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Rachael Allen of Global Retail Management = RA

Transcript

RA: Kelly, why you would like to talk about the GoldTech Retail Manager System today?

KO: First and Foremost, the GoldTech Retail Manager is built from the ground up as a 21st century technology system. Our system has no baggage from legacy systems, particularly systems that were created and brought forward from the 1990s. The GoldTech Retail Manager System allows the retailer's sales associates to concentrate on their customers instead of the software that runs their registers.

Our system has been in development for over four years. In order to enable the extraordinary fault tolerance and scalability we have built into our system, the GoldTech Retail Manager System takes advantage of the latest in available hardware, operating system, and database technology on the market This allows a retailer to concentrate on running their operation - not on their software systems. As everyone knows, that can be a huge drain on resources and keeps them from paying attention to what's important: their customers.

An investment in the GoldTech Retail Manager System assures the retailer that their software can grow with them without the need to continually modify the software. This dramatically lowers their total cost of ownership and increases the speed of offering new store capabilities.

RA: How does the Manager System deal with network and back office service areas?

KO: Every retailer's worst nightmare is that their store systems fail during the largest rush they've ever experienced and their customers walk out without being able to complete their purchases.

Statistics have shown that after 2 to 3 bad experiences that customer is gone, usually for good. With our system you can break the network at any point, lose the store back office system, lose the home office system and the cashier and the customer never notices it. As soon as the register detects the connection to the back office again, it starts seamlessly moving the accumulated data without any end user intervention. It's the same scenario between the store's back office and the home office.

What it boils down to is as long as you've got power to a register, you can ring sales. The obvious benefit this provides to the retailer is measurable and money is added to the bottom-line.

And I have to beat this drum: if that customer leaves your store without being able to purchase what they want that is money lost to that retailer. Worse still, that bad experience may lead to the customer never coming back

RA: How does this capacity compare with previous models and, indeed, other such systems on the market?

KO: Based on our market research, to the best of our knowledge, no one else on the market offers this level of fault tolerance. On the GoldTech Retail Manager System you could turn the power off to the network and the register will not miss a single beat. It immediately detects the server as soon as it comes back online and starts moving data and the sales associate never notices. Better still, the customer never notices it either.

You could pull the power cable for the GoldTech register with a 500 item transaction in progress, plug it back in, power it back up, and as soon as the cashier logs back in the register knows that they had a transaction in progress, offering them: do you want to continue it or void it? The cashier can then continue that transaction and the register will pick right up after the last item was scanned.

RA: So would it be fair to pronounce GoldTech's Retail Manager System optimally fault tolerant then?

KO: I think it would be very fair to pronounce that GoldTech's Retail Manager System offers the ultimate in fault tolerance. Again, to the best of our knowledge, no one that we have seen offers that level.

Here's an example: we have a customer with nine mobile stores. They operate these stores out of trucks. They also have two brick and mortar stores. The mobile stores take advantage of the fault tolerance, hosting each of their back offices on one server at the home office. The registers connect via cellular broadband cards, allowing you a real-time data visibility at the home office. The great part is that even if the truck is in an area with unreliable cellular service, as soon as they get to an area where it reconnects, the data starts moving without any intervention by the sales person.

RA: How does GoldTech Retail Manager System figure in terms of scalability?

KO: The GoldTech System generally appeals to retailers of any size. Our system can literally scale from the smallest to the largest retailer. For example, you can have from 1 to 99,999 registers in a store. For the small or single store retailer that has only 1 or 2 registers, their cost of entry into our system is minimal. They only pay for the registers they need. There are added features to the software that they don't need but they're part of it, they're included. The way our model is set up, retailers pay per seat on the register. Small retailers don't have to pay for different back offices, different features - they are all included. They use only what they need.

That retailer's dream is to turn himself into a multi-store chain, maybe becoming a billion dollar retailer; the software grows with them. As they add more stores, as they add more registers, they just keep adding more seats on the software; it scales with them completely without having to make any changes to the code which is the most costly aspect of any store system

RA: What about real-time data visibility? Is this a feature of the GoldTech Retail Manager System? And if so, how does it improve user flexibility?

KO: Real-time data visibility is the idea of being able to ring a transaction on the register and then almost immediately, or very shortly, see it at the home office so that you can make analysis based on multiple transactions running from across the chain, or across a store. And, depending on the retailer's need, the data replication speed that we do within the GoldTech Retail Manager System can be

tailored based on whatever their hardware network or internet capacity is, depending on how they're managing their network.

Looking at the top speed of the GoldTech Retail Manager System, a cashier can ring a transaction and in no more than 1 minute, that transaction is visible in the back office and in no more than 2 minutes it is visible at the home office. This gives executives, buyers, the store managers, or anybody that needs to see trends and visibility into what's happening at near real-time speeds and to be able to make analysis based on this information. They can also see projected sales trends and potential problem areas.

RA: Ease of use is a particular requirement of technology users in today's high tech world. With this in mind, how does GoldTech Retail Manager System lend itself to this requirement?

KO: Ease of use means that the cashier, sales associate or store manager is able to ring transactions, deal with a customer, deal with problems, and make sure their customer is happy and satisfied, without having to fumble through the software or complain about how the software is working. If the POS software consistently behaves erratically, even the most experienced sales associate can voice frustration in front of their customer and *that* is not a good thing.

Another point on the ease of use of the GoldTech Retail Manager System, is that if you've given a cashier a login ID and they have basic computer skills, they can look at the screen and will literally be ringing sales in under ten minutes without being taught. That doesn't mean they've learned all the intricacies of dealing with credit card transactions and dealing with pin pads and specialised coupons and store sales and all the myriad of things that a retailer can introduce, but they can sit there with that register and get to work.

Overall training time in hours is dramatically reduced. This is partly due to how the GoldTech Retail Manager System is designed. Every screen in the register is very consistent to the point that it is intuitive for most users. We don't try and make it look like the back office application. It is the register. There is a single entry field for almost everything unless it specifically needs multiple data fields. It uses minimal keystrokes; the right-hand toolbar shows just what's relevant to a transaction or items on that transaction. The bottom toolbar deals with the overall system to deliver functions that are not directly related to that transaction. It is completely consistent throughout the whole system, which in and of itself, eases the training burden.

RA: Are there any other features of the GoldTech Retail Manager System that you feel are particularly pertinent to customer satisfaction?

KO: Yes, the GoldTech Retail Manager System is easy to use but total proficiency is also achievable due to its ease of training. In addition, the system security is completely door based and can be tailored to the retailer's individual needs. But, again, I'm back on the real value of "ease-of-use" and that is in assuring that the customer has a pleasant experience. The cashier or sales associate can spend time with the customer, rather than struggling with the software, or complex transaction routines just to make it do what they want.

When GoldTech Retail Manager's fault tolerance is factored in, sales associates are equipped with what they need and there are no hiccups should the network or server fail. The retailer's technical problems are isolated from their sales associate and, most importantly, the customer.. Your sales associate can remain focused on the care of their customers' needs and make sure they have an enjoyable experience. That's the bottom line.

RA: Finally, how do you anticipate retail management systems evolving over the coming years? And more specifically, how will GoldTech adapt?

KO: The main way that we see retail management systems evolving over the coming years is moving away from the total traditional model of a package of software, installing it, customising and tailoring it. We see retailers progressing into the Software as a Service model or SaaS.

The GoldTech strategy has been to integrate SaaS into the GoldTech Retail Manager from the very beginning. You can host your back office remotely. You can host your home office. You can save the money that you would spend on that hardware infrastructure to host your own servers in your stores or to put your own home office servers in place.

Generally, GoldTech sees increasing intolerance with retail management systems that have too many failure points. Wherever there is a window of opportunity for the system to go down or cause frustration or cause problems with their associates, which ultimately causes problems with customers, retailers are becoming less and less tolerant of those types of systems and will no longer spend the money on them. That is a perceived trend and where we see the GoldTech Retail Management System providing a timely solution.