

Abra

Abra used Micro Focus solutions Vibe and GroupWise to enable secure online collaboration for employees.

Overview

Part of the Steinhoff International group, Abra is a furniture retailer with a network of nearly 100 stores in 80 towns and cities in Poland. The company employs 400 people, is headquartered in Krakow and provides a wide variety of furniture and homeware products at competitive prices.

Challenge

Abra's long-term aim is to open stores in all Polish towns with more than 20,000 inhabitants. To achieve this goal of sustainable growth, the company wanted to identify new efficiencies that would enable it to continue to high-quality products, at low prices, with rapid delivery times to customers.

Grzegorz Krzypkowski, IT manager at Abra, said, "As we expand our reach into new markets, we

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GRZEGORZ KRZYPKOWSKI

IT Manager
Abra

have a chance to build on economies of scale and the larger knowledge base of our growing workforce. Without ways to effectively collaborate, however, we are missing out on this opportunity. We wanted to help our employees share ideas and resources without compromising the security of customer information."

Solution

To enable secure, controlled collaboration between its employees, Abra decided to deploy Micro Focus GroupWise (previously a Novell product), replacing multiple email solutions with a single system for email, calendaring, task management, and contacts. The company teamed up with jama-tech for the implementation.

"Comparing the cost of GroupWise with competing solutions—taking into account both up-front and long-term licensing fees—we found that it was half the price while providing all the features we needed," said Krzypkowski. "jama-tech was our choice of partner as they always deliver on timelines, and are not afraid to make suggestions they think could take our business to the next level."

When jama-tech introduced Abra to Micro Focus Vibe as a temporary tool during some design work, the company was soon convinced to adopt the solution permanently. By



At a Glance

- **Industry**
Retail
- **Location**
Krakow, Poland
- **Challenge**
Inefficient processes were making it difficult for the growing company's employees to collaborate and innovate.
- **Products and Services**
Micro Focus GroupWise
Micro Focus Vibe
Micro Focus ZENworks Configuration Management
- **Success Highlights**
 - + Replaced multiple email systems with a single, feature-rich solution
 - + Saved time in areas such as document sharing, setting up new stores, and resolving customer issues
 - + Created a secure, efficient, collaborative environment where innovation can thrive

“Collaboration with GroupWise and Vibe helps our employees share ideas and work together. By unlocking innovation and making the most of human resources in this way, Novell solutions (now Micro Focus solutions) provide us with an important competitive advantage.”

GRZEGORZ KRZYPKOWSKI

IT Manager
Abra

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using the rich document management features provided by Vibe, Abra's employees can easily share and edit files, with automated, formalized processes for version control and approval.

“Vibe was an instant success among the Abra workforce,” said Krzykowski. “Previously, documents were often emailed out to different people in turn for feedback, so keeping track of the edits could be time-consuming and difficult. With Novell Vibe, we can publish a document to be viewed and edited by multiple people at the same time. At the end of the process, the manager receives a link to approve the final version.”

Abra relies on Vibe to improve the efficiency of its operations in a variety of ways. Employees use the tool to schedule and monitor tasks, helping them manage their workload. The company put Vibe to work building a template for the opening of stores, documenting the end-to-end process from signing the lease for a new location to fitting out the premises. Abra also created an evolving company knowledge base, frequently asked questions section and discussion forums within Vibe.

Krzykowski said, “Working with jama-tech, we continue to build on Vibe to add value to the business. For example, jama-tech extended the solution so that we can now use it to manage the customer complaints process and check that parts are in stock. In the future, we plan to build on Vibe to create a company intranet and newsletters. The applications are endless.”

With over 400 workstations to manage, Abra also decided to deploy Micro Focus ZENworks Configuration Management (previously a Novell product) to automate administrative tasks, further enhancing efficiency. “We used to write scripts by hand, but with ZENworks Configuration Management these tasks are all automated, saving us valuable time and effort,” said Krzykowski.

Results

GroupWise and Vibe are helping Abra make its expansion goals a reality.

“We estimate that deploying GroupWise and Vibe has helped us boost employee productivity by making it easier for our workforce to complete their responsibilities,” said Krzykowski. “These solutions offer a host of efficiencies, saving us time in areas such as document sharing, setting up new stores, and resolving customer issues. The time and effort we save can be diverted to focus on delivering exceptional service to customers.”

Removing the barriers to collaboration is also helping Abra innovate to get ahead. Krzykowski said, “In today's competitive marketplace, we cannot afford to stand still. Collaboration with GroupWise and Vibe helps our employees share ideas and work together. By unlocking innovation and making the most of human resources in this way, these solutions provide us with an important competitive advantage.”