

Asahi Breweries Ltd.

Asahi Breweries' Business Style Revolution How Implementation of the iPad Changed Our Work-Lifestyle

When Asahi Breweries Ltd. introduced Asahi Super-Dry as the first "dry" beer, it revolutionized the modern beer industry in Japan and established itself as a leading company within the industry.

"Everything for the customer's exclamation of 'delicious!'"

Working as a whole toward the customer's satisfied exclamation of 'delicious!', Asahi Breweries seeks daily to provide the added value or new value that their customers anticipate.

Asahi Breweries Ltd. produces alcoholic beverages and is a core company within Asahi Group Holdings, Ltd. Asahi Breweries, Ltd. executed an absorption-type split in 2011 and completed the transition to a pure holding company by changing its trade name to Asahi Group Holdings, Ltd. The Asahi Group strives to strengthen its corporate brand and has expanded into a wide array of industries including the alcohol, beverage, and food industries, as well as overseas businesses. Among those, Asahi Professional Management Co., Ltd. manages general affairs common to all Asahi Group companies, including finance and accounting, general administration, payroll, welfare benefits, IT systems and others.



We interviewed Asahi Breweries about their business style reformation project which aimed to "Increase Productivity in the Sales Environment".

Analyzing Sales Activity to Increase Productivity

In January 2011, Asahi Breweries started a project with the goal of "Increasing Productivity in the Sales Environment"; for this project, the company adopted iPads as a tool to reform both "quality" and "quantity" in the sales environment. The Sales Division Vice-Chief of Asahi Breweries Digital Communications Strategy Office & General Sales Group, Kanako Morimoto, explained the details:

"Before the adoption of iPads, sales representatives with clients who managed bars and restaurants had been using laptops. However, due to reasons such as taking a long time to start up, using laptops on location was very rare. Faced with this situation, we decided to acquire new tools to facilitate efficiency. We didn't specifically decide on iPads from the start, but approached the problem from various angles to find a solution by posing these questions:

"What kind of sales approach would be most effective for the specific work characteristics of bars and restaurants?"

"What is the defining factor to close a negotiation?"

"How can the area representatives make their rounds more efficiently?"

"What is the key to increasing the number of visits?"

"Would it be worthwhile to overhaul the existing sales activity style?"

Upon analysis, the iPad was ultimately chosen for its fast startup time, portability, easy operability, and visualization that lends strength to presentations. Presently, there are roughly 300 iPads being used at our Tokyo, Nagoya, and Osaka sales locations."

Table 1: Topics and effects before and after initial iPad implementation

Departments using iPad	Sales department promoting at bars and restaurants	
Sales Goals	Expansion of stores selling Asahi products within the sales representative' s area	
Customers	Bar/Restaurant owners/managers	
Challenge	Being unable to explain offers to owners/managers in short periods of time; difficulty responding promptly (laptop usage was low)	Not enough time to increase number of visits
Solution	Digitization and cross-sharing of product catalog: - can offer a wide array of products suitable for each encounter - fast start up time, leading to instantaneous display - can explain offers while standing and talking at the same time	Being able to access company systems from outside the office, no need to return to the office in the afternoon - email and daily reports can be handled outside the office - more time created for client visitations - more ecologically friendly due to decrease in car usage
Outcomes	Higher customer satisfaction due to quick responses	Greater sales opportunities due to more client visits

The iPad is like a “Doraemon’s Pocket”

“After deploying the iPads, the role it played in increasing productivity in the workplace was strongly felt in terms of both ‘quality’ and ‘quantity.’”

Vice-chief Morimoto explained further on the increase in productivity in terms of ‘quality’ and ‘quantity’ in the workplace.



“For example, digital data such as proposals and product brochures could be shared among sales representatives, as well as searched and displayed on the iPad. As a result, we could make proposals to our customers faster, and negotiation opportunities also grew since promotional videos could be played while chatting. Sales material could be accessed anywhere and everywhere, and with the capability to check e-mails and write reports, there are some sales representatives who call it “Doraemon’s Pocket”. The implementation of the iPad is revolutionizing the style of sales as we know it, and is boosting up ‘quality.’”

Creating Time for Client Visits with CACHATTO and the iPad

“On the other hand, the ‘quantity’ effect we were aiming for was ‘creating time for client visits’. Our goal was to increase the amount of time sales representatives spent in their designated area, and raise the number of client visits. Before implementation of the iPad,

representatives had to return to the office during the day to check e-mails or submit daily reports, and would return to their clients’ businesses were opening.

To change this system, we integrated CACHATTO, and became able to check e-mails and schedules outside of the office. To access the daily reports and client database from outside of the office, we created an internal site called ‘iPad Portal’. As a result, sales representatives no longer needed to return to the office during the day, which created more time to remain in the field. Being able to assign that time to clients led to an increase in client visits, thus enabling the increase in ‘quantity’ that we desired.”

Asahi Professional Management Co., Ltd.’s Administrative Group Supervising Director Yusuke Mitsunobu shared insight on CACHATTO usage that led to the increase in available time.

“When looking at the CACHATTO user access logs, it is shown that usage is highest between 14 and 17 o’ clock. Any spare time is now used productively to check e-mails.”

Group Chief Morimoto further explained departmental distribution of iPads:

“More and more departments have been requesting iPads after hearing about them being used in the Sales Department. Although trial usage is limited, it is difficult to justify distribution to those who are not currently working offsite.”

Being able to analyze the situation carefully to determine the project’s course of action is certainly admirable.

“CACHATTO’s Security is Reassuring”

Administrative Group Vice-Chief Ota shared her thoughts on CACHATTO.

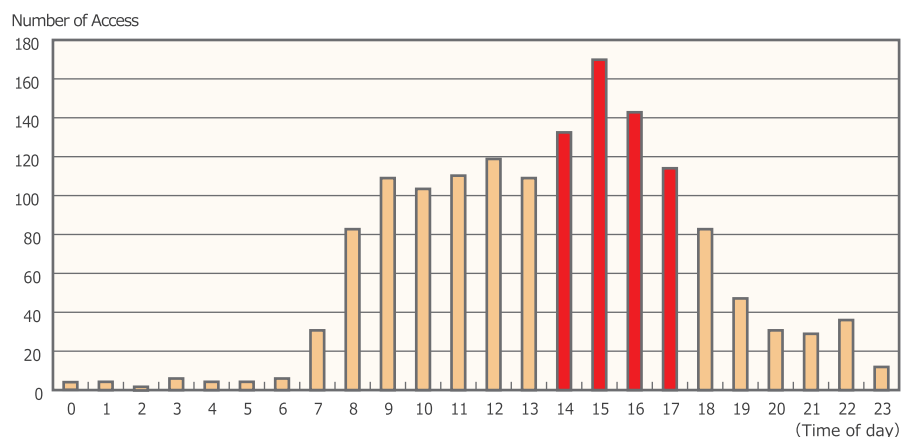
“CACHATTO gives you peace of mind since it doesn’t leave browsing data on the device; from a security perspective, it is very reassuring. Currently, we are using a VPN to access the company’s web system from outside the company. Instead we would like to integrate this system into CACHATTO for strengthened security and better usability. We look forward to continuing to work with you to achieve that.”

Furthermore, she continued with a request.

“We would like to be able to take photos with the iPad and send them as email attachments. We could then take pictures of the client’s store displays and share the photos amongst the other sales representatives for the next product promotion. If we could do this then the negotiation speed would increase, which would be well received by those in the field.”*

This request has been made by other customers following Asahi Breweries Ltd., and a portion of this feature is already in development, while the rest is included in the developmental roadmap. With a

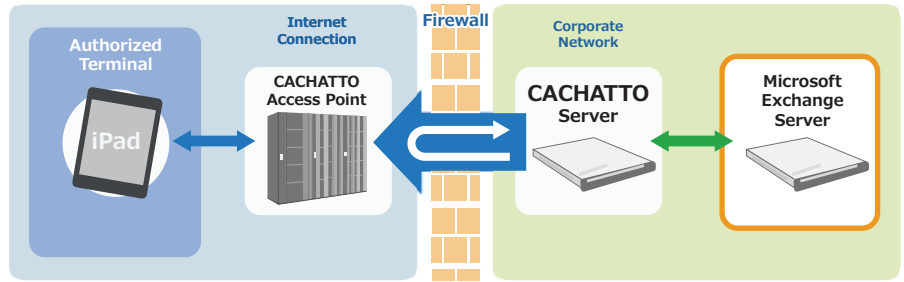
Graph 1: Hourly CACHATTO Usage



CACHATTO® Case Study Asahi Breweries Ltd.

strengthening CACHATTO reflecting the “live” opinions of its users and by powering up the sales force and fieldwork, Asahi Breweries Ltd. will be able to quench the people’s thirst even more.

Diagram 1: Asahi Breweries System Configuration Diagram



This information presented in this case study is from September 2013, and may no longer be up-to-date at the time of publication.

*1 This feature is now available on CACHATTO.

Customer Information



Asahi Breweries Ltd. produces alcoholic beverages and is a core company within Asahi Group Holdings, Ltd. Having created low-malt beers such as Japan’s first dry beer, ‘Asahi Super-Dry’ and the carbohydrate-free ‘Asahi Style Free’, it has also started new genres such as ‘Clear Asahi’ and has a wide range of products within the four categories of Western liquor, wine, ready-to-drink (low-alcoholic drinks), and shōchū. It has also expanded into the nonalcoholic category, such as with ‘Asahi-Dry Zero’, beer-flavored and cocktail-flavored soft drinks.

Corporate name	Asahi Breweries Ltd.	Capital	¥920.8 billion (as of December, 2012)	Industry	Production and sales of beer, happoshu (low-malt beer), shōchū, chu-hi, spirits, and wine.
Headquarters	T1-23-1 Sumida-ku, Azumabashi, Tokyo	No of Employees	4,783 (as of 2012)	URL	http://www.asahibeer.co.jp/

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