O'Neill Europe/JSI bv

O'Neill Europe/JSI bv improves sportswear delivery with hosted remote support

O'Neill Europe is a privately held company with 160 employees and its own clothing designs. The headquarters of O'Neill's European licensee, Joint Services International bv, is located in Warmond, the Netherlands. JSI is the company that designs, develops and distributes the complete O'Neill branded sports clothing and footwear collection for the European market. JSI has distributors in 34 countries that sell the products to many independent retail stores.

Since 1952, when Jack O'Neill opened his first surf shop in a garage across the Great Highway in San Francisco and sold his first wetsuits, the company has expanded into a worldwide designer and manufacturer of sports clothing and footwear. Products range from wetsuits, jackets, body warmers, vests, shirts, skirts and shoes to bags, belts, wallets and caps. Innovative designs include multimedia clothing with built-in connections for cell phones or MP3 players, and a solar backpack that includes a solar battery charger.

The challenge: supporting a business application all over the world

JSI O'Neill's clothes and shoes are manufactured by contract companies located all over the world, from the Middle East to India to South Africa. To be able to keep track of exactly what goods are produced, when they leave the 140 factories, and the distributor they are sent to, the organization provides all contractors with laptops, bar code scanners and an in-house-developed database application called Logiteg. Supporting this application and devices on the other end of the world was a real challenge.

Previously, the company used a locally installed remote control application. Unfortunately, talking users through changing settings or enabling or disabling features with this solution proved almost impossible. "It was not easy for the IT help desk of JSI to manage remote systems by phone, especially with non-English-speaking employees on the other side, or over Internet connections of varying quality, using a locally installed remote support application," said Peter Maljaars, manager, Service Desk at JSI. "We were looking for an easier way to administer remote support – a solution that would function well over low-bandwidth connections and would require no special skills for the employees."

Implementing GoToAssist for simple remote support

A new IT manager at JSI had gained good experience with Citrix® GoToAssist® at his former employer and recommended the solution. In addition, JSI had had good results with Citrix Presentation Server™ in the retail division. After a thorough review of alternatives, the JSI management team decided GoToAssist was indeed the best solution for their challenges. OpenLine, a Gold Citrix® Solution Advisor, assisted the company in quickly rolling out and implementing the solution at the help desk in the Netherlands and on all company laptops in the factories.

> " O'Neill products now leave factories as planned, and the continuity of the logistics process saves us a substantial amount of money. "
>
> Peter Maljaars
> Manager Service Desk
> O'Neill Europe/JSI

Key benefits

- Speeds resolution of application problems, improving clothing distribution process

- Reduces cost of IT staff travel to remote sites

- Helps avoid language barriers in the support process

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Because GoToAssist is Software as a Service, requiring no premise-based hardware or software installed at the remote sites, it was easy to get it up and running within a few hours. The IT help desk in the Netherlands now remotely supports the company laptops and the Logiteg application that are provided to the factories. Two users at each of the 140 factory locations operate the Logiteg barcode scanning application.

Reducing application downtime ensures distribution continuity

The Logiteg application is very important to JSI. If it is not working properly, the O'Neill products may be delayed in leaving the factories, which can impact scheduled deliveries. Even worse, products may leave unscanned – thus without the ability to trace them. Besides not knowing which products left the factory headed to what distributor, there are risks of piracy or loss of the trendy and innovative O'Neill branded products.

Maljaars said, "About ten times every year, O'Neill goods left factories unscanned. This was not acceptable. The GoToAssist solution helps us quickly solve errors and problems on our remote systems using any Internet connection a factory happens to use. O'Neill products now leave factories as planned and the continuity of the logistics process saves us a substantial amount of money."

Previously, to upgrade the scanning application and to solve related system problems, two members of the IT staff traveled for two weeks twice a year to visit factories and perform these support activities. Maljaars continued, "With GoToAssist this traveling is no longer necessary. Software upgrades are handled remotely by using the file transfer feature of GoToAssist and remotely installing the upgrade. Problems with corporate laptops are solved immediately on the phone. We are even able to eliminate time zone differences because now we can support the systems at times when the remote employees are not working. With our old system, in worst-case scenarios, we had to have the factories ship a laptop to us by mail, solve a problem, and send it back to the other end of the world afterwards."

The GoToAssist product is extremely easy to install at the service desk. There is no infrastructure to set up or maintain. In fact, for the remote sites, installation is not even needed. "We can simply provide a Web address, and are immediately able to remote support the PC with our application," clarified Maljaars. "Some countries have non-English-speaking employees operating the notebook and bar code-scanning application. The simplicity of enabling GoToAssist and using the remote assistance features is outstanding, which eliminates the need to speak to the remote employee about every support issue."

Future plans

JSI is investigating the use of GoToAssist within the retail division, especially when more O'Neill shops are opened as the division expands. Remote support and control of Point of Sale (POS) systems at the shops, for example, could prove very efficient.

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