

Henderson has the EDGE for Global Innovation



Henderson Technology was created, to bring our customers the most cutting-edge solutions, at the right time, and bringing the right value to the business.

Overview - what Henderson Technology looks after on a daily basis?

At Henderson Technology we develop the EDGEPoS Point of Sale system for convenience and forecourt stores. Within Northern Ireland, this is exclusively used by customers of the Henderson Group, and has been developed to specifically meet the needs of these stores, both today and into the future.

It is in use in all of our company owned stores run by our sister company Henderson Retail, and because of this we are proud to say that we are the only company developing Point of Sale systems that actually uses their own software in their own stores - so we understand what it has to do, and how it has to do it. It also means that we are fully committed to the ongoing development of EDGEPoS, so all our customers have a system that will grow with their business. We employ over 50 people, in all areas of technology, from development and R & D, support and maintenance through to sales, training and installation services. It's a busy environment, and one which gives us new challenges every day.

How has Henderson Technology developed and changed over recent years?

One of the biggest evolutions at the company has been when we realised that the product that we have developed for the Henderson Group stores at home, had so many benefits and applications further afield and across the world.

We are working with a very strong partner in Australia - Companion Software - and now have over 90 stores there running our system. In Great Britain, we have also started working with partners and we're rolling out the software to customers in England, Scotland and Wales. Every country we enter has so many similarities for us to share our experience, but also gives us opportunities to develop the product even further in ways we may not have thought of.

As our team travels the globe, we

get a unique insight into all aspects of retail and it really does help us push forwards. We are very proud to have been chosen by SPAR International as their preferred Point of Sale solution, and this year for EDGEPoS to have been named as UK Retailing Technology of the Year, at the National Technology Awards in London.

What are the key areas of focus?

Efficiency is a main focus, as it is for a lot of businesses. How can we develop our systems to help our customers reduce costs and provide better service to their customers? It was a discussion like this 18 months ago, which led us to develop our own self-checkout solution for our customers. We wanted a low-cost, reliable way of giving our customers all the benefits that self-service technologies bring to the major multiple retailers, but not at the same cost that those stores pay for it. So, we developed it in-house, and are in the process of rolling it out to all the pre-order stores.

Another focus is mobility, again not something that is unique to us, but we need to develop unique ways to embrace it in our stores to ensure it brings value to our customers. We are trialling mobile apps for payment, loyalty and hot food ordering, and are soon to look at our first trial of click and collect and scan-pay-go technology to make the shopping journey as frictionless as possible for our shoppers.

How does technology help keep your stores ahead of the curve in the industry?

When you combine all the areas we have discussed - a solution developed by us as retailers for use by other retailers, a product which is continually evolving and being invested in, a system that is picking up the best international developments and trends, and a company that is backing up the product with one of the best teams of IT professionals in the business - you can see that our stores have the tools to hand to help drive forwards against the competition.

Giving our retailers the tools and technologies that our shoppers expect and indeed that exceed those shopper expectations is what keeps our stores here and around the globe ahead of the curve - and the competition.

Cybercrime threat? Security?

This is an area that requires constant focus and review. The threats are constantly evolving and so our response must evolve with them - and that gives us all challenges. Much as we enhance the system and create new barriers against threats, one of the biggest challenges is user training and awareness.

Every system is only as secure as the last person that used it, so to that end we employ a fully dedicated training team at Henderson Technology, who not only train on our EDGEPoS software, but also all other aspects of IT in our customers stores as needed. We also distribute monthly awareness packs about the latest threats to try and make sure our stores are prepared and that they know what to look for in email messages, what to look out for around the hardware at till areas, and how to secure their system at all times.

We also need to ensure that we have the right response systems in place, so that if there ever was an issue, we are able to isolate it and deal with it immediately. We have designed our systems not to hold sensitive personal data - security by design as the latest GDPR regulations put it - but we also have to be aware of threats that may cause an interruption to our business and the business of our customers. Again, having a dedicated team looking at business continuity, we can ensure we are prepared as best as we can be, and that our procedures and processes are in place to help our customers when they need us.

Future plans & objectives?

Keep evolving, and keep growing, but at all times keeping our contact with our customers. We pride ourselves on the strong relationships we have with our retailers, and this is the foundation that the business is built upon. When our customers trust us to help their business, and work with us to develop new solutions - that's when we have real success for both the team at Henderson Technology and them. We are expanding every week both geographically and technically, and it's an exciting place to be!

Henderson Technology is an innovative company that sits within the Henderson Group and is creating global innovations when it comes to retail technology. Here, Darren Nickels, Head of Henderson Technology gives us an overview of the business, and how they're breaking into international markets with their unique solutions

How important is technology to SPAR/EUROSPAR stores in NI?

As with all business today, technology plays a vital role in the day-to-day running of every convenience store, petrol forecourt, and supermarket in the country. Our retailers work in one of the most competitive and fast-moving sectors of the economy, and so it is vital that they have technology solutions that both meet their needs today to be able to run their business smoothly and efficiently, but that are also constantly evolving so as they can stay ahead of the competition.

Technology can be a true differentiator if it addresses a need for our customer and a want for our shopper. Thankfully our customers and retailers know this and are keen to invest in innovative technology to help drive their business - this is really why