



Russell Hobbs®

Russell Hobbs

Corporate Profile

A market-leading pioneer of small appliance brands

Russell Hobbs has been synonymous with life in the kitchen for over 50 years. Known, owned and proudly on display in millions of homes across the UK, Russell Hobbs has forged a reputation for timeless, stylish kitchen appliances. From kettles and toasters, to coffee makers, cooking and baking, and food preparation products, each product has been designed with the consumer in mind and offers the ultimate in performance. One in every three households own a Russell Hobbs product in the UK and Russell Hobbs today is now a leading irons brand.

Early in 2010, Spectrum Brands announced that it had completed its merger with Russell Hobbs. The company thereby added the Russell Hobbs small appliance brands, including familiar names such as Black & Decker, George Foreman, Littermaid™ and Toastmaster, to Spectrum Brands existing portfolio of global consumer brands. The result of the merger was to create a new global consumer products company with \$3 billion in annual revenues.

Business Challenge

A rapidly evolving portfolio of products

Brand recognition and consumer expectations are extraordinarily high. Nine out of ten consumers in the UK recognize the Russell Hobbs name as a leading small kitchen appliance brand. Consequently, consumers expect to be able to walk into the retail outlet of their choice, anywhere in the country and find the latest Russell Hobbs product immediately available to buy and take away with them.

The retail outlets span the range from the largest supermarket groups and major electrical chains to small family owned independent stores. Thousands of very different kinds of shops stock all or part of the Russell Hobbs portfolio. When it came to electronic commerce, a fundamental part of the challenge was to be able to cater to the varying demands of these retailers, many of whom employ different B2B communications methods.

At the same time, the Russell Hobbs portfolio is changing on a continual basis as new products are introduced and older products removed. A distinct characteristic of the company from the very beginning has been the ingenuity and inventiveness of its designers and developers. Back in 1955, for example, Russell Hobbs designed the world's first automatic kettle. More recently, the company has developed the world's first fully programmable kettle. From a supply chain perspective, this emphasis on innovation leads to a constantly evolving product portfolio. The company has also dramatically expanded its

product range by developing new product categories. From the very beginning, Russell Hobbs has been the market leader in kettles and toasters, and has built on this track record to become a leader in irons, food preparation and now floorcare, with a growing presence in other markets, such as cookware and bakeware. Today's lines cover food processors, electric kettles, toasters, vacuum cleaners, irons, sandwich toasters, juicers, smoothie makers, and electric hobs.

A key requirement in the company's B2B electronic commerce requirements was scalability and the ability to manage large volumes of product orders across many different lines.

Finally, there were geographic aspects to consider since the prime markets for Russell Hobbs are UK, France and Germany.

The Solution

Support for the complete variety of retailer standards

Russell Hobbs is a long standing customer of GXS™. Currently, the company is using GXS Desktop EDI™, a PC-based software solution that connects to the GXS Trading Grid® and translates documents to and from customers' EDI format via easy-to-use desktop forms. With its major retailer customers, Russell Hobbs exchanges a range of electronic messages including delivery notifications, invoices, orders and order changes, and in the near future will include Advanced Shipping Notifications (ASNs), electronic proof of delivery and inventory reports.

To support this range, Russell Hobbs has to be able to accommodate a variety of communications methods and EDI standards including ANSI X12 EDI, Tradacoms, and EDIFACT or EANCOM. GXS supports all of these different standards.

On a business level, GXS provides Russell Hobbs with a quick win in terms of demonstrating to retailers that the company is flexible and easy to do business with. The process of setting up a new trading partner has been significantly accelerated.

Before GXS, Russell Hobbs worked with another supplier whose solution left staff with a major headache since they were unable to do any mapping themselves. The company cites the quality of GXS support as a major attraction for them, especially when it comes to undertaking complex mapping assignments.

The Results

Sales order processing team re-deployed

GXS is helping Russell Hobbs to become an Active Business that can send and receive information in any format and via any method preferred by its customers without creating a technology challenge or costly support burden for the business.

Russell Hobbs typically exchanges 250 files per day, and each file can include multiple orders. The company trades electronically with major multiples such as Argos, Asda, Comet, Dixons, Morrisons, Sainsbury's, Tesco and Wilkinson.

It is quick and easy to add new trading partners, as Lee Shepherd, a business analyst with Russell Hobbs, explains: “The sales team used to always be pushing us to get a new trading partner onboard more quickly. With GXS, this is something we can easily achieve.”

The increased efficiency provided by GXS Trading Grid® has enabled the reduction and redeployment of staff in the sales order department. This department contained 20 people five years ago. An entire department of staff was once dedicated to processing orders and sales order changes, a business-critical task that took up hours of time. Now, most of that department has been reassigned to different and more productive duties.



About GXS

GXS is a leading B2B integration services provider and operates the world's largest integration cloud, GXS Trading Grid®. Our software and services help more than 550,000 businesses, including 22 of the top 25 supply chains, extend their partner networks, automate receiving processes, manage electronic payments, and improve supply chain visibility. GXS Managed Services, our unique approach to improving B2B integration operations, combines GXS Trading Grid® with our process orchestration services and global team to manage a company's multi-enterprise processes. Based in Gaithersburg, Maryland, GXS has direct operations in 20 countries, employing more than 2,800 professionals. To learn more, see <http://www.gxs.com>, read our blog at <http://www.gxsblogs.com> and follow us on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/gxs>. You can also access our public filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission at <http://www.sec.gov/edgar.shtml>.

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