



Tops Markets maintains fresh, crisp customer service

Client name: Tops Markets

Location: Williamsville, NY

Industry: Retail

Challenge

- Adapt to continually changing customer tastes and preferences
- Modernize applications inherited from parent company
- Expand digital business initiatives online while ensuring stable and secure systems and infrastructure

Solution

- Provided application services for business systems
- Hosted computing infrastructure, including mainframe, servers and networks, security and workplace support
- Added e-commerce, digital communication applications to support digital transformation

Results

- Implemented highly reliable infrastructure to support growth with no major outages
- Reduced IT costs for new stores by 63%, cut overall IT costs by 10%
- Gained confidence to aggressively pursue new ideas and innovations with the support of reliable and secure infrastructure, networks and access controls
- Provided end-to-end security services, including monitoring, threat detection, network security, vulnerability scanning, auditing and two-factor user authentication

Many supermarkets struggle to maintain a foothold in their highly competitive space, but Tops Markets — a regional supermarket chain with 169 stores in the northeastern United States — has prospered by building customer loyalty through a wide range of products and services.

“We pride ourselves on being a full-service supermarket with all the services our customers need, so we have gas stations, pharmacies, banks — and we’ve grown exponentially over the years,” says CEO Frank Curci.

Because supermarkets constitute the “last mile” of the supply chain in consumer goods, they are among the first to recognize changes in consumer tastes, preferences and behaviors. “Customers want things that are different and innovative, so we’re trying to come up with solutions in the store to take care of that,” Curci says.

Never content with the status quo, the leadership team at Tops, working with DXC Technology, developed a laundry list of IT projects to keep the company moving forward. Michael Metz, Tops’ vice president of IT, says application modernization is one core area, but the company has larger plans.

“We have our brick-and-mortar stores and offer online ordering that you can have delivered to your home or pick up curbside at the stores,” Metz says. “We constantly communicate with our customers via email and messaging. We need to follow digital transformation trends so we don’t fall behind.”

Secure platform for success

DXC’s longstanding relationship with Tops began when the chain was carved out of Ahold, a European retailer. As Curci explains, it was a ground-up project: “[DXC] helped us build the infrastructure we need to serve customers in our stores, our front-end systems and the structure that we need to bring product into our stores. They’ve helped us improve it and update it over those years.”

DXC provides application services for Tops’ business systems and hosts the computing infrastructure, including mainframe, servers and network management, security and workplace support.

Major upgrades included the modernization of a costly and obsolete database platform to an open architecture solution and the optimization of Tops’ IT environment through virtualization, consolidation and moving to an electronic data interchange (EDI) software-as-a-service deployment.

“We’ve been focused on store-based technology over the last several years,” Metz says. “We put a lot of money in our point-of-sale and our back-office applications. DXC implemented and integrated and supported all those back-office integrations.”

John Persons, Tops president and chief operating officer, says DXC’s platforms have enabled the company to change with the times. The systems have “allowed us to add capabilities, including e-commerce, digital communication applications, business analytics and other applications. We’re looking to add capabilities in all areas of our business — for customers and also internally so we can grow and learn about our business.”

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In addition to workplace services and technical services, DXC helps safeguard Tops Markets’ digital transformation with end-to-end security services, including monitoring, threat detection, network intrusion prevention and detection, vulnerability scanning, audits of system and organization controls, and two-factor user authentication.

DXC’s global security operations centers (SOCs) secure the company’s IT environment, which includes firewalls, network proxies and more than 300 servers. Since 2017, DXC patched and secured systems during the Wannacry/Petya/NotPetya ransomware attacks and the Meltdown and Spectre server vulnerabilities without incident. DXC also provided security consultants to proactively analyze the breach of another retailer to identify any potential gaps in the environment and offered the latest best practices to guard against breaches and ransomware attacks.

A bumper crop of benefits

Curci says Tops identifies DXC as a partner of choice because of DXC’s demonstrated expertise in the consumer and retail marketing industry and its special experience with systems that Tops wanted to import from the parent company.

In addition to building new capabilities, the company has had no major outage with DXC’s services. The IT cost for opening a new store has been cut by 63 percent, and Tops has seen an overall annual cost savings of about 10 percent.

“We’ve also improved our performance within corporate applications and store applications,” Metz says. “We are now hitting all our service-level agreements.”

Curci says DXC’s willingness to bring new ideas to the table has helped the company maintain its forward momentum.

“There have been many times where they’ve pushed us to do things that we really need to do and maybe didn’t feel ready to do, but they’ve given us the tools to put those things in place to serve our customers going into the future,” Curci says. “Going from 71 stores to 169 stores is no small feat, but we’ve been able to do that really without any bumps in the road.”

Persons says the partnership between the companies is strong, and Tops looks forward to continuing to work together to expand the business and improve customer service.

“DXC has been with us since the beginning, and they’ve brought us immense value over the years in new ideas, new innovation,” he says. “The Tops and DXC partnership is viewed internally as the preeminent partnership with any of our service providers.”

About DXC Technology

As the world’s leading independent, end-to-end IT services company, DXC Technology (NYSE: DXC) leads digital transformations for clients by modernizing and integrating their mainstream IT, and by deploying digital solutions at scale to produce better business outcomes. The company’s technology independence, global talent, and extensive partner network enable 6,000 private and public-sector clients in 70 countries to thrive on change. DXC is a recognized leader in corporate responsibility. For more information, visit www.dxc.technology and explore thrive.dxc.technology, DXC’s digital destination for changemakers and innovators.