Objectivity

Optimising Primark's operations over the span of three decades

Evolving Business Needs

Objectivity has partnered with Primark since 1991. Their cooperation began when Primark had just 15 stores—today, the international fashion retailer has nearly 400 brick-and-mortar stores across 13 countries. With such rapid growth, the retailer's technology needs have changed considerably over time and having the help of a trusted software vendor through the years has made all the difference.

Running Primark's business model requires a focus on lean operations and continuous improvement. The company cannot allow stock allocation, inventory management, or order processing to cause shortages or delays, at any cost.

In order to support process automation, Primark decided to create a bespoke system. Today, Objectivity and Primark have collaborated on the company's core, business critical systems and their partnership continues to encompass a portfolio of custom software solutions.

Business Critical Systems

As Primark started to expand at pace, the company began expanding its technology portfolio to help ensure that their operations remained lean and seamless.

When developing new systems, Primark chose to invest in a long-term partnership with Objectivity. This strategic decision has enabled them to keep experience and business knowledge within the vendor's dedicated team as their retail business grows—a unique market advantage that could only be possible through loyal engagement.

In order to deliver on their promise of providing their customers with quality affordable fashion, Primark depends on systems responsible for:

- Stock management

- Ordering

- Reporting

- Central Data Processing

These systems are business critical as they enable efficient processing of stock and sales data, which facilitates the daily allocation, ordering, dispatch, and delivery of stock as well as provides employees with access to key systems and reporting insights. This, in turn, ensures that Primark's stores are ready to open their doors to customers every morning. Objectivity developed seven of Primark's core systems—one of which dates to the beginning of the companies' partnership, (a testament to the quality delivered)—and collaborated with third parties to create an additional two systems.

Store Stock & Order Management System

The Store Stock and Order Management system provides a platform for store managers to review automatically generated stock replenishment recommendations based on sales and inventory. Using the system, store managers can modify recommended order quantities before confirming orders for stock. The solution also provides store managers with information that supports their activities—e.g. historical sales data pertaining to specific regions as well as a general overview of what is available in stock in the company's warehouses.

Allocation Module

The Allocation Module supports the store stock and ordering management system. This module calculates the recommended order quantities of products to stores, based on an analysis of various factors, such as stock demand, sales, and business priorities.

Central Processing Hub

The central processing hub was the first Primark system to be developed by Objectivity. Initially the solution had a wide range of capabilities, however over time functionality has been migrated to other systems. The central processing hub is a critical solution, taking data feeds from a number of Primark solutions and processing them onwards to other systems within the Objectivity landscape. It also serves as the solution for management of Store Grading, Pricing and Promotion management and Product Attributing.

Data Warehouse

The data warehouse created by Objectivity contains data about sales, stock, orders, commitments, and PO. It enables Primark to review store sales & stock and plan upcoming in-store clothing collections. It provides a view of historical data as a result of which they're able to distinguish which items generated the most sales the previous year, what kind of inventory was sold, etc. This allows for more precise stock orders to be purchased. Additionally, it gives the management board access to key reporting, providing them with data insights regarding how much inventory was sold on a given day, which items are popular with consumers, etc.

In-Store Reporting System

The in-store reporting system is another one of Primark's data warehouses—it was created with a strong focus on high quality user experience. The user-centric application serves to make it easier for store managers to assess, which types of stock orders will most accurately meet their customers' expectations. Its historical data enables store managers to see what was most popular with customers during particular periods in the past. For instance, the system can inform store managers how many Halloween-themed items sold the previous year during the month of October—this provides an accurate sales forecast and allows for orders to be made according to fact-based estimations.

Internal Communication Application

The Objectivity team worked on this application in collaboration with Primark. The system was created using a low-code platform. It enables Primark's stores to communicate with their headquarters in an organised and centralised manner.

In-Store Inventory Management System

This system was created by Objectivity and a third party with the use of a low-code platform. It is an inventory management system that enables Primark's employees to browse warehouse stock, manage stock transfers, assign prices, etc. It provides information regarding in-store inventory and informs headquarters about the state of stock across warehouses and brick-and-mortar locations. The in-store inventory management system gives users access to real-time reporting, enabling them to quickly replenish stock where and when necessary.

Purchase Ordering System (now decommissioned)

Although this system has now been decommissioned, it was one of Primark's key solutions. It consisted of two elements— the purchase order processing and purchase order matching modules, which were interdependent and shared an application framework and system database. The purchase order module recorded details of purchase orders for stock placed with suppliers and produced the required Purchase Order paperwork. The invoice matching module matched the details of the delivered goods and the invoices associated with those goods with the original Purchase Order for accounting purposes.

One Vendor, Many Advantages

The solutions systems created by Objectivity are highly available and reliable. Objectivity have been able to adapt these bespoke solutions to meet the needs of an ever-evolving market, helping to ensure that Primark retains its competitive edge.

A Trusted Partner

Being partnered with a trusted technology vendor during the years of rapid growth and transformation ensures stability and helps to maintain the continuity of business knowledge. The team working with Primark has been stable, which has helped sustain a high level of targeted customisation and delivery. This long-term cooperation has enabled Objectivity to respond to business needs quickly and easily.

Flexibility

The Objectivity team is flexible and able to adapt to Primark's preferred delivery model whether that be T&M, fixed price, Waterfall or Agile. Being accustomed to the company's ways of working is a unique advantage, which contributes to the acceleration of project initiation and helps to ensure everything runs smoothly.

End-to-End Delivery

Objectivity have a proven track record of delivering custom software in an end-to-end manner. This capability as well as

Objectivity's established domain knowledge eliminates the need for Primark to onboard additional teams. They can rely on the Objectivity team to deliver high quality software on-time and on-budget. The Objectivity team takes care of the entire project lifecycle—from design to development, delivery, and maintenance. Over the years, Primark has trusted Objectivity to take on a growing number of development responsibilities and, being familiar with the company's ways of working, the team is able to get started straightaway.

Robust Technology Capability

Since the beginning of the partnership, the Objectivity team has applied their practical expertise when working with a wide variety of technologies, such as:

- Java Enterprise Stack

- Microsoft Stack

- Low-Code

- High Availability & Scalability Frameworks

- Message Queues/ESB

- Databases & Data Warehouses

- In-Memory Databases

Having this wide range of experience enables Objectivity to apply the most fit-for-purpose technologies, ensuring the effective realisation of Primark's business goals. The Objectivity team also seamlessly integrates the bespoke solutions they create with Primark's various standard products by means of developing dedicated systems, which ensure Primark maintains its competitive advantage.

Fit-for-Purpose Quality

The high quality of Objectivity's systems is validated by a minimal amount of issues found during user acceptance tests and on the production environment. The resilient, large enterprise systems have a robust range of functionalities and are fully synchronised with Primark's other solutions. The systems' complex architectures must always be available to not disrupt the store's daily operations.

The Objectivity team has been with Primark every step of the way, ensuring that the company is able to expand, adapt, and excel in line with their chosen business model while also meeting their customers' needs.
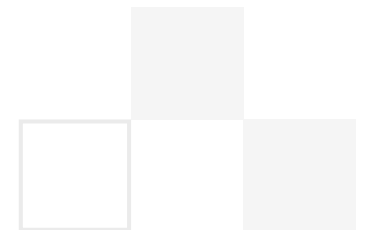
PRIMARK®

Primark is an international retailer that offers the latest fashion, beauty, and homeware at the best value on the high street. First established in Dublin in 1969, Primark currently has over 385 stores, with over 16.5 million square foot of selling space, across 13 countries in Europe and the United States.

www.primark.com/en

Contact us to learn more

Please get in touch if you would like to discuss this, or other digital strategies, in more detail.

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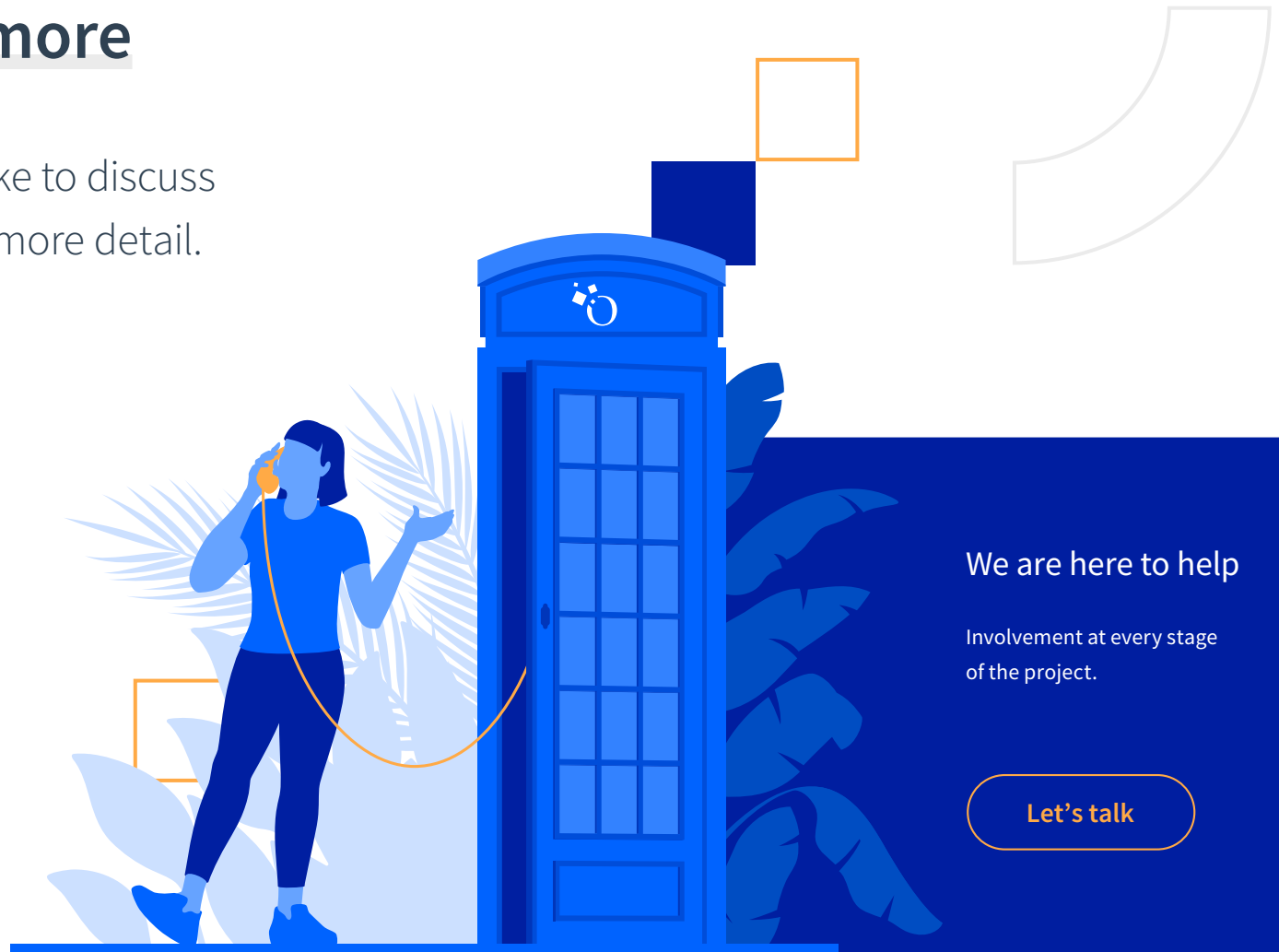Coventry, CV4 8HS
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We are here to help

Involvement at every stage of the project.

Let's talk