



## Homebase

Significantly improved sales for home improvement retailer



“It’s all about empowering and enabling Homebase stores to deliver a continuously improving experience for customers.”

*Adgild Hop,  
Retail Director,  
Capgemini Consulting*



### The Client

Homebase is a leading home enhancement retailer selling over 38,000 products for the home and garden. It has more than 300 large, out-of-town stores throughout the UK and Republic of Ireland serving around 64 million customers a year. Homebase is part of Home Retail Group, the UK’s leading home and general merchandise retailer.

### The Opportunity

As a destination retailer – where customers make a point of visiting a store because they wish to view, research or purchase products – customer sales conversion rates were deemed to be falling short of potential. A key driver of this was colleague hours not being focussed on the right customer-centric activities. As a result, a review of in-store operations and the customer experience was launched with the help at the outset of management consulting partner, Capgemini Consulting, and later Ipsos Retail Performance as subject matter experts.

Initial analysis highlighted a few key areas of opportunity:

- Potential to reinvest time spent on non-value adding activities into customer service
- Potential to complement a strong targeted task-focus with an equally strong customer-centric mindset to better leverage this increased customer-facing time
- Potential to transform leadership, selling skills and knowledge to drive a better customer experience, better conversion and better financial results and empowered colleagues.

Homebase trialled a low-capex ‘future-store’ concept through an integrated set of +/-20 solutions that addressed each of the three opportunities described above.

Peter Casey, Stores Director, explains: “It was all about empowering and enabling Homebase colleagues to deliver a great experience for our customers.”

### The Solution

Key to success was accurate measurement of the effectiveness of the trials.

Ipsos Retail Performance was already working closely with key members of the Homebase team in selected stores, providing footfall analysis and insights.

It wasn’t simply the footfall metrics that Homebase were impressed with; Ipsos Retail Performance was fully engaged with the new wider project, tailoring their solutions to meet the needs at hand as well as providing assistance, training and consultancy to fully support and utilise the metrics provided.

Running parallel to this, Capgemini Consulting were able to pinpoint three ‘hothouse’ stores, where the following solutions were implemented over a 12 week test period:

- Ensuring colleagues were able to focus on value-adding tasks to increase customer facing time
- Determining if colleagues possessed the skills and knowledge they needed to engage and excite customers
- Introduction of colleague incentive schemes to incentivise the right customer focussed behaviours for all shop floor zones.



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Retail Director,  
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Similar results and conclusions were found by both Capgemini and Ipsos Retail Performance and subsequently the solution was shared to the entire Homebase portfolio.

## **The Results**

The results have been profound; conversion rates increasing by 2% within weeks, average sales performance increasing by circa 2.4% across the rollout, and all of this with minimal capital investment.

"Conversion rates became a more important indicator and in fact the data that we were getting became more crucial to store teams," explains Elise Williams, Liberation Manager, Homebase. "Rather than simply relying on historical sales data, we could measure footfall throughout the day as changes were being implemented."

The hourly and daily data from Ipsos Retail Performance facilitated 'customer centric scheduling', matching customer facing colleague hours with customer footfall, allowing staff to be on hand during peak times to drive conversion rates.

Ipsos Retail Performance was able to provide conversion rate benchmarks to help incentivise staff to become more consultative and customer centric in their approach. "The ability to count, analyse and incentivise conversion performances has been key to the success of this exercise," explains Adgild Hop. "Together with formally tracking and managing customer satisfaction, sales and profitability measures, this has helped to foster a 'hard' performance culture alongside the 'soft' skills required in customer interactions. "Working collaboratively with Homebase and Capgemini, Ipsos Retail Performance has played an important

role in bringing retailing data to life for Homebase stores in a way that is helping them to fulfil their true potential."

Critically, customers are really noticing the difference, with satisfaction rates improving at 2 or 3 times the rate of the rest of the estate." There has been a drastic change in the service here over the last month... anyone can clearly see that customer service has become paramount ..." (Customer feedback).

The journey that colleagues have been on has also been profound, "Empowering, rewarding, relentless and uncompromising. Life will never be the same for me." (Sales floor team leader).

## **In Summary**

This retailer was able to strongly improve the in-store experience, not by investing in expensive hardware or systems, but by focussing on the basics – the customer. Empowered colleagues could leverage powerful data to manage the improvements and the results could be seen in the increased conversion rates and satisfied customers.

Capgemini Consulting provided the thought leadership and well-tested methodology; Ipsos Retail Performance provided the key customer conversion insight and training, but crucially Homebase owned the change, drove the change and delivered the results!

The relationship between Ipsos Retail Performance and Homebase remains a strong one, with Ipsos providing ongoing insights and support in a climate of continuous improvement.

## **About Ipsos Retail Performance**

Ipsos Retail Performance provides footfall monitoring solutions, shopper tracking systems and in-store behavioural research to retailers worldwide. Its core products Shopper Count, Shopper Interact and Shopper Engage scientifically measure all aspects of a shopper experience from store entry to exit. It supplies national and international retailers with essential business metrics to drive accountability and performance improvement. You can find out more at [www.ipsos-retailperformance.com](http://www.ipsos-retailperformance.com).