

# Kingstown Associates

Utilizes Aptean Retail ERP to Transform Mail Order Business into Multi-Channel Retail Operation

## Industry

Mail Order Fulfillment Services

## Challenges

- » Lost orders through batched card payments
- » Duplicate order entry for online marketplace sales
- » Complex web store orders

## Benefits

- » Organic business growth of 29%
- » Doubled online sales in 12 months
- » Increased order accuracy and improved customer service and profitability
- » Single view of operations through integrated dashboards



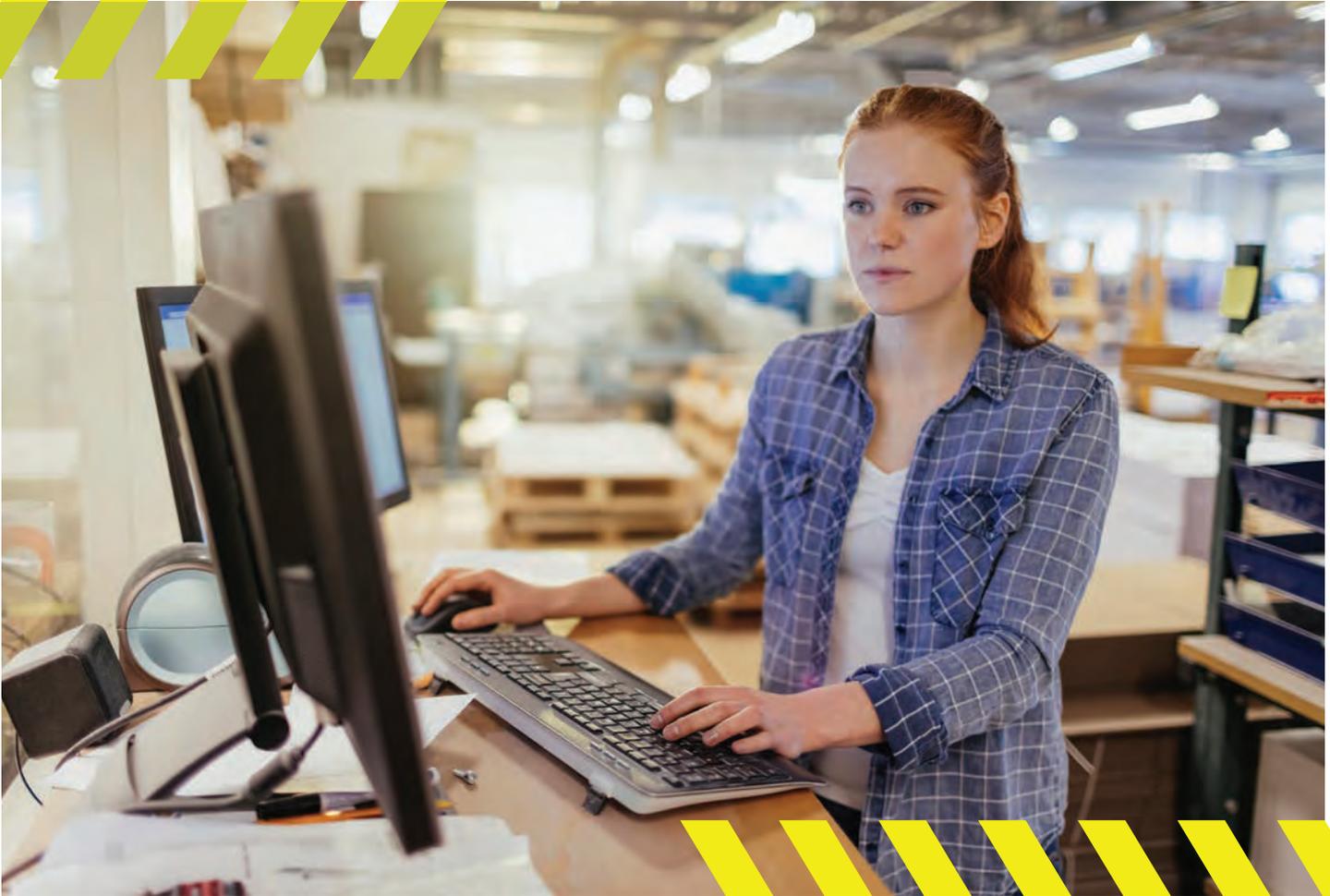
Transforming a traditional mail-order business for the over 60's into a complete multi-channel retail business has seen specialist retailer Kingstown Associates deliver organic growth of 29% in just two years.

Sending a million parcels a year and up to 75,000 catalogs out to customers every week, the business has replaced numerous legacy systems – that didn't talk to each other – with a modular retail ERP multi-channel system from Aptean.

Paul Chambers, Kingstown Associates Operations Director, knew the Aptean Retail ERP system would be a good fit. Chambers said, "We had outgrown our existing systems, so recognized that we needed to invest in a multi-channel retail solution that could improve the efficiency of our overall operations and support our ambitious growth plans."

**"Our sales are up, we have streamlined our operations, reduced costs and dramatically improved our ecommerce offering."**

**Paul Chambers** Operations Director, Kingstown Associates



“Put simply, we wanted to be able to see exactly what was going on in our business at any point in time, so we could make informed commercial decisions that would improve our levels of service and profitability. So, following an analysis of the systems on the market, we opted for the Aptean Retail ERP *Elucid Edition* multi-channel retail solution.”

## **Business process analysis key to successful implementation**

The implementation of the Aptean Retail ERP system followed a detailed business process analysis (BPA), which involved Aptean consultants working together with the Kingstown team to analyze every part of its operations.

By mapping out the processes and understanding how the modules could introduce industry best practices, the Kingstown team could streamline business operations and introduce other positive changes to the business.

Before Kingstown signed the contract, the BPA process was undertaken, ensuring it had the right integrated solution for a single-day switch over to the new system.



## Integrating the sales order process

A key benefit of the Aptean multi-channel retail system is integrating the sales order process across Kingstown's multiple channels of eight branded websites, Amazon and eBay Marketplaces, telesales, postal orders, and its factory outlet store.

Paul added, "The automation, integration and data the system gives us has led to a significant increase in operational efficiency, without the need to increase staff levels. For example, we can now spot ordering trends much quicker, matching them with stock levels, that in turn influence our product purchasing decisions."

## Faster order processing and zero lost orders

With 40% of orders taken by its team of 50 telesales staff, the implementation of a faster, more accurate payment process has eliminated lost telephone orders, increasing the overall volume of sales.

It also removed the time spent trying to re-contact customers whose card details were declined in the previous batch card payment process, which led to lost sales.

**"As a business, we are currently responsible for the sale of over 10,000 products through eight different brand channels. We needed an **integrated system** that could give us a 'single version of the truth' in a dashboard format, that we could **view at the touch of a button.**"**

**Paul Chambers** Operations Director, Kingstown Associates

## New ecommerce sites double online sales

The launch of seven new ecommerce sites for Kingstown brands on the integrated Aptean Retail ERP ecommerce platform, with improved functionality, has increased Kingstown's online revenues by 100% within 12 months.

It has also seen dramatic growth in its eBay and Amazon Marketplaces, which now account for over £500,000 in extra revenue since they were launched. By automatically downloading its marketplace sales through Aptean Retail ERP *Elucid Edition*, the business has also eliminated the need for duplicate order entry, helping it maximize the fulfillment of same-day dispatched orders.

Commenting on its online sales strategy, Paul added, "When we set out the objectives for a new system, a key goal was to drive ecommerce growth year on year. By investing in online marketing and increasing visits to our ecommerce sites through our catalog advertising, we anticipate online orders continuing to grow rapidly".

**"By integrating our delivery and returns process, we have improved our overall customer service and experience. We are now able to offer increased delivery options, and the time it takes to deal with returns has been reduced by at least 50%."**

**Paul Chambers** Operations Director, Kingstown Associates

## Improvements from the first point of contact to deliveries and returns

With the business sending over a million parcels a year and up to 75,000 catalogs a week, a detailed review of mailing operations and returns management formed a critical part of the BPA process.

Implementing the Aptean multi-channel retail system has provided Kingstown with the flexibility to update its warehouse operational processes. These critical improvements have resulted in quicker, more accurate deliveries and a simpler returns assessment, refund, and re-stocking process.

Commenting on the changes, Paul said, "By integrating our delivery and returns process, we have improved our overall customer service and experience. Our delivery partner now also has all the information they need to plan delivery routes more efficiently, speeding up the order-to-delivery process. In practical terms, we are now able to offer increased delivery options, and the time it takes to deal with returns has been reduced by at least 50%."

"By integrating warehouse stock received with order taking, picking and dispatch, we have also eliminated paper-based systems and are currently considering moving to voice order picking," explains Paul.

In terms of warehouse management, Kingstown now has greater visibility of the combined sales from its ecommerce, telesales, mail order and EPoS channels via Aptean Retail ERP *Elucid Edition* – so it knows which products to place towards the front of its warehouse. This has led to a complete transformation in how it utilizes its 250,000 sq. ft. of space – reducing order picking times while increasing stock rotation.

## Business information at the touch of a button

Without question, the Aptean multi-channel retail system has transformed the way the Kingstown business operates. With its single version of the truth, delivered through intuitive dashboards, at any one moment, staff can access accurate, business-critical information that helps them deliver a better and consistent customer experience.

Staff can also produce reports to analyze trends and better understand order patterns, improving the overall buying process and stock management.

## A phased approach to growth

Paul concluded, “Having gone through the BPA and implementation process with Aptean, we have made a positive start to the transformation of our business. Our sales are up, we have streamlined our operations, reduced costs and dramatically improved our ecommerce offering.”

“We now have a robust platform for growth, achieved with minimal additional headcount, and we are focused on the next phase of our multi-channel journey with Aptean.”



## Are You Ready to Learn More?

Aptean Retail ERP can help improve your multi-channel operations, streamline efficiencies, and reduce costs. Find out how, now.

Contact us at [info@aptean.com](mailto:info@aptean.com) or visit [www.aptean.com](http://www.aptean.com).



### About Aptean

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