

COMPANY CASE STUDY

The future of team communication in retail: Chelmsford Star Co-op's VoCoVo experience



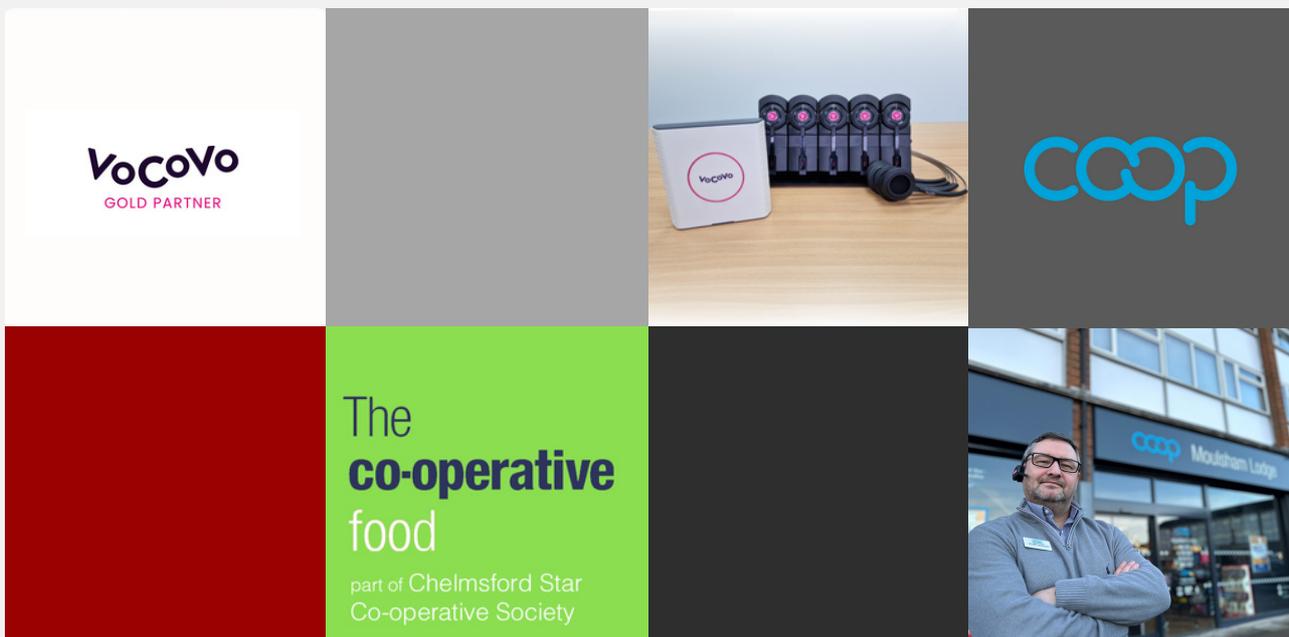
THE BIG PICTURE

Chelmsford Star Co-operative Society operates nearly 40 convenience stores in Essex, ranging from the East End of London to the Essex coast. Since it was founded in 1867, the business has been guided by a strong set of Co-op values and principles. All stores, which are slightly different, are purpose-built to support the neighbourhoods and communities they serve. As such, customer service and staff wellbeing are critical.

Until now, their stores had been relying on traditional bell/buzzer systems which were proving to be inefficient in a modern retail environment. Having seen VoCoVo being used within another Co-op Society they recognised the need to update their communication methods. As part of their store refit programme that began in 2023, the Society took the opportunity to switch solutions with a view to helping their teams communicate more effectively and serve their customers better. **"Being good people is simply in our DNA"** - a Co-op core business value.

CHELMSFORD STAR CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETY'S CHALLENGES

Outdated systems like tannoys and bell/buzzer methods could lead to delays and misunderstandings. This approach, which was beginning to feel dated, fell short of the Society's aim to deliver exceptional customer service. There has been an increase in use of headsets across the industry in recent years, and for good reason. Chelmsford Star Co-operative Society recognised the need to move to a more advanced communication solution that could simplify communication, enhance staff safety and seamlessly integrate with their existing infrastructure across several sites. They turned to 2826 Ltd and VoCoVo to help them overcome the challenges of a rapidly advancing retail sector.



Chelmsford Star Co-op is in the process of rebranding its food stores from a bright green fascia to a more modern grey and blue that incorporates the International Co-op marque.

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AT A GLANCE

Challenges

- Traditional outdated system
- Multiple sites
- Disjointed communications

Benefits

- Team 'togetherness'
- Exceptional customer service
- Speed & efficiency

REQUIREMENTS

The Society wanted a solution that would not only streamline operations but also provide a sense of togetherness for their team members. The ability to quickly and effectively communicate in case of emergencies, or other safety concerns, was also a key requirement.

The IT Leadership team sought a solution that could be implemented across all their convenience stores, and it needed to be reliable and scalable. It was critical that the headsets were an 'easy-to-use' system that could adapt to the unique needs of each store and its staff and be adopted quickly. They required the solution to be 'futureproof' and provide adaptations and functionality enhancements in time. In summary, they needed the new solution to...

- Streamline operations and enhance teamwork
- Deliver quick, effective communication
- Be reliable and scalable
- Provide easy-to-use, adaptable headsets
- Be a futureproofed investment

SOLUTIONS & OUTCOMES

VoCoVo Go 4 user systems were initially rolled out in 10 stores and have been embraced by staff who say that they simplify communication, improve the speed of communication and save time. The Chelmsford Star Co-operative Society have seen improved confidence and teamwork amongst staff, quickly delivering a positive impact on the customer experience (a core business value). Team members say they are more closely connected and working better as a result of the continuous communication provided by the VoCoVo devices. Further feedback indicates that VoCoVo not only exceeds the capabilities of its predecessor, but also offers a striking level of affordability compared to the outgoing communications system.

The Society's strategy is now to ensure all store colleagues are equipped with the headsets as soon as possible with a view to installing further VoCoVo technology to improve the profitability of their stores. These integrations, implemented once again by 2826 Ltd, range from stock and inventory control to enhanced security technology and much more and will grow as the business does.



"Our team love these headsets! They simplify communication, improve colleague safety, and have brought our colleagues closer together. Thank you, 2826 Ltd, for providing an excellent solution. We want to ensure all our food store employees are equipped with the headsets as soon as possible and then look at how we can use further VoCoVo technology to improve on our bottom line."

Martin Gibson
Head of IT