

Micronet has the answer for Amber ...

case study

Whether it was better inventory management, improving customer service or reducing operational costs, Micronet Systems had the answer to Amber's business challenges.

Back in 2001, Amber realised the company needed an integrated IT system to improve operational performance and support expansion of its franchise network. However achieving growth in recent years in the tile and stone industry has been tough. Faced with a flat building market, the industry is dominated by imported products and price commoditisation.

Yet Amber's decision to overhaul its IT systems has paid off. Today Amber is the most recognised retailer of tiling and paving solutions in the home renovations market. Since deploying the first pilot program at its Seaforth store, Amber has worked closely with Micronet Systems to streamline business processes and improve overall business efficiency.



*"Flexible Franchise Solution
has the Stone, Tile & Hard
Floor Industry Covered"*

"Micronet enabled Amber to make a generational change," said John Schrooten, Queensland State Manager, Amber Group Australia Ltd. "It has given us the flexibility we needed to meet the ever changing nature of our business and has grown with the demands and sophistication of our operations."

Streamlining Franchise Operations

Previously Amber was using an outdated windows-based warehouse system. Stores were manually placing orders, with sales people writing orders on a paper then phoning or faxing through to the warehouse.

With over 28 franchise stores located across NSW, ACT and SE QLD Amber needed better efficiency at retail point of sale. Fully automating customer ordering and delivery processes was a key factor in streamlining Amber's store operations.

Micronet's Franchise Solution enabled Amber to fully integrate retail POS systems with back-end warehouse, wholesale and accounting systems. Eliminating all paper-based processes at a store level, Micronet's electronic ordering system has greatly improved customer service and staff efficiency.

Integrating Wholesale and Retail Operations

To service its franchise network Amber operates a large wholesale and distribution centre from a 7000m sqm warehouse at Prospect in Sydney. With over 10,000 active product lines, sourced from a variety of local and overseas suppliers, improving inventory management was also high on the priorities list.

By fully integrating Amber's wholesale and retail operations, the Micronet solution provides full supply chain visibility with a paperless inter-company trading system and a centralised inventory master file.

"No longer are we operating from disparate supplier price lists and out of date shipping reports. All product data is maintained and updated centrally."

"Live stock on hand information is available to the entire store network, enabling stores to carry minimal stock levels and readily access stock from other locations."

The ability to generate customised customer purchase orders, with comprehensive delivery instructions for each component of a customer's order is now possible. Amber stores can see what stock is available in the warehouse or have orders placed on suppliers for delivery direct to customers, substantially improving lead times.





Flexible Solution Supports Unique Industry Processes

The in-built flexibility of Micronet's Franchise Solution enables Amber to readily customise its business processes to meet the changing needs of the industry

"We needed a solution that could handle our unique industry business processes without moving to a fully custom written software package. Micronet's solution was flexible enough to incorporate our changes and cost effective to support over the long term."

By customising the centralised product database, Amber efficiently handles product variations. Managing the small differences in shade and texture of natural stone products ensures customer orders fully match their in-store selection.

In addition customer purchase orders are converted automatically to pieces or boxes per metre, reducing order error rates and improving the efficiency of shipping functions.

On-Demand Business Analytics

A centralised data warehouse was implemented in 2009, fully integrating all business data and centralising analytics for greater business visibility.

Micronet's customisable reporting tools enable Amber to quickly make decisions on sales and product promotions, consumer buying patterns and long term trend analysis.

"The Micronet Franchise Solution created for the Amber Tiles Group a significant strategic and competitive advantage."

*John Schrooten, Qld State Manager
Amber Group Australia Ltd*

"Amber's head office can see live store sales data, reporting back useful benchmarking results and jumping on anything that is looking out of the ordinary. In the past we waited weeks to analyse these trends and stores spent hours doing end of day sales roll ups."

Reducing IT Cost and Complexity

Using a secure, centrally hosted environment Micronet manages Amber's network and server infrastructure, as well as centrally hosting software components and their data warehouse.

Removing much of the IT cost and complexity, franchise owners run their own business systems online without the need to install networks or maintain software in store.



About Micronet : Since the introduction of its first-generation product in 1983, Micronet Systems business solutions have been implemented in over 2000 companies. Servicing a diverse range of industries, Micronet Systems has customers and operations throughout Australia, New Zealand, United Kingdom, South Africa and the Pacific Islands.

Micronet Systems Australia

T: + 61 2 9542 2000

F: + 61 2 9542 2100

www.micronet.com.au