

## Deployment Company Overview

<b>Company:</b>	Blacks Outdoor Retail Ltd.
<b>Company Executive:</b>	Rodger Maguire, Head of Training & Development
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="http://www.blacks.uk/">http://www.blacks.uk/</a>
<b>Date Founded:</b>	1861
<b>Size:</b>	61 stores, 1800+ staff
<b>Location:</b>	United Kingdom
<b>Products:</b>	Outdoor & Camping equipment, clothing, footwear and accessories
<b>Selected Brands:</b>	Merrell, Berghaus, Osprey, Columbia, The North Face, Adidas and Salomon

Blacks Outdoor Retail Ltd., is a British retailer, headquartered in Bury, Greater Manchester, England which owns the British outdoor retailers Blacks and Millets. Blacks is the largest outdoor retailer in the UK with stores nationwide. Blacks is a subsidiary of JD Sports.

### Reinventing Organizational Learning.

In early 2015, Rodger Maguire, Head of Training & Development for Blacks, was tasked with implementing a new training solution to train store staff on product knowledge so they would sell with more confidence to customers. "The issue being that in this day and age, in-store training simply isn't as effective as it used to be because retailers do not have the staff or the time to allow a brand supplier to come in and fully engage with their staff," said Maguire. Brands were only covering 5-10% of the total workforce and it was expensive to host their training. Moreover, there was no transparency into skill levels at individual stores or in regions.

The company's legacy LMS was ruled out as although it was a robust system, it could not be accessed remotely and didn't support video. After discovering Myagi, Maguire knew it was a solution that met Blacks requirements because it provides an easy to use, universal online network for retailers and their brand partners that ensures everyone is receiving and engaging with the same content.

Myagi is an online retail learning and development network for retailers and their brand partners where sales associates build core skills to increase sales and provide superior customer service. Myagi is accessible on any device at any time, and it's easy to use for both learners and administrators, for whom it provides complete visibility over learning programs.

"Myagi has fundamentally changed the way we look at training", said Maguire. While Blacks still does traditional brick and mortar meet the brand type training, they now use Myagi to ensure Blacks staff have done their homework before they meet the brands to demonstrate they've reached the required levels of learning. In this way, both the staff and brands get more from the learning sessions. Myagi also acts as the ultimate distribution point and safety net for learning. No matter what else happens, Maguire knows that a defined level of content has been uniformly covered across all Blacks stores.

## Setting Up For Implementation.

After an orientation and onboarding session with the Myagi team, the account was promptly configured with learning content from Blacks and its brands. Learning programs were easy to design and distribute across teams and reporting provided transparency and accountability for learning participation and effectiveness. Roll out was more effective when led by top down champions with the head of retail, district and store managers able to go live and assign training to their teams only after they had taken the learning programs.

## Improving Productivity and Results.

Blacks has seen an increase in average basket value across its stores since adopting Myagi, as well an increase in compliance rates. With new store openings staff are now ready on day one and this beats the old way where 2-5 weeks could be spent training staff on different brands and their products. Blacks is also seeing better staff retention rates. "People are happy when you invest time and effort in them and you do things to help them do their job better, and Myagi helps people do their job better," says Maguire.

## Creating A Bright Future.

Starting from a pilot in early 2015, Myagi is now used across all 61 Blacks stores and the 7 Ultimate Outdoors stores. Due to its success, its now being implemented at sister company Millets across their 102 stores. The company is confident in its future amidst the rapidly changing retail environment as it knows how to use technology to teach staff to deliver better retail experiences. "I don't think we'll be swamped and taken over by online as long as we take a proactive stance towards developing staff knowledge and their commitment to customer service" said Maguire.

