JAMES ROSS
CONSULTING

Microsoft

Microsoft manufactures a range of business and consumer software products for sale across Europe. Distribution and product sales were controlled by a series of third party operators. The business had grown dramatically in recent years, in terms of both product range (market variant) and volumes. Feedback from the marketplace indicated that there may be scope to improve packaging performance. However, actual physical packaging needs and performance throughout the distribution network were not understood.

Helping Esselte streamline packaging operations across multiple European manufacturing plants - delivering bottom line improvement

Business Challenge

At the time of this project the speed at which the European software market was growing and the ever increasing demand for product meant that even Microsoft were not fully aware of the exact routes to market, consumer requirements and retail opportunities. James Ross Consulting were asked to decipher the distribution network, specifically to identify delays, packaging needs and to improve the 'speed to market'.

How JRC Helped

James Ross Consulting carried out a detailed survey across the European marketplace. The survey assessed actual physical, regulatory and environmental requirements for the clients packaging within the distribution and retail network, in each market. This involved analysis of: Manufacturing Process, Distribution to freight forwarder, Receipt and shipment from 3rd party Distributor, Receipts, Competitor activity, Anticipated requirements across the supply chain and environmental regulation and anti-theft / security.

Value Delivered

The survey identified clear scope for short term improvements in packaging function. These included consolidation of shipping methods, damage / returns reduction and recommendations on common pack structures across all markets. In addition, the survey also highlighted significant opportunities for increased volume throughput and sales from a re-structuring of existing formats.

About Project

Microsoft provides a variety of products and services, including its ubiquitous Windows operating systems and Office software suite. Microsoft has expanded into markets such as video game consoles, customer relationship management applications, server and storage software, and digital music players. The company has also used selective acquisitions to bulk up its presence in markets such as online advertising, mobile devices, and enterprise software.

About James Ross Consulting

James Ross Consulting is a mid sized global manufacturing consulting, technical support and analytical services company, with offices established in the UK, USA and Australia. Their three competence groups, Cost Optimization, Technical Support and Analytical Services, develop a full spectrum of services and solutions that address business opportunities and challenges common across industries. See also **www.jrconsulting.com**.

Cost Optimization, Technical Support and Analytical Services