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Performance

TIS Helps Fortune 50 Retailer Get Ready for Back to School

TIS' specialization in the rapid deployment of networking and computer technologies for large scale enterprises played an integral role in helping one of the USA's largest retailers get last minute technology upgrades to its stores just in time for its back-to-school rush for shoppers.

Background

The customer is one of the country's largest retailers with annual revenues in excess of \$60 billion. Operating in a very competitive market space, this retailer is renowned for its continuous improvement initiatives—as well as reliance on its vendors' commitment to innovative leadership, superior execution and commitment to enhancing its brand.

Back-to-school spending in America is estimated at over \$17 billion annually and rising according to the National Retail Federation (NRF). The success of the back-to-school shopping season helps retailers gauge how strong the holiday season is likely to be, along with allowing the retailers to pinpoint emerging trends and popular products prior to the start of the holiday shopping season. Back to School brings people into the stores not just for school supplies, but also for electronics, pharmaceuticals, and groceries.

As part of the retailer's annual planning it realized that many of its stores needed to add a combination of checkout capacity and server upgrades in its pharmacy, electronics and third party store-within-a-store locations. After a competitive RFP process TIS won the business in the month of July, therefore, all key stores needed to be installed in less than four weeks!

Challenges

Time: a schedule needed to be crafted that included installing and configuring equipment in 120 stores in 29 states in less than four weeks.

Coordinating Resources: both pharmacists and technicians needed to coordinate their schedule between the hours of 4:00 am and 8:00 am. One sleepy pharmacist who is not used to arriving before 9:00 am could throw a hitch into the entire rollout (work can not be performed in a pharmacy without a licensed pharmacist on premise).

Multiple Disciplines Required: to get the job done, TIS had to demonstrate competencies in structured cabling, configuration networking, project management, and logistics.

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TECHNOLOGY INFRASTRUCTURE SOLUTIONS, INC.

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Solution

TIS's Project Management is always a critical success factor, and so it was in help getting this retailer ready for back to school. The coordination of all tasks, logistics, resources, and schedules with those both inside the stores as well as with TIS Deployment Partners was the decisive factor identified by the client for the successful implementation of the project.

Complementing its project managers is TIS's help desk. Help desk services support field personnel understand definitions in the Statement of Work, supporting detailed technical installation manuals and orientation of all assigned resources about customer rules for on-site conduct. Additional duties include call-outs, check in-outs, and trouble shooting field technical questions, including helping field personnel configure network or computing technologies if the need arises.

TIS's winning RFP was aided in part because it provided the most cost effective support model while enhancing service. Given the breadth and time frame of the project, TIS accomplished this by utilizing a network of TIS employed technicians and certified Delivery Partners across the country. The TIS certified Delivery Partner network is made up of field service professionals that meet stringent qualification standards. TIS only partners with similarly experienced companies that are able to consistently deliver quality field technical services.

TIS Project Management Responsibilities include:

- Manage project issues and escalation issues in relation to the defined Statement of Work.
- Monitor project progress, processes, and procedures as necessary to keep the project on schedule.
- Drive issue resolution across the Project Team associated with Vendor's responsibilities in this Statement of Work.
- Create a mutually agreed to change management procedure.
- Prepare Change Order Requests and obtain customer's approval. Only those changes which have been reviewed by both parties and have prior written approval may be invoiced by Vendor.
- Complete weekly status email report inclusive of prior week's activities showing the following information:
 1. Location
 2. Status
 3. Date of Deployment
 4. Revisit/Reschedule Date
 5. Deployment Completion Date
- Coordinate staging and shipping of all necessary cabling materials to stores.
- Provide for a single point of contact for field technicians and for project contacts that will be available during all hours that field work will be executed.
- Participate in weekly status meetings (or more frequent as necessary).
- Review the project progress and address open technical or business issues.

Finally, attesting to TIS's Project Management, the retailer's team lead went so far as to say "I just have to reiterate how great (TIS) was to work with. (TIS) was always available when we needed them and was able to resolve issues quickly."