



Using information to stay ahead of the game

If you're into sport, and you live in Victoria, the name Karl's Mega Sports is sure to be familiar. A locally owned family business, Karl's is the number one sports and surf retailer in all of its locations. Since the first outlet opened in the 1980s, Karl's has expanded to three megastores, employing around 60 people across the group.

THE FACTS:

- > Retailer of sporting goods and clothing, with three megastores in Victoria.
- > Required a retail management system to increase efficiency, accountability and control across the organisation.

THE SOLUTION:

- > A blended retail solution, utilising Shopkeeper for retail management, and QlikView for reporting and analytics.
- > 24 x 7 x 365 technical support and ongoing customer service.

THE RESULT:

- > The ability to set, track, target and report on KPIs, directly impacting buying decisions and sell-through.
- > Total visibility of crucial information across the entire organisation.
- > Detailed analysis of clothing inventory using Shopkeeper's Matrix module, with an 80% time saving.

In 2007, the company recognised a need for increased efficiency, accountability and control across the organisation. They were looking for 'an affordable end-to-end solution that was also very competitively priced'. Markinson responded to this need with a blended retail solution using Shopkeeper for retail management and a QlikView interface for business reporting and analytics.

This integrated functionality has allowed Karl's to gain total control of their operations, from point of sale to financials, sales, loyalty, inventory and reporting. Consultant and Acting CFO for Karl's Mega Sports, Darren Moncrieff explains, "In a business buying consumer goods, profitability is determined by the successes of buyers. The solution enables us to set, track, target and report on Key Performance Indicators. Great buying decisions mean efficient sell-through, which flow straight through to the bottom line."

With the majority of the retailer's product being clothing, Shopkeeper's Matrix module has been invaluable. "The Matrix module enables us to track and analyse items by size, colour, type and style whilst creating stock codes quickly. This saves us 80% of the time it would take to do the same task manually," Mr Moncrieff says.

Having been a customer of Markinson for over 10 years, and compared Markinson's solutions with competitors, Mr Moncrieff offers this advice for other growing retail businesses, "There's nothing as user friendly in the market for this price. It's so much faster and better than anything Quickbooks, SAP or SUN could offer. The way businesses are going, greater priority will be placed on monitoring business performance," he says, "I know businesses worry about the up-front investment, but the benefits and savings it can bring are unbelievable – and it's surprisingly affordable."

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"The Markinson solution has taken us through a stage when we needed to operate more tightly with greater visibility of numbers. By putting the right systems in place, we've achieved competitive advantage by using information to stay ahead of the game."

As an experienced global consultant seasoned in the field of business intelligence, Mr Moncrieff was pleased to have found a reporting tool versatile enough to be used across the entire organisation. "I knew that QlikView could be used effectively by a non-finance person to monitor sell-through, follow trends and access the information required."

Aside from the business benefits offered by the solution itself, Mr Moncrieff attributes the success of their partnership with Markinson to a high level of service and support. "The Markinson team provide personal service and are responsive to our needs," he says, "They work with us as a business partner, and we rate the relationship highly."

Mr Moncrieff says Karl's Mega Sports is looking forward to continuing their partnership with Markinson. "Every business needs growth, increased profitability and efficiency," he says, "Markinson work with us to find ways that improve our business."