



Overview

Country or Region: United States

Industry: Retail

Customer Profile

Janie's Indian River Bazaar in New Smyrna Beach, Florida, carries 4,000 SKUs of high-fashion women's apparel, jewelry, and accessories for a growing clientele of residents and tourists.

Business Situation

Owner Janie Panasis's eye for fashion, smart purchasing, and detailed notes kept the store expanding through two locations, but her new store in The Cloisters outgrew the old manual system.

Solution

When a QuickBooks Pro consultant recommended Microsoft® Business Solutions Retail Management System, then fellow retailers recommended it, Panasis selected NuRol to ship her preconfigured system.

Benefits

- Revenues up 25 percent
- Receiving time cut by 75 percent
- Stock turns two to three times faster
- All handwritten notes in one database
- Reports target mail to right customers
- Unproductive vendors trimmed

Fashion Boutique Opens Doors to Expansion by Quickly Receiving and Revealing Inventories

“Microsoft Retail Management System was the best business decision I could have made.”

Janie Panasis, Owner, Janie's Indian River Bazaar

The owner of Janie's Indian River Bazaar, Janie Panasis, is used to change. In 2004, she expanded her store to its third location, and then evacuated it three times for Hurricanes Charlie, Frances, and Jeanne. Her shop's 4,000 stock-keeping units (SKUs) constantly evolve through a shifting rainbow of women's dresses, tops, pants, jewelry, accessories, and gifts.

But receiving and pricing once took up to 20 hours a week. With no storage space in the new 1,000-square-foot store, staff had to rapidly log in, price, and display new merchandise. Notes about customers' special orders covered Panasis's desk. She constantly worried if she had ordered too many or too few of something.

Installing Microsoft® Business Solutions Retail Management System restored peace of mind, drastically cut purchasing and receiving time, and provides customer records that help attract return customers.



“Microsoft Retail Management System is entirely targeted to what real-world retailers need.”

Janie Panasis, Owner, Janie's Indian River Bazaar

Panasis and staff arrange the Spanner collection



Situation

Founded in 1986 in Titusville, Florida, Janie's Indian River Bazaar focused on swimsuits, cotton clothing, and handcrafted accessories. After an interim move, today the store's halogen lights illuminate 4,000 stock-keeping units (SKUs) of high-end women's merchandise, including Suva and Jade lines. The cheery store is in a historic downtown district of New Smyrna Beach called The Cloisters, which encompasses a quarter mile of shops, galleries, and restaurants between the river and the Atlantic Ocean.

“This is an ideal location,” says owner Janie Panasis. Visitors flock in from across the country, many with shopping vouchers from nearby real estate incentive tours. “We have tourists, regulars, and staff who love coming to work in this setting.” Janie and her five hand-picked employees specialize in friendly customer service that makes every shopper feel welcome and at home.

But with little on-site storage space for their inventory, growth was very difficult. “When boxes arrive, they have to be unpacked immediately, then labeled and properly merchandised,” says Panasis. “This process used to take half a day per order from each supplier, because it could contain 72 pieces—and this happened up to four times a week. And each piece needed a handwritten price tag. You can imagine the nightmares.”

Running her store with manual systems instead of a strong, centralized solution forced Janie and her staff to spend a lot of time dealing with paper, and sometimes notes were misplaced. “We knew other stores were computerized, and it was embarrassing that sometimes we couldn't find important orders and reminders,” she says. “This slowed our response time to customer needs.”

Something had to change. “To do the volume we wanted, we needed a system that would organize and keep all our special orders, notes, stock levels, and reminders in one place,” Janie says. “We needed to join the 21st century.”

Solution

Janie began her quest by asking questions and searching the Web. “At a QuickBooks Pro seminar, the lecturer recommended Microsoft® Business Solutions Retail Management System over QuickBooks Point of Sale, because Microsoft offers more breadth, an unlimited number of records, and more comprehensive reports.

“Bookkeeping programs are well geared to making preparations for taxes, not buying, selling, and retailing—and certainly not to customers,” she says. “Microsoft Retail Management System is entirely targeted to what real-world retailers need.”

After asking fellow retailers about their experiences, Janie was convinced that Microsoft Retail Management System was right for her. She searched the Internet for the Microsoft Certified Partner that would best meet her needs. “A former client highly recommended NuRol,” she says, “and they turned out to be a perfect fit.”

Microsoft Retail Management System was installed in June 2004. “Microsoft Retail Management System was the best business decision I could have made,” says Janie. “When our computers arrived from NuRol, they had pre-installed the software. NuRol answered our calls about plugs and connections, and we just started entering our inventory.”

Interested tech support was another bonus. “NuRol was always there for any question,” Janie says. “I knew I could trust them to handle anything that came up.”

“This Microsoft system really gives me tools to run the whole store.”

Janie Panasis, Owner, Janie's Indian River Bazaar

Janie Panasis scans an item for fast transaction times.



Benefits

“Even with three hurricanes last year, we raised revenues 25 percent. I credit the targeted marketing tools in Microsoft Retail Management System. We send mailings about our higher-end lines, say, the Jade and Suva collections, to people who have bought them before. We also target affluent zip codes, and can pick who gets our newsletter. All this brings in new customers and reminds regulars about new merchandise.

Staff now constantly update customer mailing lists at the point of sale, and special orders go into the system, not on Panasis's desk.

“Our paper problems are 100 percent remedied, which makes me very happy. When someone wants to know when something will arrive, it's a quick lookup. We present a much more professional shopping experience for our customers.”

Receiving Relief

Staff are able to receive, label, and display merchandise much more quickly, freeing up hours for walk-in customers. “This system has cut our time for all those receiving tasks by 75 percent,” Janie says. “With no real storage space, this whole work cycle has to be done very rapidly—ideally all at once. So I love creating the labels and pricing items so fast.

“Because some of my staff are trained in the Manager part of this system, I don't have to be there for them to receive goods. No more wasting half a day per shipment. We receive and label up to three boxes a day. Without Microsoft Retail Management System, we could never have handled enough merchandise to make this new location pay.”

Raising Revenues

The clearest area of improvement lies in inventory turnover. “The shelf-time of our inventory is greatly reduced, and we turn over stock two or three times faster than before

installing Microsoft Retail Management System,” Janie says. “And reordering is effortless.

The new system allows Janie's Indian River Bazaar to expand and change its business with amazing ease of use. “After installing Microsoft Retail Management System, I can't imagine operating with anything else,” says Panasis.

Unexpected Benefits

Then came the record hurricane season of 2004. “We were under mandatory evacuations,” says Janie. “This is beach country; ocean on one side, river on the other. Needless to say, our stock and our computer system were the first things we protected. Despite the ordeal, I at least had peace of mind knowing I had airtight records in case of a loss claim with our insurance company. We moved the computers, then re-hooked them up when we came back. This gave new meaning to the term 'data portability!'”

Panasis's newfound ability to instantly generate exact reports was unexpectedly useful. “You can gather so much critical information that way,” she says. “The reports showed me which suppliers were performing and which weren't. We can see ahead and discontinue stock that once stayed on the floor too long and had to be marked down. I was surprised at some of our best sellers—it's too easy to take them for granted. Now we make buying decisions based on dollars and cents, not on hunches, our personal product likes and dislikes, or a charming vendor.”

A bookkeeping program has been nearly retired. “We used QuickBooks for years, but now, because the Manager part of Microsoft Retail Management is so powerful, I don't use the accounting program as much. This Microsoft system really gives me tools to run the whole store.”

For More Information

For more information about Microsoft products and services, call the Microsoft Sales Information Center at (800) 426-9400. In Canada, call the Microsoft Canada Information Centre at (877) 568-2495. Customers who are deaf or hard-of-hearing can reach Microsoft text telephone (TTY/TDD) services at (800) 892-5234 in the United States or (905) 568-9641 in Canada. Outside the 50 United States and Canada, please contact your local Microsoft subsidiary. To access information using the World Wide Web, go to: www.microsoft.com

For more information about NuRol products and services, call (800) 390-6623 or visit the Web site at: www.NuRol.com

For more information about Janie's Indian River Bazaar products and services, call (386) 426-2556.

The atmosphere at Janie's Indian River Bazaar is one of anticipation and pleasure. "Our store is always an exciting environment for the customer," says Janie. "Our new Microsoft system allows a fast-paced merchandise turnaround that keeps customers anxious to come back and find out what's new!"

Microsoft Business Solutions Retail Management System

Microsoft Business Solutions Retail Management System offers a complete store automation solution for small and medium-sized retailers, streamlining point-of-sale (POS), customer service, and store inventory management, and providing real-time access to key business metrics. Microsoft Retail Management System is a comprehensive solution for single-store and multi-store retailers that empowers independent proprietors, store managers, and cashiers through affordable and easy-to-use automation. Microsoft Retail Management System has the flexibility and scalability to grow with a retailer's business. It works with the Microsoft Office System, Microsoft Windows® Small Business Server, and leading financial applications to provide end-to-end support from the cash register to the back office.

For more information about Microsoft Retail Management System, go to: www.microsoft.com/pos

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Hardware

- NuRol PCs
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