



CASE STUDY

BMc Azurri helps East Cheshire Hospice implement new Gift Aid solution to support future growth

East Cheshire Hospice currently runs two warm, friendly charity shops and an ebay shop which all play a critical role in generating funds to support the Hospice's variety of services. As the Hospice receives less than 18% of its funding from the Government, it is vital that the stores are equipped to generate the maximum income, with Gift Aid being a major factor.

Since 1988, East Cheshire Hospice has been caring for people suffering from life-limiting illnesses. The Hospice cares for over 300 patients every year offering end-of-life care, symptom and pain control, rehabilitation and respite care.

Being a charity means that they can provide all their services without charge. Less than 20% of their funding is from the Government and the remainder is donated by the communities they serve: Buxton, Congleton, High Leigh, High Peak, Knutsford, Macclesfield, Poynton, Wilmslow and everywhere in-between.

Both stores are located in affluent areas and their drivers take out the Gift Aid forms with them when they collect furniture, free of charge. Having a good basic understanding and knowledge of Gift Aid across the organisation provides the perfect environment for the Hospice to build on and maximise the income it generates via Gift Aid.

The Challenge

Mick Prescott joined East Cheshire Hospice as their Retail Development Manager in August 2013 after moving from Forget Me Not Children's Hospice, West Yorkshire. As part of his role, Mick has been looking to expand their number of shops but is adamant that they must find the right location for success. He was also keen to ensure that the existing stores were working as effectively as possible before adding further stores to the mix and tackling their IT provisions was one of the first items on his agenda.

The BMC Azurri Solution

In Mick's previous role, he had used the BMC Azurri system in 10 shops and saw how effective it was and how quickly it made a difference to the overall processes in store.

"The stats at the hospice I worked at previously spoke for themselves and it was clear that it was a very worthwhile investment. When I came to East Cheshire Hospice, reviewing their Gift Aid IT provision was part of my immediate plans as the stores didn't have a solution in place at all" explains Mick.

Mick naturally looked at a range of suppliers in order to assess the best value for money and from both a quality and cost perspective, found that BMC Azurri came out on top. Combined with his previous good experience of working with both the solution and the team, he decided to enlist the help of BMC Azurri to get a Gift Aid solution up and running.



"In Mick's previous role, he had used the BMC Azurri system in 10 shops and saw how effective it was and how quickly it made a difference to the overall processes in store."



CASE STUDY

BMc Azurri helps East Cheshire Hospice implement new Gift Aid solution to support future growth

A straightforward, simple, solution

Mick decided to proceed with the BMc Azurri solution for a number of reasons.

“The pricing was very reasonable and many of the alternative solutions just seemed too big for what we needed. Ultimately, I needed it to do three things – process Gift Aid, provide visibility with regards to what was being sold in shops and then to have a system that supports the financial team so they can export information into their existing processes like Sage. From both a retail and financial perspective, the BMc Azurri solution did exactly what it said on the tin.

We didn't want a complicated system. Our shops are largely run by 80 volunteers with different skill sets and we've got to train all those people to use a new system. Putting a touch screen in front of them was quite a challenge but I must say that the BMc Azurri system was extremely user friendly and our staff were able to get up to speed very quickly,” explains Mick.

Looking to the future

Moving forward East Cheshire Hospice has growing requirements for barcode scanning and stock on new goods and the BMc Azurri team are looking to trial their latest stock system within the hospice reception area where they sell a variety of new goods. Their reception area sells a wide range of cards, handmade knitted products and branded merchandise.

The BMc Azurri team are also currently exploring additional updates to the system including Integrated Chip and pin (from a new partnership with YesPay), Footfall analysis with thermal imaging and Gift aid on rags – which has been developed with The Salvation Army.

“What is great about BMc Azurri is that they aren't just a Gift Aid software provider, they actually care about the growth and development of the retail side of our charity. Bob is able to advise and guide us on what is happening at other hospices he visits and often puts charities in touch with each other so that they can share advice on recent successful ideas,” explains Mick.



“The pricing was very reasonable and many of the alternative solutions just seemed too big for what we needed.”