

## BUILDING SOCIETY WORKS OUT STAFFING

Yorkshire Building Society (BS) is deploying workforce management systems to assess branch improvements for enhanced member services.

The UK's third largest society has selected Impact 360 for Retail Financial Services from Verint Witness Actionable Solutions, in partnership with contact centre services company and Verint partner, Sabio. And the investment, which is being deployed as a Managed Services solution, complements the existing Impact 360 contact centre solutions already in use.

Yorkshire's objective is to implement the solution in a number of its 136 branch locations to assess process and procedural changes that will be designed to further enhance member experiences and gain additional efficiencies.

Impact 360, offered as a managed services solution, provides banks and building societies with branch forecasting and scheduling capabilities through a cost-effective, and easy to use and implement solution. With the hosted Impact 360 service, Yorkshire BS can accurately forecast member needs based on transaction and non-transaction resource demands and then schedule staff accordingly, helping ensure it has the right people with the right skills at the right time in its branches.

Ian Bullock, sales and marketing director, Yorkshire Building Society said: "With Impact 360 and Verint's expertise, we will have important new tools to help us make the best possible decisions to improve member experiences in our branches."

## ZBD GEARS UP IN ITALY

UK electronic display specialist, ZBD has announced a significant breakthrough in the Italian retail sector, securing its first orders from one of Italy's largest retailers, grocery store operator SISA.

The agreement covers SISA Nord Ovest (North West), which serves the Lombardia, Piemonte and Liguria regions of Italy through an estate of more than 230 stores. Starting with SISA Nord Ovest's largest outlet near Milan and subsequently extending to other stores in the region, Windsor-based ZBD and its Italian partner are overhauling SISA's fresh food labelling in accordance with Italian regulations and introducing automated electronic displays to replace traditional paper tags.

ZBD's electronic point-of-purchase (EPoP) displays are being deployed initially in the fresh fruit and vegetable department, with plans to include fresh meat and delicatessen counters as the roll-out develops. Several thousand of ZBD's EPoP500 displays, together with EPoP Communicator devices and Bounce communications software, have been earmarked for the project, which ZBD envisages growing to a group of about 50 stores during the first quarter of next year.

The deal, brokered last month by the Italian member of ZBD's VISION international partner programme, Milan-based Proxima Centauri Informatica, answers SISA's demand for an automated, customer-friendly solution to comply with Italy's food labelling laws. These require stores to display point of purchase data about fresh produce's provenance, such as its quality classification and origin, as well as usual product code and pricing information.

By teaming ZBD's zero-power LCD displays with its own "GDOshop" back office to point-of-sale (PoS) software already in use at SISA stores, Proxima was able to quickly deliver a flexible, effective system customised to SISA's needs.



GDOshop, an end-to-end store solution handling supply chain, process flow, data management, logistics, label creation and PoS integration, also automates the management of product provenance data. Linking this data to ZBD's EPoP displays provided an ideal alternative to the cumbersome manual processes of traditional paper labelling and product tracking.

David Rogers, ZBD group sales and marketing director commented: "The agreement with SISA demonstrates the ability of ZBD's electronic labelling solutions to deliver tangible business benefits in a wide range of retail environments."

SISA Nord Ovest is the first SISA region to deploy ZBD's EPoP solutions. In all SISA operates about 1,000 stores across Italy under a model similar to a traditional co-operative, with stores in shared ownership between SISA and the store manager.

## RESEARCH FUNDING BUILDS INDUSTRY LINKS

Professor Michelle Lowe from the Faculty of Management and Law at the University of Surrey has been awarded £1.5 million over the next five years by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) as part of a partnership business engagement cluster between the Universities of Southampton, Leeds, Oxford and Surrey. Led by Prof Neil Wrigley at the University of Southampton, the retail industry business engagement network (RIBEN) includes funding for CASE studentships, knowledge transfer partnerships, business vouchers and placements.

RIBEN is one of four ESRC capacity building clusters with the aim of creating a new generation of high quality researchers committed to direct engagement and co-production of knowledge with the business sector.