

23-Store Chain Ties It All Together With Catapult Multistore



Reid's Dairy Stores is a family-owned dairy retailer with **23 stores between Kingston and Toronto**, with a majority of the stores residing in the more densely populated greater Toronto area. Carrying a selection of milk, butter, eggs, bread and other staples, Reid's also boasts an ice cream shop in each of its store locations. President Dave Quickert took some time out of his busy schedule to talk with us about his booming business and how Catapult is helping him gain control over his **massive operation**.

ECRS : Tell us a little bit about Reid's Dairy Stores.

Quickert : I'd say the best description would be that we're a **specialty dairy retailer** that sells both "packaged and prepared" goods. We carry dairy and dairy-related staples like milk, eggs, cheese, and bread, and we have an ice cream and dessert shop at every store. The products we sell in our retail locations are manufactured and delivered fresh by our family-owned dairies.

ECRS : How did you arrive at Catapult as the solution for your multiple store operation?

Quickert : Originally we thought about making Reid's Dairy solely a wholesale operation so that we could focus on the product itself. That way we could leave all the marketing, advertising, and consumer issues to the retailers. But our pride in product quality caused us to re-think the wholesaler idea. We realized we wanted to control the marketing, the product image, and the relationships we would establish with our customers. We knew we needed to establish Reid's Dairy retail stores to accomplish this level of control. This also meant that we'd have to find an accurate way to manage all of the additional data the retail operation would produce.

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ECRS : And were you able to accomplish this initially?

Quickert : Not right away, unfortunately. After suffering through magnitudes of **tedious manual paperwork**, we finally purchased and installed a point-of-sale system in an effort to automate our processes. We'd looked at Catapult, but went with one of its lower-end competitors primarily because of cost considerations. We came to realize very quickly that the company who installed our first POS software had practically no experience and was rarely able to follow through on the promises they made to us.

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Reid's Dairy Stores



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ECRS : Where did you go from there?

Quickert : Armagh and ECRS came to us with Catapult again. Of course we were very skeptical due to our current situation, so they let us install it and run it for a month to see if it would do what we needed it to do. Sure enough, it performed as we'd hoped, so we quickly replaced the old system with Catapult in all 23 of our retail locations. I should add that in addition to Catapult's **superb functionality**, we continually reap the benefits of having a highly intelligent and supportive local dealer in Armagh, as well as a very approachable manufacturer in ECRS.

ECRS : How often are you replicating with Catapult? Is the process noticeable?

Quickert : Each of the 23 stores replicates once a day during the evening after business hours. It all happens **invisibly behind the scenes**. If for some reason we have a connection problem that prevents replication during the scheduled time, Catapult automatically forces replication the following day during business hours. Even then we don't notice it.

ECRS : What kinds of centralized tasks are you performing from your Catapult headquarters?

Quickert : I'm constantly doing **promotional price changes** from headquarters for all of our stores. I decide which stores run which promotions and when. Catapult automatically activates the promotions at the start



dates I set, then terminates the promotion automatically at the desired end dates. All I have to do is plug in the dates and prices and Catapult does the rest. Before Catapult, setting store promotions was a very labor intensive and time consuming process that involved faxing sheets of information to all the stores, then hoping each store manager executed their promotions properly. With Catapult I don't worry about that anymore because I have complete control over that process from headquarters. Catapult basically **brought us out of the Dark Ages**.

ECRS : Are there any other tasks that Catapult's HQ functionality helps simplify?

Quickert : It's very **easy to change the touch screen** interface at any given store, or all the stores at once, from headquarters. Here again Catapult allows me, a single person, to make the needed changes for all of our stores from one computer. There was just too much room for human error when I was trying to coordinate 23 people to make those changes. It's really a double bonus in that I now have control over the information I need, and my managers can focus more on their customers. And in retail, you have to take care of your customers. **How do you put a price on that? You can't.**

