

# Pursuing growth dreams in China



## Home improvement giant realizes expansion ambitions with Wincor Nixdorf's New Store Opening solution.

For 40 years, home improvement retailer B&Q has fired up the imagination of consumers to make their homes better. That drive to inspire consumers to fix, build or decorate has flourished into a global brand, making it the third-largest home improvement retailer in the world and the market leader in Europe.

As early as 1996, B&Q had opened its first store in Taiwan. By 2001, the retailing giant had launched a third store in Shanghai – its fourth location in China. Even though Asian market growth played a part in B&Q's \$6.1 billion-a-year story, the retailer knew it could do better.

After an extensive search, the company chose and adopted Wincor Nixdorf's Managed Total Store Portfolio to open and support its new store locations. Referred to as the "New Store Opening" (NSO) solution in the Asia-Pa-

cific region, Wincor Nixdorf helped B&Q open between three and four locations every quarter in the world's largest consumer market.

Initially, B&Q had its own dedicated IT team to open stores. The team, however, struggled with the time-consuming task of finding and managing multiple vendors, and implementing all systems such as networks, wiring and POS hardware. The need for separate business processes to work on a store opening was also taxing because the entire system put pressure on a few key individuals to travel between cities every time a new location was launched to oversee operations, pulling them away from their core duties.

With Wincor Nixdorf's complete setup and implementation service, B&Q was able to open new stores at a blistering pace, without always having to be on the ground. "B&Q was

very clear about its global aspirations and we knew we had the right methodologies and expertise to accelerate their growth in China," says David Tay, Regional Director, Technical Solution/CIO, Services Division at Wincor Nixdorf Asia Pacific. "We knew that we could capitalize on what they had already achieved and make a good thing better."

The backbone of the NSO solution is a complete and ready-to-use ICT (information and communications technology) infrastructure for each newly opened location. Eighty percent of the solution and work processes are common across most retailers, covering POS devices, server applications, client productivity, storage, security, network infrastructure and operating systems. The remaining 20 percent are customized to the customer's specific front- and backoffice needs. This service in-

cludes product solutions related to in-store solutions, CRM (customer relationship management), logistics, inventory management and/or ERP (enterprise resource planning).

Wincor Nixdorf assembled and set up compliant ICT infrastructures for each new store and integrated them into B&Q's overall system landscape. As part of the project, the IT company also provided 830 Beetle POS devices for 40-plus stores in China, as well as software support services.

When B&Q bought 13 stores in China from Germany's Obi, Wincor Nixdorf also upgraded and harmonized these newly-acquired infrastructures into B&Q's environment within six months. The company performed the work successfully behind-the-scenes without the need to close any stores for system and network integration.

Part of the project's overall speed came from standardization. To reduce complexity, Wincor Nixdorf made the store layout – from the ICT infrastructure and documentation to the telephone numbering system – consistent across all cities and locations. This approach enabled the software installation, set-up and layout of POS counters, cashiers' training and end-to-end testing to be done swiftly and efficiently.

Besides Wincor Nixdorf's POS solutions, retailers also need an array of third-party solutions within the store. Wincor Nixdorf turned to its extensive partnership network to complete the job. In China, the company has a

network of partners across 80 cities to ensure the right mix of pricing, knowledge, servicing and procurement.

One Wincor Nixdorf contact point was used across the retailer's project environment – across all cities and locations – to manage an array of service partners. The single point of accountability guaranteed consistency and saved on the time and cost needed to manage multiple vendors for third-party procurement. Wincor Nixdorf also ensured projects were completed on-time and on-budget by applying systematic and standards-

based best-practices such as Project Management Institute and ITIL Methodology. "B&Q needed flexible services with tailor-made solutions and Wincor Nixdorf was able to provide that," Tay says.

Overall, B&Q enjoyed a number of workflow efficiencies, including a single point of contact to coordinate more than 10 different vendors, as well as a 10 percent saving on central procurement costs. Today, B&Q's reach extends from Dublin to Wuhan, including B&Q Beijing, which is now the largest B&Q store in the world. ■



B&Q China's in-store interior design service.

B&Q China's store in Shanghai (left) and the revamped store in Putuo.



**B&Q**

- **Company:** British home improvement chain headquartered in Eastleigh near Southampton
- **History:** Established in March 1969 by Richard Block and David Quayle in Southampton
- **Stores:** B&Q currently operates 330 home improvement stores, in addition to 9 stores in Ireland and 47 in China.
- **Market position:** B&Q is the largest home improvement company in the U.K. with a market share of 14.8 percent, including craftsmen and building materials.

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