



**Chelmsford Star -
the Co-operative**
at the heart of essex

Celtech[™]

Chelmsford Star Co-operative Society go real-time in record time with ab-initio to strategically reposition the business for growth

Chelmsford Star had reached a point where the Retail Management Systems for both the Food and Department Store business needed to be replaced, and at the same time the CEO was looking to strategically reposition the business for growth. Celtech, with a track record of delivering true real-time solutions worked in partnership with Chelmsford star to deliver a total system replacement in record time.

The challenge:

- To replace both the systems and the supporting technical architecture in a six week period
- To strengthen yet streamline operational processes in order to increase productivity, sales and profitability
- To improve operational reporting across the business in order to enable executives to make more timely and informed decisions
- To facilitate a move to multi-channel retailing, e.g. Click and Collect

Our solution:

- One fully integrated and centralised retail management system with true real-time reporting across the business for both the food and department store operations
- A fully managed service, allowing the client to focus on running the business

The results:

- Establishing real-time visibility to all aspects of the business, delivering improved control and operational agility
- Establishing a strategic foundation for growth
- The ability to strengthen and streamline operational processes, using ab-initio as the enabler

“We wanted to implement a new integrated solution that would act as a strategic enabler for growth and I have every confidence that in implementing ab-initio that is exactly what we have.” Barry Wood, CEO, Chelmsford Star Co-operative

The challenge:

The society was established in 1867 and has traded since its formation with the sole intention of meeting the needs of its members, and sharing profits with them. Braintree Co-operative Society merged with Chelmsford Star Co-operative Society in 1969 to create the currently structured co-operative society, retaining the name Chelmsford Star. From relatively humble beginnings the society has developed by prudent investment, insightful management and the support of members and other customers to become

a meaningful trading presence in mid-Essex operating convenience food stores, departmental stores, travel agencies, funeral businesses and renting property.

With the increasing complexity of the business, Chelmsford Star wanted to replace both the systems and the supporting technical architecture in a six week period leading up to Christmas. The challenge was to strengthen yet streamline operational processes in order to increase productivity, sales and profitability at the

busiest time of the year to maximise sales.

The implementation of the new real-time system would also improve operational reporting across the business in order to enable executives to make more timely and informed decisions.

The solution:

Chelmsford Star had a clear set of objectives for delivering a world class retail management system. Primarily they wanted to be able to identify the location of stock and facilitate more effective stock control, reduce central administration by improving efficiencies through a single point of entry on pricing, product and promotional information, provide ease of use membership services, deliver targeted membership promotions through the use of basket analysis and to facilitate a move to multi-channel retailing via Click and Collect.

This led to Chelmsford Star selecting ab-initio as the retail management system of choice. The totally integrated architecture that ab-initio provides, delivered the ideal framework for helping the client meet their list of objectives. The ability to take product

and pricing information electronically from the Co-operative Group and providing best in class pricing, ranging, promotions and customer loyalty capabilities gave the client the ideal foundation for providing a unique customer experience.

Establishing a true real-time reporting of business performance, provided the client with the ability to make more informed decisions faster, thereby enabling the client to react quicker to changing market conditions.

The delivery of a totally managed service enabled the client to focus on the key task of running the business, knowing that the systems were being supported in a professional manner. Celtech consultancy services continues to work with Chelmsford Star

Built upon the foundation of the product database, ab-initio established real-time visibility across all aspects of the business, delivering improved control and operational agility. This has delivered a strategic base for growth and the ability to streamline operational processes.

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