

SPEAK

"The way to increase both customer satisfaction and business efficiency is through continuous data sharing"

Wladimiro Bedin
BEDIN Shop Systems



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BEDIN optimises Windows Phone 8 for retail

BEDIN Shop Systems has launched aKite Mobile, a business dashboard for Windows Phone 8 devices that displays sales and margin history updated in near real time for the whole retail chain, as well as a single store. The new offering can also provide details about product availability, recent

sales and short-term forecasts through barcode scanning with a standard camera.

In other news, Kipoint, an Italian Post Office Group chain, has adopted BEDIN Shop Systems' aKite solution. Kipoint wanted to achieve more accurate and immediate control over the entire chain with fast and low cost deployment and

flexibility in fulfilling local franchisee needs, as well as also addressing the specific needs of the express delivery business.

"aKite was the only future-proof solution and, at the same time, was underpinned by many years of experience in shop automation," said Armando Borsetti, Kipoint's business director.

Cloud speeds aKite deployment at Limoni

Limoni, the largest perfumery chain in Italy, has taken only eight weeks to deploy BEDIN Shop Systems' aKite solution, thanks to Microsoft's cloud technology. The aKite point of service (POS) and in-store software was deployed at more than 450 Limoni stores.

Thanks to e-learning materials, store managers and shop assistants were able to prepare for the transition to aKite, easing workers into using the new system and gaining practical experience, rather than relying on technicians.

On top of the fast and easy deployment, the main reasons for choosing aKite were its high scalability and service level, and connected retail functionality. The sales flow through queues from stores to SQL Azure and then immediately to the Dynamics NAV system at headquarters.

"BEDIN Shop Systems has perfectly implemented the solution according to our needs," said Enrico Andrini, COO of Limoni. "The all-inclusive fee model, allows us to keep full control of our budget and to make sure software costs

are proportional to the actual number of outlets and seats."

aKite is the first POS and in-store software service designed to leverage all the benefits of the Microsoft Windows Azure cloud computing platform.

As the aKite solution is delivered on the cloud, the same software can be deployed at small, medium and large retail chains. For enterprise retailers, time and cost of deployment are important, as the critical period of running both old and new systems at the same time is reduced to a minimum.



Cloud computing is here

Cloud-based solutions are already making a difference on the shop floor today, but misconceptions around cloud computing are still holding businesses back from realising its full potential, says Wladimiro Bedin

Cloud computing is now a widely accepted term and most have an understanding of what it is and the benefits it has to offer, so why are retailers and companies across other industries still reluctant to use it? For many, concerns around security and service quality are holding them back from taking advantage of the cloud, which means that when it comes to managing mission-critical processes such as operations at the point of sale, most would still prefer an in-house IT solution.

At BEDIN Shop Systems, we believe that the majority of concerns around cloud computing originate from a pre-internet view, whereby businesses are caught up in the thinking that software solutions for the retail market, even when delivered from the internet, must remain inside either traditional centralised or departmental architectures. When hosted on premise or in a public or private cloud, centralised architectures come with inherent shortcomings and are limited by redundant lines and/or back-up systems. And because a departmental architecture requires frequent synchronisation between different databases, a real-time, connected business is almost impossible to achieve. In both instances, slow provisioning and limited scalability, plus high costs and complexities are common.

The post-internet paradigm, however, is based on standard web services and an open application programming interface for easy integration across geographies and software platforms. Here, software as a service (SaaS) should be based on a multi-tenancy environment (the sharing of code and resources across organisations), to deliver evolving services to a large number of users, with high service level agreements (SLAs) and at a low cost.

The first and simpler level of public cloud computing, also referred to as infrastructure

as a service (IaaS), is an evolution of virtualisation, but scalable and fault tolerant SaaS still requires additional middleware, adding complexity and lowering total SLA. This is why modern platform as a service (PaaS) models like Windows Azure, which ensure a clear distinction between infrastructure and application software, are so enabling.

Because of these reasons, our aKite solution is designed to take full advantage of Windows Azure and comes with the ability to integrate with any enterprise resource planning system or application on premise, allowing retailers to manage their operations both on a global and local level. This means they can keep sales logs and stock data in the cloud, and keep local operations on premise (embedded in each POS), allowing for seamlessly connected and disconnected operations.

One common misconception about the cloud is that it can be used only through browsers or thin clients with fast internet connections. Rich internet applications (RIAs), smart clients and the new HTML5 standards, however, are all designed to get the best from current hardware to create a richer user experience and allow for disconnected operations. Our smart client-based POS.net solution responds instantly to scanners and can read and manage multiple peripherals directly. Synchronisation based on compressed XML messages on bidirectional queues can easily handle traffic peaks as well as any intermittent connections that a mobile POS or store with poor connectivity may suffer from.

Another concern raised by retailers about running their POS operations using an SaaS model is that it will limit their ability to customise applications for their specific needs. While automatic deployment, continuous evolution and low cost favour parameterisation versus customisation, today, new, open and



Wladimiro Bedin

BEDIN Shop Systems

standardised technologies are facilitating the creation of new specialised clients, integrating with whole subsystems without having to overcome the language and architectural constraints of a traditional system. Furthermore technology developments like Microsoft Dynamics allow companies to choose which parts of their systems they want in the cloud and which they want to keep on premise. And aKite integrates with both environments, allowing for true flexibility and easy customisation.

As the market matures and perceptions towards the cloud change, an increasing number of businesses will begin to trust in it as a viable and secure IT supply model. It has been proven time and time again that those who take advantage of the next paradigm shift in technology gain a competitive edge. Cloud computing is that next paradigm shift; it is the next evolution of IT.

Wladimiro Bedin is president and founder of BEDIN Shop Systems, which develops software solutions for the retail market

First steps to the cloud

Rebecca Lambert speaks to Ian Carlson at Microsoft to find out more about his company's private cloud offerings and how they are helping businesses get used to the new IT delivery and consumption models of cloud computing

The cloud is shifting the way we think about computing. Offering unbounded scalability on a pay-per-use basis, for many businesses cloud computing means increased business agility, accelerated time-to-market, less upfront, capital expense and reduced IT overheads. But how should they take advantage of the cloud? Should they be using a public, private or hybrid environment? In previous issues of *Speak* we have explained what public cloud computing is all about and how customers are benefiting from the Windows Azure Platform. Here, Rebecca Lambert speaks to Ian Carlson, senior product manager in Microsoft's Windows Server and Virtualisation Product Management team, to find out why customers may choose a private cloud computing model and how Microsoft is helping them to build out a dedicated cloud environment to transform the way they manage their IT.

What are the main differences between public and private cloud computing?

At Microsoft, we view cloud computing as a new model to deliver and use IT services – one that helps to increase the focus of IT on what really matters to the business, resulting

in increased business agility and improved IT economies. That being said, we describe the cloud by its core attributes; first is pooled resources, which is taking all of your compute, network and storage and building a shared pool. Second, it provides self-service capabilities, allowing people to access the IT resources they need, reducing the burden on the IT department. Third is the ability to be elastic, which is to scale up or down dynamically as resource needs change. Fourth is the ability to have a usage-based system, where the people using IT resources are paying only for what they use, when they need it. We feel this definition covers all the cloud computing delivery models, and private cloud has all the same benefits and attributes, with the additional control and customisation of resources that are dedicated to an individual customer. In comparison, a public cloud offering is built on IT resources shared by multiple organisations.

Why would some customers choose private over public cloud?

One of the factors that may govern a company's use of private over public is the desire to have some additional control and customisation of their cloud resources. Some

examples include data sovereignty and regulations. Certain governments don't allow data to exist outside their countries, and with some public cloud offerings that may not be possible. In these cases, private clouds run by individual companies or hosted by a service provider can help meet these needs.

What benefits does a private cloud infrastructure specifically offer to retailers?

One scenario that highlights the value to retailers is around application elasticity. Retail companies often have high seasonal demand for their products and services. Through efficient resource pooling, which is a core tenant of cloud computing, corporate IT can scale based on that seasonal demand across a larger set of resources, and release them back into the pool for the next seasonal demand. The usage-based model is also applicable here, as it can help provide a better view into the true profitability of individual stores, or seasonal events.

What developments is Microsoft making in the private cloud computing space?

With the upcoming release of System Center 2012 we are bringing to market enhancements across the Microsoft private



Businesses are expected to take advantage of hybrid cloud models where they can use both public and private cloud to meet their needs

cloud solution, including new capabilities at the base layer for building IT resource pools across multiple hypervisors, as well as new models of self service that are tied into a structured set of IT processes. At the application layer, we have made investments in providing deep application insight, all the way to the code itself, which allows for faster time to resolution when applications are not performing as expected. We also just introduced an early pre-release of Windows Server 8, which will bring a broad range of new technologies for private cloud, including new enhancements in virtualisation, management and storage.

How will the release of System Center 2012 enhance the current Microsoft private cloud programmes and offerings?

We will be updating all of the Microsoft private cloud offerings to include the new System Center 2012 functionality. For example, the Microsoft Private Cloud Fast Track programme, which represents joint solutions from Microsoft and the key server providers, will be updated in the first half of 2012.

Once businesses are comfortable with a private cloud computing model, how easy is it for them to migrate to a public cloud infrastructure?

The ability to operate in a hybrid model is central to our approach to cloud computing. It is important for a business to get comfortable with the new IT

delivery and consumption models of cloud computing. Implementing a private cloud is a great step towards public cloud computing. Getting the new processes in place, setting up the SLAs for self service, and transitioning to a usage-based model make for an easier transition to leveraging public cloud resources when that makes sense. At Microsoft, we believe that our customers will live in a hybrid model of cloud computing, where they will choose the combination of private and public cloud infrastructure that best fits their particular business. To enable this hybrid model, we have focused on providing a common set of identity, management, development and virtualisation technologies that span our private and public cloud offerings.

How will the role of cloud computing (both private and public) evolve over the years?

Applications will continue to evolve into full services that can be developed and used through the new cloud computing models, where private or public become deployment decisions based on business needs. Getting started with building a Microsoft private cloud provides a great foundation for getting your business into cloud computing. With the common management processes, identity, development frameworks and infrastructure solutions you are best positioned to take advantage of the new functionality that cloud computing models will continue to deliver both with private and public cloud offerings.

Private cloud: A perspective from BEDIN Shop Systems

Private cloud computing ultimately offers businesses the ability to manage their in-house IT resource in a more agile, flexible and efficient manner

While we have chosen to offer our retail solution suite aKite on a software as a service model built using Windows Azure, we are also aware that retailers still want to run some mission-critical solutions in house. For this reason, aKite comes with the ability to integrate with any ERP system or application on premise, allowing retailers to manage their operations in both a private and public environment. The advantage here is that they can gradually make the transition to the cloud on their terms while still benefiting from the innate scalability, flexibility and cost-effectiveness of the cloud computing model. As companies get used to this new way of managing IT, I believe the distinctions between public and private cloud will blur.

Wladimiro Bedin is president and founder of BEDIN Shop Systems

Feature
Enriching the customer experience

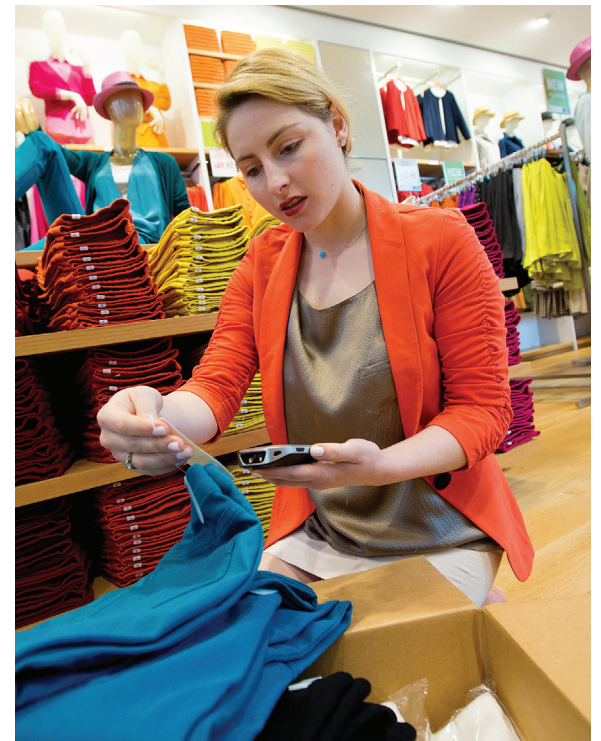


Store of the future

Amber Stokes talks to Microsoft and its partners to find out which innovative technology solutions can help prevent the demise of bricks-and-mortar stores

More and more stores are closing on high streets today. The Centre for Retail Research has estimated that total store numbers in the UK alone will fall by 22 per cent by 2018. Much of the threat comes from soaring online and mobile sales, as digitally savvy customers revel in the omni-channel experience. This trend is not unique to the UK. According to eMarketer, online sales in the US grew by 13.9 per cent in 2012, while the number of people buying online in China will nearly double between 2012 and 2016. So because of this, the future of bricks-and-mortar stores remains uncertain. Do we still need them? In ten years time, will they even exist?

"There will always be a place out there for bricks-and-mortar stores, but retailers



need to make the experience more exciting and meaningful for customers in store," says Marty Ramos, Microsoft's director for worldwide Retail and Hospitality. "Mobile in particular has changed the role that stores play. Customers are going into stores today with a computer in their pocket – their smartphones provide them with instant, anytime access to information and deals, so they want the same, enriched experience when they go into the store."

Indeed, much of the appeal of online shopping for consumers is having better access to stock and being offered competitive prices. And this is why the trend of showrooming has grown in recent years. "Showrooming is a rapidly growing trend where consumers visit a store to look at



merchandise and then purchase the product from an online competitor, usually for a cheaper price,” explains Servebase CEO, Ritz Steytler. “Retailers need to embrace this new shopping behaviour, often just to stay afloat. Consumer journeys are no longer linear. It used to be that a retailer would be able to tell if a customer was online or not in-store – with the rise of smartphones, this is no longer the case. Customers may be in-store, comparing prices of products, reading reviews over social networks, checking product details and buying from a competitor’s website, while using store wi-fi.”

Steytler believes that bricks-and-mortar stores will continue to remain important, but warns that retailers need a strategy that promotes an optimal mix of customer

touchpoints, taking all these different kinds of customer shopping journeys into account in order to improve the customer experience.

Back in 2011, Forester reported in *Welcome to the Era of Agile Commerce* that: “customers no longer interact with companies from a ‘channel’ perspective; instead, they interact through touchpoints.” And Steytler says this is exactly how Servebase operates. “These touchpoints range from stores and websites to apps, social media and SMS messages,” he says. “Showrooming has become prevalent because consumers want to be able to engage and transact on any device. So retailers need to focus on having an offering enriched engagement with customers.” Servebase is helping retailers to do this

through its flexible multi-channel payments solution. ANYPay allows retailers to manage any payment device across any application, from a centralised intelligent hub via the cloud, meaning customers can pay in whichever way they prefer.

But just providing services on any device isn’t enough. Improving the customer experience ultimately starts with the store associates, and to ensure they give the best service possible, retailers need to give them the right tools. Lenovo’s Sharon Love, director of Global Integrator Offerings, says that mobility and touch have created a fundamental shift in thinking in retail today, and through the use of mobile POS, the retailer can demonstrate the value of the face-to-face experience and deflect

Feature

Enriching the customer experience

showrooming. “Rather than making the customer go to the point of service, the service can now go to the customer,” she says. “Retailers should design the store experience around what the customer wants, enabling them to bring what’s online into the store in a way that really highlights the value of having real people ready to help. With a shared interactive space – tablet or larger touch screens – customers and associates can work together in a way that isn’t possible online. The in-store experience quickly becomes easier, more personal and more compelling.”

Lenovo’s Windows 8-optimised, dockable tablet, the ThinkPad Tablet 2, is ideal for retailers in this space because it is light and sleek, yet still rugged enough for regular use on the shop floor. Furthermore, Windows 8 delivers many benefits to retailers today. “Windows 8 means retailers

can choose the device that is right for each unique situation, rather than being locked into proprietary architectures. They can also enable their applications for touch, without cutting off users from easy access to conventional applications,” says Love.

“Mobility has changed consumers’ behaviour,” says Enzo Capobianco, EMEA development manager at Honeywell. “If they struggle to find a store associate that can provide them with product and price information (such as availability or a promotion), then they will simply go elsewhere or online and the retailer will lose a sale.”

Capobianco claims that historically, a store associate would have to go into the back office to check for product information. Honeywell offers a platform that allows store associates to have access to information at their fingertips, on the shop floor.

Using Honeywell’s newly developed Dolphin Black device, store associates can have access to all the information they need on the shop floor. “The Dolphin Black is rugged and stylish – ideal for associates that need to provide assisted sales service to customers on the go in a professional environment,” says Capobianco. “They can access all the typical tools they have access to in the back office, but they can also use it as a phone to communicate with other staff and stores. Its integrated imager means they can also scan linear and mobile barcodes on the shelf or a smartphone for instant access to information.”

Mike Adams, who leads the Retail Industry Practice at Dell, says that while retailers understand the importance of using innovative technology in stores today, one of the biggest challenges they face is deciding what they should implement. “Customers are now in control of the shopping process and can dictate how and when they engage with retailers,” he says. “Store technology needs to be as flexible and agile as possible to enable these improvements. Retailers need to be able to experiment and find the right solutions for their business.” Dell’s wireless store solution provides a comprehensive mobile ecosystem that can equip retailers with secure customer wireless access, associate mobile devices to enrich the customer experience, as well as make store operations more efficient. “Retailers that do this will be well positioned to compete in this new retail environment,” says Adams.

“Physical retail is about having the product right in front of you and being able to try it out before you buy it,” says Microsoft’s Ramos. “That’s why it is so critical for a store to have the right stock and for store associates to be able to access accurate inventory information. There are some really innovative solutions in use now that are transforming the way retailers can provide what the customer wants.”

Getting personal is also an important part of improving the customer experience in store, it seems. “Through facial recognition technology, retailers can deliver this personalised experience to customers to ensure they are getting



Viewpoint: Wladimiro Bedin, founder and CEO, BEDIN Shop Systems

Assisted selling on the shop floor

Wladimiro Bedin explains the importance of allowing store associates to reach customers through mobile POS

Assisted selling on the shop floor is so important to customers today for alleviating queues and improving customer service. A stand-out feature is the ability to give value to customers on the shop floor, for instance, explaining technical features of a product, providing stock availability details, considering deals and so on. To do this effectively, it makes sense to share information via the cloud.

At BEDIN Shop Systems, we have focused on removing the complexity from the store and putting it in the cloud. This shift allows a POS feature wide enough for use in standard lanes and light enough for mobile operations. Our solution, called aKite, runs on Windows 8-enabled devices or standard tablets, meaning the shop assistant can use the POS and move around the floor with it, without having to learn to use different interfaces.

aKite was designed to easily integrate with other applications such as e-commerce, web marketing and social networks:

basically covering the entire multi-channel experience that is necessary in retail today. We think the future of retail is based on an ecosystem of cloud services that can be easily integrated together instead of a vertical and rigid method. Retailers can benefit from a solution that fits their own unique requirements through standard services – it’s low cost and continuously develops services. Through social networks and web marketing, you can integrate aKite with what the customer really wants, while the retailer can provide effective marketing,



Wladimiro Bedin is founder and CEO of BEDIN Shop Systems



Lenovo's Windows 8-optimised tablet is ideal for retailers

"One way to truly improve the customer experience in store is by analysing data"

Marty Ramos

Microsoft

what they want," says Allen Ganz, senior account development manager at NEC. "Facial recognition technology itself isn't new and has been used for many years in security, but retailers are now starting to see the benefits in their stores. Today almost all devices have a camera so consumers' perceptions of using photographs have changed over the last few years."

Ganz explains that NEC facial recognition technology is helping retailers engage with customers and deliver personal experiences. Taking the example of a coffee shop, if a customer can see a queue of people leading up to the door, they might simply walk away and go elsewhere. If a customer opts in to the facial recognition solution, however, they can

walk to a kiosk and it will know what they want based on their previous purchase history and even suggest other products they might be interested in.

Universal Studios Japan is currently using NEC's technology for access control to the park. As one of the largest and most famous theme parks in Japan and with annual visitors exceeding eight million, easy access for customers is essential in ensuring they enjoy their visit. Using NEC's facial recognition technology, it now takes approximately one second to check a face, and the system recognises previous visitors every time they return. With this access control system, the guests' waiting time at the entrance is dramatically shortened and Universal Studios Japan has cut operating costs by 30 per cent. "We're giving retailers the ability to capture customers who would have previously walked out of the door. Now they can up-sell based on purchase history and increase return on investment," says Ganz. "This can be applied to almost any retailer who has a highly valued customer and a certain experience they want to present to them. We're selling a unique customer experience that is enabled by our facial recognition technology."

"One way to truly improve the customer experience in store is by analysing the data," says Microsoft's Ramos. "Information, like how much time a customer spends in the store, what products they bought, which products they wanted to buy but couldn't get hold of, and so forth – all of this can be really useful to a retailer in ensuring they offer the best products and service in store." Dassault Systèmes' My Store solution aims to deliver a unique and memorable consumer experience across all channels through analytics, 3D merchandising and store layout management. "People don't



Solution profile: NCR Netkey Endless Aisle

Capturing sales in store

NCR's self service retail solutions can help retailers beat the challenges of showrooming to secure a sale in store

The NCR Netkey Endless Aisle kiosk application seamlessly integrates with back-end e-commerce systems to enable customers to browse for product information on a retailer's website, as well as check inventory and order out-of-stock items or products that are not available in store.

Combined with the new NCR SelfServ 85 Slimline 32-inch kiosk, retailers can bring an innovative high-definition digital retail experience into the store. It's aimed at helping stores capture sales that might be lost due to out-of-stock situations and it can also be used in an assisted mode with a sales person.



Feature

Enriching the customer experience



Dassault Systèmes' My Store solution is helping retailers to better plan their stores



Solution profile: Dynamics for Retail

A new level of customer service

Microsoft Dynamics for Retail can help retailers to improve productivity of store associates for better customer service

"The heart of omni-channel retail is an integrated supply chain," says Dilip Popat, Microsoft Dynamics EMEA industry director for Retail. "It's essential to having visibility into inventory and customer information, otherwise it is very hard to provide what the customer wants. Dynamics provides this visibility, allowing retailers to have one view of the inventory in real time and reflect on events as they happen – it's the core of the business, ensuring you have the right product at the right place at the right time."

"Dynamics for Retail can help retailers provide a whole new level of customer experience," adds Luke Shave, Microsoft's global industry marketing lead for retail. "Look at the Dynamics POS running on a Windows 8 tablet for example – store associates can quickly access role-specific information through the device, providing them with the ability to better answer questions, quickly check product information and ultimately provide a richer and more personal customer

experience. It also puts associates on a more level playing field with today's increasingly empowered consumer and drives productivity by reducing the time taken to close sales and offering additional selling opportunities. Microsoft Dynamics is the unifying fabric across the Microsoft solution portfolio, bringing technology investments like Windows 8, Windows 8 devices and the new version of SharePoint to bear in a way that retailers and consumers alike understand."

A recent advocate of this solution is US retailer Mattress Firm. Microsoft replaced its dated legacy enterprise resource planning system to support continued business growth. Because Dynamics for Retail is intuitive, user-friendly and has a familiar interface, new employees were able to get up to speed quickly once the new software was rolled out. A better-informed store associate means improved customer service, which is key for retaining customers in-store and ensuring they make a purchase there and then.

just shop for things they need – they do it for pleasure too," says Susan Olivier, vice president of Consumer Goods and Retail Industry Solutions at Dassault Systèmes. "Through our solution, we aim to make this experience more enjoyable for customers again. We look at how retailers can get them in the store in the first place and how to make it more interesting and enjoyable when they're there, but also how they can better support their staff."

Olivier explains that retailers need to work out how to use their time, space and staff more productively – which can sometimes mean differently – in order to pull customers into the store. "Using My Store, we start by looking at a retailer's analytics in terms of sales and trends and combine that with social data to tap into the top tier consumers and allow them to have a voice," says Olivier. "The most interesting part of My Store is the 3D merchandising part. Today, retailers might set up a model of their store in the back office somewhere and take photos and send them to other stores for consistency. If they're lucky, these arrive with instructions before the actual stock arrives. We're ahead of this process."

By visually merchandising the store using Dassault Systèmes' 3D technology, retailers can get an accurate understanding of where their stock should sit to better fit the customers' preferences. Retailers might have ten different models for different stores to ensure each one is meeting the right standards according to the different data they extracted at the beginning of the project. They can drop fixtures into place with the product, sales collateral and POS to know what it will look like, so that the store associates can virtually walk the shop floor to understand what it should look like and why. They will ultimately spend less time on the shop floor moving products around and spend more time with the customers.

"Without a doubt, there will always be physical stores as consumers will always want to touch products and enjoy the social aspects of shopping," adds Ramos. "But retailers must focus on enriching the shopping experience, which includes embracing the customer's phone as their personal shopping portal. Retail is transitioning today and by using technology from Microsoft and our partners, we can help retailers excel throughout these changes."

The Cloud POS Manifesto

Retailers have much to gain if they take advantage of the cloud, says Wladimiro Bedin

Today, cloud computing is a widely acknowledged (and possibly overused) term, but its importance should not be underestimated. The cloud is emerging as the most significant technology shift in a generation.

At BEDIN Shop Systems, we have developed a POS and in-store software-as-a-service suite called aKite that leverages the full potential of latest cloud computing paradigms. It can be integrated with other internal or external IT systems and extended across the supply chain. Here is our Cloud POS manifesto that explains why and how retailers should take advantage of this latest technology development.

Cloud computing is revolutionary. To realise the full potential of cloud computing and exceed traditional hosting and virtualisation, software must leverage all key characteristics. According to the National Institute of Standards and Technology, these characteristics are on-demand self-service, broad network access, resource sharing, rapid elasticity and measured service.

Connected retail. The way to increase both customer satisfaction and business efficiency is through continuous data sharing between all parties in the supply chain, from suppliers to customers, allowing everybody to be truly connected.

No information technology limits. The complexity of traditional IT systems results not only in a cost increase but also in a distraction from the core business. The purchase, deployment and evolution of traditional software are too expensive and slow.

No centralised and departmental architectural dilemma. Traditional software architectures do not support the 'Connected Retail' vision with the necessary service level and resilience. Often, centralised solutions are coupled with a departmental backup, increasing cost and complexity.

A cloud POS is an intelligent device. Only local intelligence enables selling without interruption in the case of any external fault. It also improves the operator's experience and reduces the load on the network. Internet and cloud computing are finite resources to be used with maximum efficiency to reduce costs and environmental impact.

Deployment is simple, fast and automatic. A cloud POS is deployed and automatically updated without any technical expertise. Maximum security and reliability is guaranteed, even when using standard web protocols.

Real cloud computing manages any workload. Data exchange through asynchronous messages and service oriented software architectures means retailers can scale without practical limits. Rapid elasticity ensures both service levels and efficiency.

No adoption barriers and constant evolution. Per seat and/or per store fees and no initial investments allow retailers of any size to benefit from cloud services while improving the economy of scale. Multi-tenancy (hardware and software sharing) and parameterisation instead of customisation, allows continuous and sustainable evolution.

A Cloud POS is part of an ecosystem. Designing for integration with other cloud services and internal or external IT systems, including legacy ones, will enable a new ecosystem. Retailers will build their own information systems integrating standard components.

A Cloud POS is different. Cloud computing and software-as-a-service – with their new technological paradigms and business models – irreversibly change the rules of the game for the better.

Wladimiro Bedin is founder and CEO of BEDIN Shop Systems



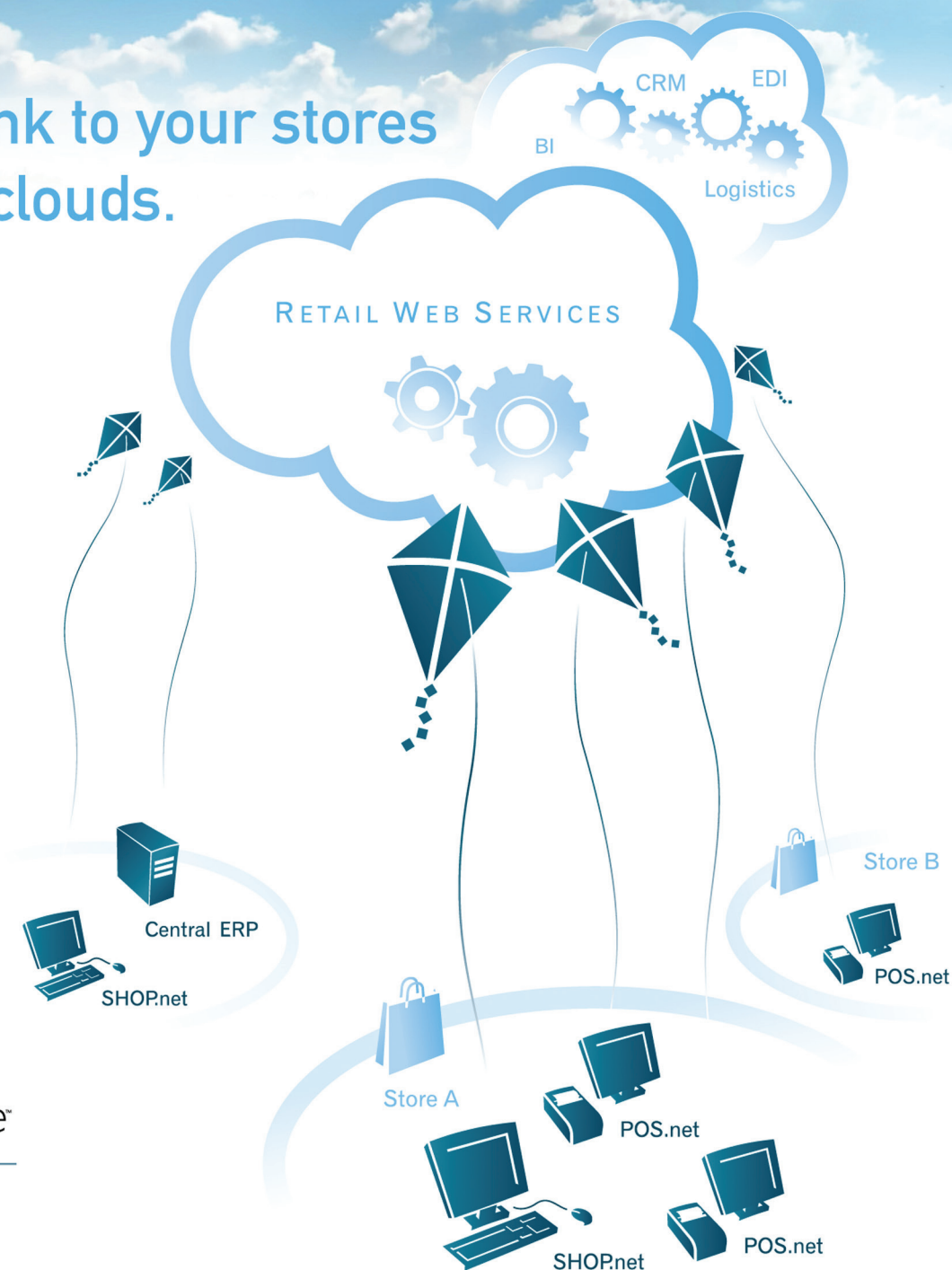
"The way to increase both customer satisfaction and business efficiency is through continuous data sharing"

Wladimiro Bedin

BEDIN Shop Systems

aKite®

The direct link to your stores is up in the clouds.



 Windows Azure™

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aKite is the first POS & InStore SaaS designed to leverage the full power of a modern PaaS like Windows Azure for high scalability and SLA together with rapid and easy deployment.

Retail Web Services, the intelligent Hub in the Cloud, removes complexity from Stores and HQ, share data inside and outside the chain and easily integrate with ERP, CRM, eCommerce, web marketing, social networks, ...

POS.net, the Front Store App, works seamlessly connected and disconnected, in any Windows POS and Tablet.

There is much talk about Cloud Computing on Retail future. For years our customers appreciate the benefit !

- No investment. Pay as you go.
- Rapid deployment.
- High scalability and SLA.
- Native data sharing and integration



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