



# Case Study: Thistle Co. of Australia

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Triquesta Fuels Thistle's Multi-Site Retail Business Transformation



## Background of Thistle Company of Australia (TCOA)

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Thistle Company of Australia (TCOA or Thistle) is a privately held company that currently owns and operates Australia's largest independent network of Shell-branded service stations and adjoined retail premises.

Headquartered in Brisbane, and operating across Queensland and New South Wales, Australia, Thistle operates in regional locations. Its closest outlet is located a 40 minute drive from headquarters in Brisbane, with the farthest being over 12 hours away by car.

During 2009, Thistle identified strong opportunity for more retail outlets in regional locations, and undertook a strategy to shift the focus of the business to a small supermarket chain with fuel available, instead of its current existence as a fuel chain with convenience goods available on the side.

*"Up-to-the minute sales information at any regional store is visible immediately at head office or on the Area Manager's laptop or iPhone if required - that's pretty revolutionary."*

Tim O'Donovan, General Manager, TCOA.



## Challenges



The Thistle management team identified that this retail transformation strategy required the closure of a number of smaller, less profitable service stations, in order to set up larger (300m<sup>2</sup>) retail-focused premises to allow for a more impressive and comfortable consumer experience.

To enable this transformation, Thistle reviewed its core business processes, primarily in the areas of financial performance (cash flow / profit and loss), management reporting, retail promotions and inventory and fuel management. All of these required mobile and remote access functionality. The Thistle team recognised that a significant extension of existing underlying technology was required.

A critical challenge for Thistle was to manage and drilldown into its sales, stock and fuel management systems on the fly, both at remote premises and via the management team's fleet of laptops, as well as on iPhones.

*"By using Infinity, we're on track to completely transform our business from fuel stations with shops on the back, to become a chain of small supermarket outlets with fuel at the front, while delivering the optimum customer experience,"* said Tim O'Donovan, General Manager, TCOA.

*"Critically, Infinity helps us keep money in the bank, instead of money in stock that may spoil or be discounted. We're now better able to predict revenues and cash flow to execute our growth strategy."*

## Solution



Thistle went to tender for a retail management solution that saw the company replace its MYOB accounting and OnQ point of sale software in favour of Triquestra's Infinity POS and SAP BusinessOne.

Functionality, ease-of-use and return on investment were key factors in Thistle's choice of Triquestra's Infinity. It also strongly favoured Infinity's reputation as a robust and centralised solution.

Triquestra is a global provider of innovative solutions designed to help retailers optimise the customer experience, reduce costs and maximise profit.

Its flagship product, Infinity Retail Management System, encompasses a suite of software products that work together to drive profit at various touch points within the retail organisation. The three tiers within Infinity RMS are modular and work together to link all branches of Thistle within a multi-store network and head office.

Thistle uses Infinity as a real-time information management system operating between head office and its stores into which all stock and fuel inventory is centralised and integrated to SAP Business One, now used as Thistle's financial package.

Infinity Point of Sale is a powerful, swift sales processing and data capture module that reduces wait times and maximises the consumer's in-store experience. Key functions include sale and return processing, customer experience, cash management, signature capture, peripheral support, label design and print. The Infinity and SAP B1 system has been unified by Flow which delivers an integration platform between disparate applications.

## Results

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One of Thistle's largest costs is in fuel management, as it purchases hundreds of thousands of litres of fuel per week. Now, Thistle's CFO can access Infinity on her laptop or iPhone and check how much fuel is being held and accordingly manage cash flow, predict profit and hold a fuel order depending on location requirements.

Previously, it required daily staff procedures to identify any variances, for example, a broken pump, or fuel theft. This lack of visibility into inventory might delay a new order or redistribution by 48 hours affecting sales and profitability. Now, the management team has instant access to review and identify unusual behaviour and inventory patterns.

"With Infinity as our centralised trending and analysis tool, we can identify critical operational and transactional issues, and operate more productively. For example, we can see how weather or local preferences are affecting sales, and then re-distribute inventory among stores accordingly to maintain a smooth sales supply and a great in-store customer experience," continued Mr O'Donovan.



## The Future

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Thistle has completed the Infinity upgrade in six stores, and is on track to complete three more by the end of February.

*"Up-to-the minute sales information at any regional store is visible immediately at head office or on the Area Manager's laptop or iPhone if required - that's pretty revolutionary. Infinity's centralised delivery of critical data puts valuable, credible information right at the fingertips of our senior management team to help them make meaningful and relevant decision instantly. This information is critical for any product-based business, but especially for Thistle given we are significantly transforming our business, and expanding in regional locations,"* concluded Mr O'Donovan.

## About Triquestra

Triquestra International is a leading supplier of point of sale and management software solutions to the global retail market place. Triquestra's products are designed to assist retailers in a wide range of verticals, including apparel, grocery, liquor, paint, telecommunications, fuel, hardware). Infinity, its flagship modular software, optimises the customer experience, reduces costs and maximises profit.



## Contact Details

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