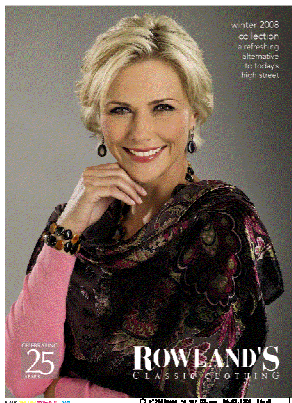


OPTIONS

Rowland's Classic Clothing expands business with integrated mail order and retail systems from Options

Established classic men's and women's clothing retailer invests in OPTIONS systems to manage sales in-store, by mail order and from its new website.

Rowland's opened its first shop in Bath in 1983, selling men's quality, classic clothing. Following its success, a women's range was founded and subsequently the launch of the Rowland's mail order catalogue.



The business has grown from strength to strength, now with eight shops across the south of the UK, including Bath, Bradford on Avon, Chichester, Farnham, Lymington, Marlborough, Salisbury and Dorchester. The company has also recently upgraded its website, which now operates as a full e-commerce operation, enabling customers the opportunity to purchase online.

Supporting multi-channel sales

Like many multi-channel retailers, Rowland's has invested in state of the art retail systems to support its operations. The company has implemented the OPTIONS suite of mail order management and

retail software systems to manage its sales made in-store, by mail order and online.

According to David Selby, Managing Director at Rowland's Classic Clothing; "A company like ours that sells to customers through different channels needs to have one integrated system that can control stock, sales and our customer database.

"We wanted to work with a company that understands the business of mail order and retail and the challenges that we face. Options provides a well-developed and mature system that is tried and tested that meets our needs."

Rowland's Classic Clothing is using the system across all of its business – sales data is captured centrally whether the customer purchases in-store, by mail order or online. The company has OPTIONS Mail Order Management System, which enables call centre agents to process both order and catalogue requests online. Because stock balances and future supplies are maintained real-time, the customer can be accurately advised on product availability, complimentary items and delivery dates. Customers' orders entered on Rowland's website are automatically received and fulfilled by OPTIONS.

Agents are also able to process payment and confirm orders and prices, entering credit or debit card details on screen as they speak with customers. The screens enable them to capture further customer details that are stored in the customer database, for future marketing campaigns.

In store developments

Following the success of the mail order implementation, Rowland's has worked with Options as a business partner to develop the retail (EPOS), used in the stores.

"We were delighted with the difference the system made to our mail order business and we wanted to extend the use across the stores. The needs of a retail business are changing all the time, and we needed a partner that understands this. Options worked with us to develop a system that supports our business now and that can be adapted quickly to meet changes as they happen – whether new



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banking regulations or market requirements,” explained Selby.

Intuitive and easy to use

Since the development of the EPOS system, Rowland's management team have complete visibility of sales and stock in real time. Staff in store can check availability of items in the warehouse or in other stores, enabling them to provide a much improved customer service. One particular feature that demonstrates the level of integration between the mail order and retail systems is the facility for shop staff to take a customer order for despatch through the mail order system, and for products to be returned and exchanged at any of the mail order or retail sale outlets independently of the original source of the sale. The retail development team at Options worked alongside Rowland's to design the till screens used in store, which are used by over fifty staff across the stores.

“Although it is a very sophisticated system, the touch screens are very easy to use,” said Selby. “We wanted any new systems to be intuitive, so that we did not have to spend a lot of time training up staff.”

Strong marketing tool

Customer data is captured from sales online and integrated into the central database, enabling the marketing team to view a customer's purchase history across all sales channels and providing them with a strong marketing tool. The marketing team is able to analyse mailings and responses to update the customer database. All access to the systems is managed by secure passwords, to ensure that information is protected and only used by the appropriate personnel.



“We can now see and analyse which customers purchase through which channels and market to them accordingly. We can also track the results of campaigns through the

system, identifying types of customers and where they live. We know that our customer database is up to date, which gives us a very powerful marketing tool,” said Selby.

Rowland's is delighted with the OPTIONS system - it gives them the control that the business requires to manage its multi-channel operations and react quickly to market changes. The integration that the system provides for the different sales channels has resulted in a number of business benefits including increased efficiencies in inventory management and order fulfilment, as well as better and more informed customer services.

“We process in excess 2000 orders per week, and so it is essential that with such stock turnover we can quickly assess what is selling and what's not. For retailers today it has never been more important to manage tight controls on stock and meet customer needs. We are confident that with OPTIONS we have a system that enables us to keep moving at the pace necessary for a successful business,” said Selby.

Options Mail Order Software Ltd
Tel: 01844 211 830 Fax: 01844 217 465
E-mail: enquiries@options-mailorder.co.uk