

Windows Vista Business Customer Achievements

A lot of PC's are being advertised today as being loaded and ready with Windows Vista. At G7 we have been aware of the Vista operating system for some time and we have carried out various tests since way back when the Beta versions were released, to check its compatibility with the G7 Retail System, Microsoft have now released a Business version of Windows Vista. Unfortunately in the business world new operating systems have to be compatible with users existing software and hardware.



As a software platform, the G7 Retail System runs well on Vista but the continued lack of device drivers (software required to talk to the hardware) means we cannot give it the green light just yet. Microsoft have announced an intended Service Pack (SP1) release containing, amongst other things, device drivers: "The update will be available in the latter half of 2007".

Congratulations to the following customers who won awards at the Garden Retailing Awards for Team Success 2007 :

Woodcote Green Garden Centre - 'Gold Winners ' mid sized Garden Centre of the year 2007 and best marketing idea.

Sunshine Garden Centre - 'Gold winner' small garden centre team of the year 2007.

Rivendell Garden Centre - 'Regional Winner' greatest catering team (North).

St Bridget Nurseries - 'Regional Winner' greatest catering team (South West) and 'Gold Winner' team of the year.

Also...

Congratulations to Old Railway Garden Centre who all passed the HTA Plant & Shop Care Awards scheme.

New Customers 2007 G7 Staff It's Show Time

We are pleased to welcome the following new customers who have joined us so far during 2007:

- Grosvenor Garden Centre, Cheshire
- Burford Garden Centre, Oxfordshire
- Hathern Nurseries, Loughborough
- Greatfields Garden Centre, Swindon
- King Acre Landscaping, Tring
- Ashton Garden Centre, Lancashire
- National Museums Northern Ireland
- Woodford Park Garden Centre, Cheshire
- Victoria Garden Centre, Pontefract
- St Bridget Nurseries, Exeter

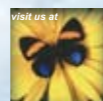
We would like to welcome the following new members of staff who have joined the team in 2007:

Keith Jenkins – Sales Executive
Jo Budd – Trainee Accountant
Russell Messum – Engineer

The following staff have been appointed new positions within the company:

Rob Gentles - Sales Manager
Paul Reeves - Support Manager
Bary Quantrill - Customer Development Manager

Come along and meet the G7 team during 2007/08



Four Oaks Trade Show - 4th & 5th September 07. Stand E176 & E177



Glee - 16th, 17th & 18th September 07. Hall 3/3am stand M30



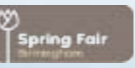
HTA Annual Conference and Dinner - 14th to 16th October 07.



GCA Annual Conference - 20th to 23rd January 08



Farma Conference and Trade Show - 13th November. Stand number 12.



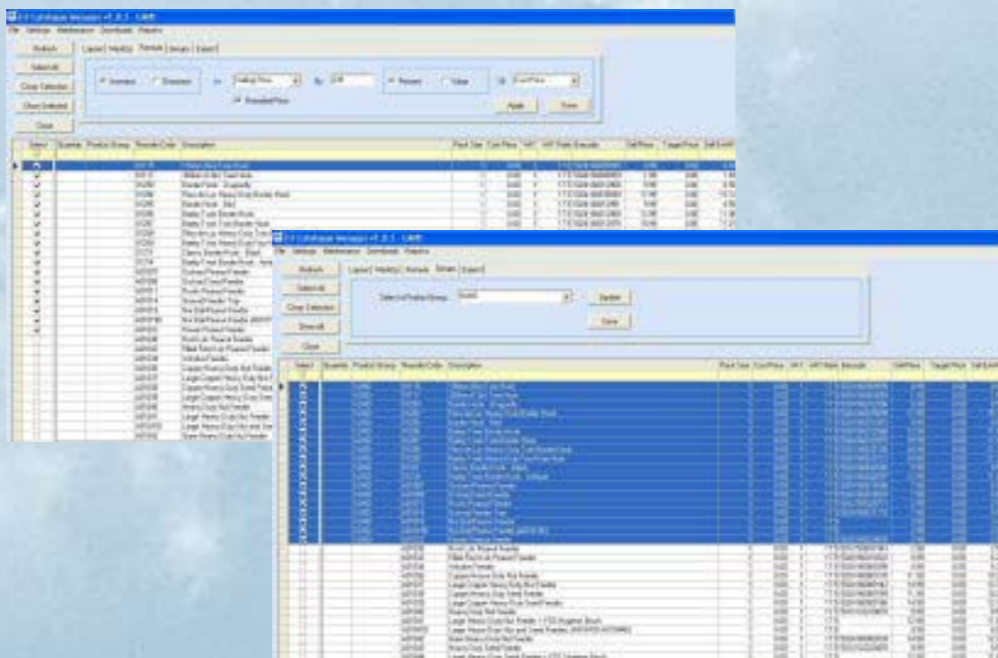
Spring Fair - 3rd to 7th February 08. Stand number to be confirmed

Catalogue Manager

Previously known as Datamanager, our software team have re-developed the application and it has been released under a new name 'Catalogue Manager'. The functionality of the program remains the same, however we have introduced a more user friendly version, in both appearance and navigation. We have also made it easier to export from and import into the system.

Catalogue Manager will be available to all customers when they migrate to the new system.

We have taken the stress and hard work out of catalogue formatting, and made available approximately 300 supplier catalogues for you to download from the G7 website in the customer secure area. These are maintained and kept up to date on a regular basis. New catalogues are also frequently being added to the list as and when customers request them.



TAKE NOTE!!

Look out for our new monthly E Newsletters. Each month we will be sending an update to both customers and prospects on the latest news and developments. If you would like to be added to the mailing list please email Zoe (zoeshelbourne@g7.co.uk)

The 0870 numbers will be phased out throughout August and will no longer be available thereafter. Please ensure you use the following numbers when dialling G7:
Main: 02392 248 550
Support: 02392 248 552
Fax: 02392 248 551

Keep your Chip & Pin pads clean to prevent faults! Card reader cleaning wipes are now available to order via our website or by contacting the Account Managers on:
T: 02392 248 563.

Warning! Please do not purchase versions of Norton Antivirus or any other type of security software/Windows based tools, without consulting a member of the support team before hand.

Get 'interactive' with G7's latest development...

The Interactive Product Finder (IPF)

Are you looking for something to entice your customers into your store? Do you want your customers to have more product choice? If so you may be interested in G7's 'Interactive Product Finder', a searchable database that can operate from a Touch Screen information centre, or Kiosk based system and is not EPOS dependent.

The objective of this exciting new product is to increase foot fall and therefore sales opportunity by offering the customer a more comprehensive product range via an internet style shopping experience.

So... what are the features of the Interactive Product Finder?

- A web based product containing a number of supplier catalogues.
- Products would be classified under Product Categories, Description and Manufacturer with possible Sub Categories where appropriate and would include both Plants and Dry Goods.
- The retailer would select which Suppliers and Categories to use.
- The Customer would be able to browse by any combination of the above options.
- The search could optionally be linked to an Epos/Stock Control system to show in-store availability.

Customers would be able to create an Order for any of the chosen items with an option to accept payment in full or a deposit via online credit card processing.

Orders could be collected in-store or delivered direct.

As well as all the above features, other facilities offered at the terminal would be to:

- Collect customer details for future mailing/emailing or Loyalty clubs
- Display a diary of events
- Display current promotions and offers
- Collect customer feedback

Are you interested in going Interactive? If so please call the Sales team on 02392 248 550 to request further information.



CUSTOMER PROFILE Claire Binns (Marketing & Events Manager), Grosvenor Garden Centre



of the country's most progressive garden centres.

An efficient EPOS system along with first-rate system support is essential for the day to day running and stock control of a 21st century garden centre. It was over 10 years ago that we dipped our toe in the EPOS pond, 3 system changes later and we're sure it will be 4th time lucky!!! Our system now includes 9 touch screen tills, over 15 back office PCs, 2 label printers and 5 Picco handsets. G7 have been with us all the way, guiding us through the hiccups and solving the inevitable teething problems.

There is never an ideal time to install a new EPOS system so we bit the bullet and G7 was installed on 14th February right in the middle of the busy half-term holidays. Despite this the system coped, and touch wood it has not crashed yet!

When 2 of our previous EPOS suppliers tills failed on the Friday before the end of May Bank holiday, G7 worked late to re-programme the new tills. Tom Smith, IT Support remembers, "When the tills went down I knew

the coming weekend would not be easy for our cashiers even with the Q Buster. I drove down to Portsmouth and collected the tills from G7 offices at 9.30am on Saturday. By 4.30pm I was back at the Garden Centre and the tills were up and running".

The ongoing support we receive from G7 is essential. They deal with any problems that crop up and they really do call you back and keep you updated when they say they will! The support history feature on the website is also invaluable as you can track the progress on any faults that are being investigated. The system support, training programme and 'can do' attitude were some of the reasons we opted for G7. Iain Wylie, Managing Director commented, "From initial discussions with G7 they promised to provide us with the training and technical support we required and they haven't let us down. If the system can't do something we want it to, instead of it being a problem, G7 just go away and write some new programming providing us with the system that we want".

Linda Houghton, Lifestyle Buyer and Ged Wilcock, Green Buyer both agree that it is much faster and easier to input new products, and G7's Cube reporting

programme gives access to a wide range of meaningful reports which give data on sales, stock levels and turnover at the touch of a button in a consistent format. This makes everyone's life easier in the buying office and in accounts, where the consistency of the reports has made accounting reporting much more straightforward.

With the comprehensive training offered and user friendly screens our staff have picked it up quickly and are relieved that they now have tills that do not crash every weekend!

G7, EPOS for Garden Centres – it does what it says on the tin!



When it first opened its doors in 1974, Grosvenor Garden Centre then named Pulford Garden Centre, with 12 members of staff was primarily a DIY store, selling paint, tools, paving, timber and nails, with a small house plant and garden department selling fertilisers and weed killers, as well as a small outdoor plant area offering sheds and wooden gates; needless to say EPOS was a long way off!

Following a few name changes and some rapid growth, Grosvenor Garden Centre, which covers a 14-acre site and now employs over 120 highly trained staff, has witnessed the many changes that have shaped the gardening industry today. As a member of The Garden Centre Association, and the only garden centre to achieve the status of Garden Centre of Excellence for seven consecutive years, Grosvenor is regarded as one

Training Update

The More Profit Workshops held in conjunction with Neville Stein have proved to be very popular this year, and those customers who have attended all fed back lots of positive comments. We recognised that many garden centres could be using EPOS data to significantly improve their profitability. Consequently, we developed a workshop that would give managers, owners and buyers the tools to understand important financial concepts and how to apply them to retailing.

We will be running three more workshops this year; one at Grosvenor Garden Centre on 11th October, one at Ben Reid Garden Centre in Aberdeen on 24th October and one here at Waterlooville on 1st November. If you would like to attend please contact Zoe Shelbourne on 02392 248 568. We can also organise a workshop specifically for your site if this is something you would be interested in doing. Again, please contact Zoe.

We are currently in the process of planning new ideas for how we deliver the training throughout the second half of 2007/2008. If you have any ideas you feel you would like to contribute please email the training team on training@g7.co.uk

Keep a look out for training updates on our new monthly E-newsletters.



Neville Stein putting his 'More Profit' talents into action at NWF, Woodford Park



Card Printing

New service. We are able to offer a card printing service to design and print full colour/double sided plastic cards for the following:

- Loyalty
- Gift
- Employee
- Or any other requirements you many have

Please contact Hannah Cook on 02392 248 550 for more information on this service. Alternatively email your enquiries to: accountmanagers@g7.co.uk



Expanding into New Markets

Part of our 2007 Sales plan has been to seek out opportunities in new markets, and back at the beginning of the year we secured a very different G7 customer and installed our system into 'The National Museums of Northern Ireland'.

Established under the Museums and Galleries order in April 1998, the National Museums and Galleries of Northern Ireland include the Ulster Museum with Armagh Museum, The Ulster Folk and Transport Museum and The

Ulster American Folk Park.

Five G7 systems were successfully installed into The Ulster Folk and Transport Museum in April, and another three systems were installed into The Ulster American Folk Park in June.

This is a new and exciting venture for G7 and we are very pleased to have National Museums of Northern Ireland on board. Because of the industry we work in our system has been developed in such a way that makes it extremely

versatile to operate in other retail outlets.

We are looking forward to branching into new markets, such as giftware, pets and aquatics.

Jim Berkeley, Commercial Manager at National Museums of Northern Ireland commented, "We needed to implement an EPOS system as quickly as possible, and G7 were able to meet our requirements effectively and efficiently".



All dressed up in the American Folk Park

EPOS in Farmshops

Wheatcroft Gourmet Food Hall - NWF Group Plc

The NWF Group has a trading history dating back to 1871 and today comprises of four separately managed divisions: Distribution, Feeds, Fuels and Garden Centres. NWF Garden Centres operate six established centres throughout the UK. Each site offers a vast range of products in their own unique environments, creating a lifestyle destination to the surrounding community.

These are Rivendell near Widnes, Wheatcroft in Nottingham, Dukeries near Worksop, Victoria in Yorkshire, Woodford Park in Cheshire and Ashton Park in Manchester.

In October 2006, we introduced a new fresh food proposition into both Wheatcroft and Woodford Park, 'The Gourmet Food Hall'. We created an environment where our customers could purchase fresh local produce including meats, vegetables, cheeses and cakes etc. helping support the local farmers and community while also enjoying the finer products in life.

We decided to introduce G7 (with integrated scales) into the food hall due to the continued success of the main system running in 4 of our centres. Using one system throughout the centres has allowed us to manage every aspect of the operation including monitor stock levels, sales analysis and useful reports, to name but a few.

The staff working in the food hall find the system extremely user friendly and through the training provided have quickly become conversant with the till and back office procedures.

Ian James, Marketing Manager at NWF



Garden Centre Catering

Neville Stein, Ovation Business & Consultancy

Any enthusiastic shopper will tell you that 'retail therapy' is exhausting! Dedicated shoppers need refreshment, and smart operators such as Starbucks and Costa Coffee make money by positioning their coffee shops in the centre of retail activity.

Garden centres are now waking up to the enormous potential offered by tired and thirsty customers. Many are thinking of installing or building a coffee shop for the first time, perhaps prompted by the excellent HTA research which shows that one in eight garden centre customers have visited a garden centre specifically to use its café or restaurant. (These visitors are most likely to be women, over 65 and either keen or marginal gardeners.) In addition to this interesting statistic, the research shows that six out of ten people who used a garden centre café or restaurant said that it was important that a garden centre had such a facility, and a third of garden centre visitors also said that the presence of a café influenced their choice of garden centre. Of course, the most important statistic supporting a coffee shop facility is the increase in revenue it can

bring, both in catering spend and knock on garden centre sales!

If you consider that just over half the population visit a garden centre at some point in the year, and the average number of visits is 6 times a year. This means that garden centres have 144 million annual opportunities to sell a cup of tea, coffee or even a meal!

A massive opportunity, but beware of catering complacency! Cafes or restaurants should not just be an additional service for your customers. They must make money! It is important that any catering facility is set up as a separate cost centre within the business. Accurate information must be gathered in order to assess the profitability of the operation and to identify how profit can be improved.

What then are the important financial ratios to consider? Clearly wage costs as a percentage of total sales is fundamental. If wage costs are too high you will lose money. You need to understand the gross

profit per item sold, monitor wastage and track each item's volume of sales. This will enable you to identify demand and plan accordingly. All this data can easily be collected and processed by installing an EPOS system. It will help you drive your business forward, improve your gross profit and enable your staff to work more effectively. Cater with confidence and stay in control!



Photo courtesy of Welequip and Playdell Smithymen