

THE REQUIREMENT

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Founded in 1932, SPAR is now the world's largest international food retail chain, with some 12,500 stores in 35 countries. It is also the UK's leading convenience store group, with a turnover in excess of 3 billion.

- A global brand with a local touch, over 50,000 people work in the UK and the business now comprises five Retail Distribution Centres servicing some 2,560 stores.
- James Hall is the north of England SPAR distributor - a growing, vibrant family business providing a comprehensive range of fresh, frozen and ambient goods to over 450 stores.

Typically, the busiest time for a SPAR store is late at night, weekends and Bank Holidays when many other retail stores are closed. Of course, these are also typically the times at when traditional service support models can be most difficult to deliver, so securing the services of a supplier who could develop a model that consistently delivers service at these all-important trading periods was a fundamental element in developing a relationship with Barron McCann.

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STUART LOCKHART
Retail IT Manager of James Hall



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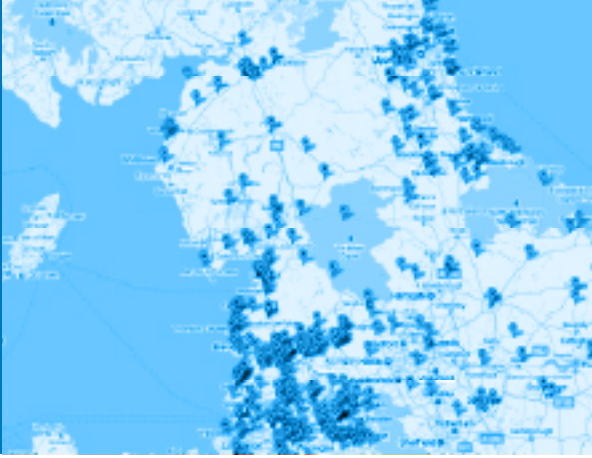
THE SERVICE

As a forward-thinking business, James Hall wanted the ability to offer stores the support over the duration of their trading days & hours, in order to best serve their Store Managers and customers alike.

A significant proportion of James Hall's stores are owner managed, and operate extended hours – often until 11pm – in some geographically challenging areas. Other potential suppliers would only commit to a maintenance service that would cease at 8pm – leaving stores exposed to system downtime, and therefore potential loss of trade and customer loyalty.

Bank Holidays in areas such as the Lake District, bring much-needed tourist revenues to some of the most beautiful and remote areas of the British Isles. Being able to capitalize on those revenues by ensuring that trading systems are operational was another key service requirement.

As an incoming supplier, Barron McCann was determined to positively affect the perception of their new customer from the very first day of the new service. “We have a proven transition process that ensures our customers will get the service they've requested from the outset”, said Harry Mee, Barron McCann Transition Manager. “We invest heavily in understanding the specific client requirements, training our Engineers, and ensuring our logistical profiles and processes are honed to deliver – we're experts in service transition, and our clients really appreciate the surety of a proven process, and the delivery of the service they need”.



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HARRY MEE
Barron McCann Transition Manager

THE RESULT

The analysis, planning, and training certainly paid off – with a solid transition that delivered an excellent service from the start!

In May 2010, Barron McCann delivered 95% of all calls within the contracted six-hour slot – many of them late into the evening.

The correct allocation and location of spares meant that repeat calls became virtually non-existent.

Busy Bank Holidays quickly became flourishing sales opportunities for stores – with positive feedback from Store Managers and customers alike.

Now into the fourth year of the service, Barron McCann has consistently exceeded the service level required. Stuart Lockhart, James Hall Ltd's Retail IT Manager, said: "Barron McCann provides a great service and have exceeded our expectations. It would be difficult for them to do better, but they are always looking at how to improve things - it feels like a real partnership and that they truly care about us and our customers. They share our core values – for instance, when an engineer arrives on site, he's not looking at his watch or worried about his next job – he just wants to finish the job in hand to our complete satisfaction."

"We were absolutely delighted with the smooth transition and there has been an ongoing impressive consistency that hadn't been achieved with previous suppliers. Service levels are consistently well into the 90% figures. And we've continued ongoing discussions with Barron McCann to look at new service options that are driving benefits for us both moving forwards - it's a win-win situation."

David Maltby, Sales Director for Barron McCann, said: "We fully recognise that Retail is a demanding working environment that relies heavily on the availability of key IT systems."

"Prospective clients are – not unnaturally – concerned about the transition of service from one supplier to another. At Barron McCann we can evidence and detail the processes whereby for every new client, we have over-delivered against their service requirements from the outset, and then maintained that level of service ongoing. A reputation for service excellence is something that requires focus to secure, and we will not be complacent in further developing that status".

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