



A modern platform to accelerate digital retail

Wilko needs to accelerate the digital transformation of its £1.6 billion retail business. To do so, it must upgrade its network infrastructure, establishing a secure, resilient platform. A five-year Fujitsu-managed service establishes a modern, secure and resilient network and points of sale (PoS) infrastructure across the UK-wide retail business. This improves network availability, reducing the risk of operational downtime in stores, and frees resource for new projects.

About the customer

Wilko is a UK high street retailer, founded in 1930. The business sells homewares and household goods, and has over 400 stores across the UK. Revenues in 2019 were £1.6 billion. The business remains in the control of the family of the founders.



Industry: **Retail**



Location: **UK**



People: **20,000**



Web: **corporate.wilko.com**

Challenge

Upgrade network infrastructure and establish a secure, resilient platform on which to drive digital transformation for customers.

Solution

- Five-year network managed service, including switches, firewalls and Wi-Fi access points for corporate and public Wi-Fi

“A five-year agreement was fundamental to deliver this critical capability. We’re both more invested in success, from design to implementation.”

Andy Knowles, IT Director, Wilko



12 weeks

to upgrade every PoS in 391 Wilko stores, with no loss of trading

Laying the groundwork for digital transformation

Wilko is a £1.6 billion retail business and is in a hurry to advance its digital transformation. The majority of Wilko's revenue currently comes from its 416 stores and it is looking to support future customer shopping habits. The challenge is to accelerate this transformation in a manner that is consistent, efficient and effective.

“You have to find a way to deploy new technology right first time and find ways to spread the cost while protecting our in-house team's capacity,” says Andy Knowles, Wilko's IT Director. “Deploying physical hardware can be a lengthy process and we need to benefit from the experience of others.”

With much of the retailer's disparate network components coming up to end-of-life, Mr Knowles wanted an end-to-end solution, spanning wireless, cable and security: “We wanted Wi-Fi throughout all stores to support our team members and our customers, to be more resilient against external threats and proactive in the way we manage the network. We wanted this delivered as a managed service.”

A long-term engagement to upgrade and optimise the network

Managed services are not always used at Wilko. The business prefers to get a balance of external and internally delivered projects. Mr Knowles says the breadth of the digital transformation and overhauling the network would have stretched his team to the limit. The Fujitsu solution is based on a five-year managed service. This ensures both parties have the time to get maximum value from the engagement. It means Fujitsu deploys, supports and optimises the network.

In March 2018, Fujitsu completed the network transformation of 416 Wilko stores. This involved the installation of 1,000 network switches and firewalls, and 5,000 Wi-Fi access points. The engagement is managed with a series of robust SLAs, says Mr Knowles: “We needed the help of Fujitsu in shaping a network that was fit for purpose for a modern retail business.”

The upgrade was followed by a complete overhaul of the PoS in all stores. Fujitsu managed the replacement of 3,964 legacy tills at the 416 stores, with a new P2PE-compliant solution, featuring 3,176 lanes of tills and 1,817 Wyse terminals. The final 391 stores were addressed in just 12 weeks.

From design to implementation to optimisation

The engagement leaves Wilko with a network infrastructure capable of supporting digital transformation. The network is secure, resilient and pervasive. It also frees the Wilko team to focus on new projects. The Fujitsu service wrap includes a network operations centre in India, and service desk in Portugal, along with UK support. Incidents are managed efficiently and the risk of any Wilko store suffering a network outage is greatly reduced.

“A five-year agreement was fundamental to deliver and support this critical capability,” says Mr Knowles. “We're both more invested in success, from design to implementation, support and optimisation. This is so much better for us than coordinating multiple suppliers.”

With the network upgrade successfully delivered, Fujitsu has been invited to explore other elements of Wilko's estate. A review of the print function found annual savings of £100,000 with a new managed print service. Fujitsu is also continuously analysing and improving the various solution elements to deliver continued benefits to Wilko.

“There is no way we could have undertaken a project the size and importance of the network upgrade, without a strong partner,” says Mr Knowles. “The success of the project, and the partnership, is helping us improve the confidence within the business to deliver our future.”

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