



## Allders Couples PowerTerm® Lite with EPOS Systems and Gains Significant Savings

### The Challenge

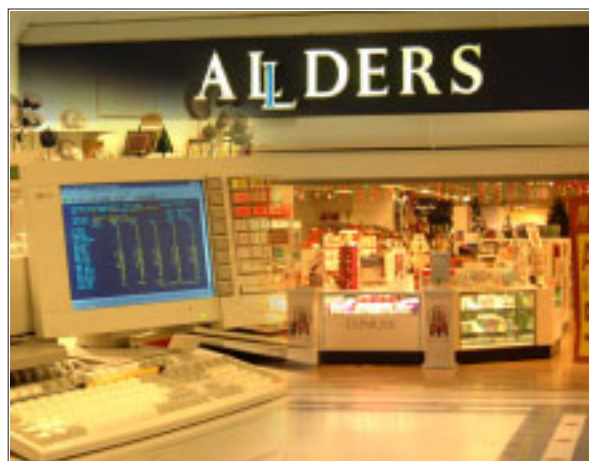
- To upgrade company computer systems to provide a more user friendly and up-to-date system, moving from dumb terminals to PC's so users could access more applications – without the need for both the terminal and PC on the same desk.

### The Solution

- PowerTerm® Lite was integrated with the store's EPOS system, in place of dumb terminals, providing staff with a single, all-in-one solution to enable them to remotely access buying and merchandising applications, and still service customers wanting to purchase merchandise.

### Benefits

- PowerTerm Lite provided Allders with a significant cost savings by reducing the amount of input devices as well as remove a significant amount of legacy network equipment.
- Integration of PowerTerm Lite was achieved within a couple of weeks, and the deployment to all PC's and tills rolled out smoothly.
- Implementation of PowerTerm was very straightforward and did not require significant IT resources.
- The new software solution has increased staff productivity by enabling anyone on the shop floor to access information on stock, prices and order status without having to leave the till or the customer unattended.



### Customer

Allders Department and Home Stores

### Host Connectivity Solution

PowerTerm® Lite

### Host Server

UNIX

### Users

3000

***“PowerTerm is a tried and tested solution for us at Allders — and in retail there is no room for unreliability or system downtime. We did consider alternatives but these would have proved significantly more expensive than PowerTerm with considerably less benefits – so saving us time and money, there really was no better solution.”***

Ralph Nicholson  
Head of IT Production Services  
Allders

*"The new software solution means that anyone on the shop floor can now access information on stock, prices and order status without having to leave the till or the customer unattended. We now have one standard technology infrastructure across the organisation – an all-in-one solution from Ericom!"*

## Background



With some 46 stores nationwide and annual revenue in excess of £600 million, Allders is recognised as the fourth largest chain of department stores in the United Kingdom.

Together, the Allders Home Stores, based mainly in retail parks, and the Allders Department Stores, based primarily in town centres, offer a wide range of men's, women's and children's fashions as well as household goods. Holding down the number four position means Allders needs to continuously find new ways of improving their competitive advantage, drive down their operating costs and expand their revenues. The innovative use of technology is considered core to Allders' ability to achieve these objectives.

## Problem Solving



As Allders' Head of IT Production Services, Ralph Nicholson is responsible for all IT applications and the computer networks for the company as a whole. Because of the strong competitive nature of the UK retail industry, part of his position includes reviewing and updating all technology systems to keep them aligned with current and future business needs. As a result of a recent review he identified the need for an upgrade to the current company systems in order to address a number of business issues. "In order to provide a more user friendly and up to date computer system, I recognised that we needed to move from dumb terminals to PC's in order to enable users to access more applications – without the need for both the terminal and PC on the same desk," explained Ralph Nicholson.

## All-in-One System Solution



"Clearly we needed to find an all in one system solution," he continued. Furthermore Ralph identified the benefit of rationalising the amount of equipment and devices needed on the shop floor at the customer service desks. By using the store's EPOS system with PowerTerm, rather than using dumb terminals, he could provide staff a single system which would enable them to remotely access buying and merchandising applications, for example stock availability, and still service customers wanting to purchase merchandise — an all-in-one solution.

In addition, Ralph decided by utilising new wireless EPOS systems within the stores he could simplify the infrastructure within stores and improve the look and feel of the shop floor.

**Editor's note:** Mr Nicholson runs the system at Allders from a Vax Cluster with VMS 7.2 running SFR (System for Retail) and different character based applications which have been developed in-house by Allders. The company's network is a CISCO based solution however the shop floor tills use a 10-megabyte wireless connection. In addition, for all finance applications, an Alpha cluster running Tru64 is used which includes DIDOS.

## Reduced IT Costs



For a number of years Allders had been using Ericom® Software's PowerTerm product on a limited number of PC's. Having established a good working relationship during this period with Ericom, Ralph approached Ericom with his project and specification. "After a successful series of discussions with Ericom, the solution we arrived at was to install PowerTerm Lite on all our PC's and EPOS systems, a total of 3,000 devices," explained Mr Nicholson. "This enabled us to reduce the amount of input devices by 800, as well as removing a significant amount of legacy network equipment – an obvious cost saving for Allders," he continued. "In addition the new software solution means that anyone on the shop floor can now access information on stock, prices and order status without having to leave the till or the customer unattended.

The positive implications of this for staff productivity and customer service are clear and tangible. We now have one standard technology infrastructure across the organisation – an all-in-one solution from Ericom!"

The integration of the upgraded PowerTerm software, which can be used by anyone in the company from the board of directors to staff on the shop floor was achieved within a couple of weeks, and the deployment to all PC's and tills has rolled out smoothly over a twelve month period. Implementing PowerTerm is very straightforward and does not require significant IT resources.

Allders was impressed with the flexible approach Ericom took with the licensing of the PowerTerm software and their highly efficient and responsive approach to its requirements. "Ericom's team assisted us greatly. They helped us to meet our objectives smoothly and efficiently."

"PowerTerm is a tried and tested solution for us at Allders, and in retail there is no room for unreliability or system downtime. We did consider alternatives but these would have proved significantly more expensive than PowerTerm with considerably less benefits – so saving us time and money, there really was no better solution," added Ralph Nicholson.

Finally, Allders have gained a significant benefit out of coupling PowerTerm with their wireless EPOS system. A reduction in the number of hardware devices needed across the organisation, a simplified network infrastructure, a universal all-in-one solution, improved employee productivity and customer service. Ralph concluded by adding, "All round, the PowerTerm solution fulfilled all our objectives."



Connectivity,  
Efficiency, Simplicity

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