



## Overview

**Country or Region:** United States  
**Industry:** Retail

### Customer Profile

Body O Soul owner Londa Laveck imaginatively revamped an old retail location into a new high-end men's and women's boutique in bustling Belmont Shores in Long Beach, California.

### Business Situation

Foreseeing the trade-off in hours spent keeping records versus time with customers, Laveck automated early. But the first solution, QuickSell 2000, hemmed in her future business plans.

### Solution

In one day, ADC Technologies installed Microsoft® Business Solutions Retail Management System to speed retail tasks, integrate future Web sales, and enable multi-store expansion.

### Benefits

- Daily reports guide purchasing and marketing.
- Staff schedules match store activity.
- Time saved from back-office chores goes to customer contact and new Web site.
- New hires learn system rapidly.
- Reporting takes minutes, not hours.

## Men's and Women's Fashionable Boutique Streamlines Retail Tasks to Court Customers

“Each step I save in the back room saves payroll money and time. Then I spend that time with paying customers who refer friends and might tell me about a new trend that brings us hundreds of sales.”

*Londa Laveck, Owner, Body O Soul*

Taking over and reinventing a long-established corner clothing store, Londa Laveck faced problems of the store's image, marketing, and administration. Buying an earlier retail solution saved her hours that she devoted to renovations, purchasing new lines, and to customer contact. But its limitations would have kept her to one store. ADC Technologies offered an upgrade to Microsoft® Business Solutions Retail Management System and its installation process was “no big deal.” The new power can open doors. In addition to saving hours and dollars through quick daily closings, inventories, and tax reports, Laveck is investing those saved hours in evolving her direct-sales Web site and planning a second store.



“You can’t run a retail store without automation. Not if you ever want to go home at night.”

Londa Laveck  
Owner  
Body O Soul

Body O Soul owner Londa Laveck revamped a neighborhood store with new image, products, marketing, and automation.



## Situation

Body O Soul is a fashionable boutique with clothing for men and women. Located in the eclectic and always-busy Belmont Shores section of Long Beach, California, this picturesque 2,000-square-foot corner store is featured in the 2005 movie *Look @ Me* by Runaway Productions. The boutique draws a constant stream of shoppers and lookers who often stay to shop. As many as six employees run one or two registers during peaks in store activity.

Body O Soul women’s apparel includes French and Italian lingerie brands such as Aubade, Lise Charmel, Christie, and Valerie. Shelves display luxury items such as lingerie and embroidered hosiery from Germany and Israel, plus loungewear and innovative jewelry, all of which set the store apart from competition.

The men’s department offers high-end shirts, blue jeans, tees, briefs, shoes, ties, and accessories for casual, business, and social occasions; even fragrances and jewelry. Labels display Hugo Boss, Ben Sherman, Diesel, Dolce, and Cabana.

## Unique Selling Proposition Meets Retail Reality

“We’re unique,” says owner Londa Laveck, “because couples can shop for each other at one store for everything from intimate apparel to party wear and jewelry. They even drop hints that we relay to their significant other during his or her next visit.”

When Laveck bought an existing clothing store in November 2000, she foresaw that she’d face marketing and administrative challenges. But she knew immediately how to take care of the administrative concerns. “You can’t

run a retail store without automation,” notes Laveck. “Not if you ever want to go home at night.”

Knowing that retail details can consume hours of after-hours personal and family time, she saved herself and staff thousands of customer and back-office hours with an early investment in QuickSell 2000, a thorough Microsoft® Windows® operating system-based retail system.

Marketing was a slower process. “I bought a store with a kind of Indian and hippie image that sold fifteen-dollar dresses and low-end jewelry. It didn’t fit with Belmont Shores’ potential,” comments Laveck.

## A New Look and New Marketing

“Selling nicer clothes and some impulse items involves much more than just waiting for a customer to throw an armful of pants and tops on the counter. It’s very personal. It takes time and attention to each person who walks in. We all strive for a sharp eye for who should wear what. And we work hard to maintain an excellent knowledge of our inventory. If you’re a sales associate and, for instance, you can visualize a male customer wearing a slim-waisted shirt—and you know that’s the right look for him—you had better know where to grab one,” she explains.

Laveck repainted inside and out, courted high-end suppliers, brought in expensive new lines, and had a new logo painted on doors and windows. Unusual for small store owners, Laveck invested in high-quality, human-looking mannequins to show clothes to their best advantage in window displays.

“Everything in a new store—windows, merchandise, staff, registers, location—has to help deliver that new brand message,” she says with a smile. “Especially when people still stop in today—years after I purchased the

## “Microsoft Retail Management System will let me go where I need to go. I can add stores, Web sales, and even a program to help me oversee everything.”

Londa Laveck  
Owner  
Body O Soul

Men's fragrances and accessories frequently become impulse buys for the person who came in for a high-fashion shirt.



store—and ask when we changed our retail format.”

Laveck's investment in early automation and reinventing the store's image paid off. Revenues and product lines continue to grow.

### Barriers to Expansion

In spite of Body O Soul's success, plans for future growth and economic security were fast approaching a bottleneck. “I want to start a second store. I'm setting up our Web site to sell directly to the public. But QuickSell 2000 wouldn't handle those needs. I couldn't integrate daily Web sales into one day-end report without doing double keyboard entry,” she observes.

### Solution

ADC Technologies of Newport Beach had originally sold Body O Soul its first QuickSell 2000 system, which worked well for four years. After Microsoft acquired QuickSell and began improving it, a new product, Microsoft® Business Solutions Retail Management System, emerged—and with it, new possibilities emerged for Laveck's company.

“Microsoft Retail Management System lets me go where I need to go,” advises Laveck. “I can add stores, Web sales, and even a program to help me oversee everything. I can use a laptop to monitor sales when I'm away.

“And, best of all, the conversion was no big deal. It was hassle-free. ADC just sent out a technician. There was no disruption to the business. What retailer needs that? Now we have the extra horsepower to grow.”

### Benefits

“I wouldn't have a business without it!”

asserts Laveck. “At the end of the day or first thing the next morning, I see what sold, what we collected, what departments are moving well, and what's not.

“Just recently, I was surprised to see that men's items were doing better than women's,” she reports. “Next, lingerie and tees and accessories are flying out the door. Now I know what to display more prominently, and what to buy.”

Londa finds that using the item-size matrix in Microsoft Retail Management System helps focus her buying on the sizes of specific items that sell best. “And matrixes are fabulous for customer service,” she says. “Customers always call in—sometimes due to our Web site—asking about their size in a certain color. We look it up and tell them in seconds. When they call to us from a dressing room that one item is too big and another is too small, it's faster to check the screen than run all over the store. And having our sales records this specific will help everyone watch out for pilferage.”

### See-Through Reporting

Laveck finds that the reporting power in Microsoft Retail Management System helps her distinguish turnover in different merchandise categories. “Some things blow out of here in a week, but more expensive lingerie might be here for a few months,” she comments. “At month-end, the reports show me totals. I can also see what sells best during what seasons.”

She goes on to say, “When I'm not here, the reports show me the store-census peaks and valleys. This knowledge enhances our image because we can be sure that we always staff adequately. It helps me forecast staffing. And it saves me money by not having people standing around during slow times.”

“I wouldn’t have a business without it! At the end of the day...I see what sold, what we collected, what departments are moving well, and what’s not.

Londa Laveck  
Owner  
Body O Soul

#### **Time and Money—A Tight Weave**

“In retail,” says Laveck, “time and money are woven together more than in most businesses. Each step I save in the back room saves payroll money and time. Then I spend that time with paying customers who refer friends and might tell me about a new trend that brings us hundreds of sales.”

She adds, “These days, I invest my off-hours time in preparing our Web site for direct selling. It’s the same principle as working with customers.”

Just as styles change with the seasons, staff revolve in and out, points out Laveck, who often scrambles to replace associates who return to school or move away. “Microsoft Retail Management System rescues me all the time,” she says. “The point-of-sale transactions—all of them—are fast to teach to new hires because they just make sense when you see the screens.” Although Laveck does most of the reports, a few trusted staff rapidly learned to do day-end reports.

“I save at least one hour a day with the new system, instead of tallying sales and merchandise by hand. On top of that, now we save hours and hours when we take inventory. Before, our month-end sales reports and California sales tax reports added even more time. Now, they’re literally two-minute tasks.”

Laveck uses QuickBooks for financial reports, but foresees that mastering even more of the reporting power in Microsoft Retail Management System will decrease the need to transfer data into a separate program.

“The more I learn about Microsoft Retail Management System, the more I see it as retail’s best overall solution,” she says. “For my next store, right after I sign the lease, I’m getting another Microsoft Retail Management System license.”

Laveck and staff instantly track and find thousands of men’s and women’s items, their sizes and styles, using the Matrix feature in Microsoft Retail Management System.



Laveck uses the employee log-in function in Microsoft Retail Management System to manage payroll. “Stop and consider all the time you’d spend adding up hours, transferring sums for each person, and making a final report for five or six people,” she suggests to fellow retailers. “And once I’ve put in a new vendor, all her information is in the system for future orders.”

## For More Information

For more information about Microsoft products and services, call the Microsoft Sales Information Center at (800) 426-9400. In Canada, call the Microsoft Canada Information Centre at (877) 568-2495. Customers who are deaf or hard-of-hearing can reach Microsoft text telephone (TTY/TDD) services at (800) 892-5234 in the United States or (905) 568-9641 in Canada. Outside the 50 United States and Canada, please contact your local Microsoft subsidiary. To access information using the World Wide Web, go to: [www.microsoft.com](http://www.microsoft.com)

For more information about ADC Technologies Group products and services, call (888) 823-2848 or visit the Web site at: [www.adctech.com](http://www.adctech.com)

For more information about Body O Soul products and services, call. 562-856-1600 or visit the Web site at: [www.BodyOSoul.net](http://www.BodyOSoul.net)

## Microsoft Business Solutions Retail Management System

Microsoft Business Solutions Retail Management System offers a complete store automation solution for small and medium-sized retailers, streamlining point-of-sale (POS), customer service, and store inventory management, and providing real-time access to key business metrics. Microsoft Retail Management System is a comprehensive solution for single-store and multi-store retailers that empowers independent proprietors, store managers, and cashiers through affordable and easy-to-use automation. Microsoft Retail Management System has the flexibility and scalability to grow with a retailer's business. It works with the Microsoft Office System, Microsoft Windows Small Business Server, and leading financial applications to provide end-to-end support from the cash register to the back office.

For more information about Microsoft Retail Management System, go to: [www.microsoft.com/pos](http://www.microsoft.com/pos)

### Software and Services

- Microsoft Windows® XP Professional
- Microsoft Business Solutions Retail Management System
- Microsoft Office System 2003

### Hardware

- Dell PC
- NEC flat screen monitor
- Compaq keyboard
- Cash drawer

### Partner

- ADC Technologies Group

© 2005 Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved.

This case study is for informational purposes only. MICROSOFT MAKES NO WARRANTIES, EXPRESS OR IMPLIED, IN THIS SUMMARY.

Microsoft and Windows are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the United States and/or other countries. All other trademarks are property of their respective owners.

Document published September 2005

**Microsoft®**