulfilment arrangement HP found that opportunities for business growth were slow to emerge. But a new service-rich supply solution from Westcoast has put the vendor back in the fast lane.

THE CHALLENGE

Back in 2012 HP held a supply and fulfilment agreement with a single distribution partner in the UK. A distribution partner that had global presence.

The trouble was that in some territories, including the UK, the vendor was seeing slower growth than desired.

As Westcoast's Logistics Director, Andy Newberry explains, the drawbacks of that distribution deal were plain to see:

“HP may have convinced itself it was enjoying a healthy degree of business rationality by working with a global partner. But the problem was that in the UK, the distributor didn't hold enough HP franchises to be fully effective,” he says.

“Overall, the territory was underperforming and the company began to realise it needed to do things differently and better to avoid missing out on all sorts of opportunities at a country level.”

THE SOLUTION

Towards the end of that year HP began conversations with long-standing UK and Ireland distribution partner Westcoast around revamping the whole of the supply process behind the 'HP store' website in the UK.

“The brief was they wanted a fulfilment partner who could offer them two things - service and growth,” says Andy Newberry. “The service had to be better than they were getting before plus they were absolutely focused on boosting their market share in this territory.”

RICHER SERVICE

Westcoast put forward a proposal for a richer, different type of fulfilment service based on providing both HP and site customers with a whole host of new benefits.

Says Newberry: “HP has always had a fantastic hit rate on its websites including the UK one because of its brand and presence. But it was keen to improve the conversion stats from people looking at products on the official website to actually buying those products – and that’s where Westcoast was able to deliver.”

MORE FEATURES AND FUNCTIONS

“So we were able to support a number of features and functionalities on the HP website around stock availability. Essentially it delivered a straightforward message to customers on the site – ‘the first time it’s available - you can have it’. That’s a promise Westcoast is in a unique position to make because it’s the UK’s largest HP distributor and has been for many years.”

The next area Westcoast looked at was speed of transaction. This was directly related to the effectiveness of the IT integration which Westcoast had to perform before the new HP Online Store went live.

SIMPLIFYING THE COMPLEX

Says Andy Newberry: “Westcoast excels when it comes to integrating our IT with somebody else’s platform. Even though HP’s back-end systems were complex and there were a vast number of regulatory hurdles we had to jump over – we did it.”

We’re awash with enthusiastic and talented IT people here at Westcoast and they are very good at making the complex simple.”

Westcoast focus on supporting HP’s vision to speeding up transactions meant the two firms worked closely on improving functionality.

For example, one enhancement gave customers the ability to reserve items of stock from the moment they expressed an interest in it.

Those items would be allocated to the customer right up until payment came through.

“This was a powerful facility for the site,” says Andy Newberry, “and HP loved it.”

CUSTOMER CONVENIENCE UPLIFT

The next part of Westcoast’s fulfilment service for HP was a complete upgrade in product tracking.

Says Newberry: “New functionality on the HP site meant customers could find out exactly what was happening with their product. It gave them peace of mind and options around delivery for their convenience. It also meant HP could communicate with the customer over text or email.”



THE OUTCOME

Westcoast's fulfilment service for the HP online store in the UK has delivered on both brief criteria – service and growth.

SERVICE:

The HP store is now service-rich for both vendor and end-customers.

Customers now benefit from:

- ✔ The availability of stock indicators
- ✔ A larger portfolio of HP products than before
- ✔ The ability to reserve HP stock
- ✔ The ability to bundle products with other HP products as well as complimentary brands e.g. Microsoft
- ✔ A number of advanced delivery services including next day delivery and delivery options for the customer
- ✔ Consolidated billing
- ✔ Longer payment terms



HP now benefit from:

- ✔ The ability to access a live feed to the HP website every 20 minutes showing mission critical data.
- ✔ The ability to reserve stock for a customer until credit checking and/or payment has been finalised
- ✔ A reduction in customer service resource
- ✔ An increase in repeat purchases

GROWTH:

Since Westcoast took over fulfilment duties on the HP website year-on-year growth for all categories of HP goods has rocketed.

- ✔ HP are thrilled with what Westcoast has been able to deliver in terms of growth acceleration, says Andy Newberry.

✔✔ **By helping them to change the way they did business we've created a new wave of business optimism for HP - and put them back in the fast lane once again.** ✔✔