



Ten years since the launch of iQuote

"It's no coincidence that Westcoast is the biggest user of iQuote in the UK and HPE's leading Distributor."

Alex Tatham

Managing Director, Westcoast UK



Westcoast empowers Resellers with CPQ application - for over ten years

Westcoast provides iQuote to speed the quotation process and aid hardware, software and services configuration.

Objective

Provide Resellers with a self-service, web-based tool to accelerate the quotation of hardware, software and services whilst reducing pre-sales enquiries.

Approach

Identified an on-line business tool developer and piloted the solution for HPE before full worldwide deployment.

IT benefits

- Offers an efficient self-service portal for resellers to create quotations, lowering turnaround times significantly.
- Acts as a hardware configuration tool, accelerating the ordering process and reducing errors and multiple quotations.

Business benefits

- Supports an increase in monthly quotations, reducing workloads by lowering pre-sales enquiries.
- Maintains a three-hour Service Level Agreement (SLA), ensuring customer satisfaction.
- Helps pre-sales specialists focus on high-value solutions, boosting quotation value by 40 per cent.
- Facilitates the sale of HPE servers to small businesses, increasing market share.
- Enables further growth, increasing monthly sales revenue.

Industry

Technology

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Paul Harman, Enterprise Group and Software Commercial Manager, Westcoast Ltd

With Resellers using iQuote, we've managed to transform our quotation and configuration processes. This solution has been so successful it has become the HPE global sales tool for configuring servers, storage and networking.

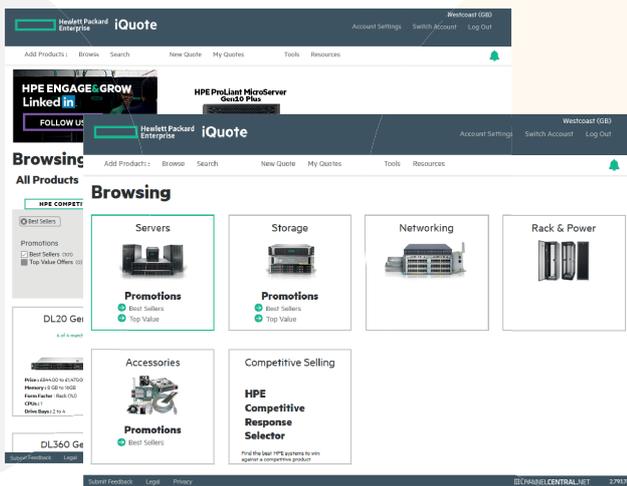
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About iQuote

iQuote is Configure Price Quote (CPQ) software for the IT Channel which generates correctly configured quotations for Hewlett Packard Enterprise (HPE) SMB BTO Portfolio



of Servers, Storage and Networking. iQuote can be accessed as a subscription service by HPE authorized Distributors and Resellers. Distributors can offer the service to their Resellers, or Resellers can have their own webstore and host their own iQuote service. iQuote Universal is a free-of-charge version of the software available to the IT Channel, with all the benefits of generating accurate quotations, but without host-specific pricing and stock availability.



HPE quotation and configuration tool inspires Resellers.

Westcoast Ltd, a leading wholesale supplier of IT products, provides iQuote to help Resellers create quotations and configure IT solutions. Pre-sales' workload fell by 50 per cent but monthly quotation value increased by 40 per cent, whilst maintaining a three-hour SLA. This has led to Westcoast increasing revenue and improving market share significantly.

Challenge

Seeking lower turnaround times.

The wholesale distribution of IT solutions to Resellers, Retailers and office product dealers, operates in a highly demanding and competitive business environment. Whether the customers of wholesale Distributors require simple or complex IT solutions, clients expect quotations in hours rather than days. After placing an order, they also want Distributors to deliver the correctly configured products rapidly.

Wholesale Distributors therefore constantly seek tools to lower quotation turnaround times, aid hardware configuration and reduce the length of the pre-sales enquiry process, which releases sales specialists' time for more important sales duties. Satisfying stringent Service Level Agreements (SLAs) to maintain or boost customer satisfaction and increasing quotation value, margins, revenue and market share whilst supporting rapid business growth were the main challenges faced by Westcoast Ltd within this diverse market sector.

Westcoast Ltd

Westcoast Ltd, a major HPE Distributor, is a leading supplier of IT products to the computer reseller and retailer networks within the UK and Ireland. Established in 1984, the company offers advanced hardware and software solutions as well as creative credit, logistics and marketing services to over 5,000 customers. Its customer base incorporates large commercial resellers, well-known high street stores and established system integrators serving the public, retail, corporate and small-to-medium business sectors.



Based in Theale, near Reading, and operating regional offices in Dublin, Glasgow, Milton Keynes and Nottingham, Westcoast's portfolio spans the computing spectrum from desktop PC and notebook products to high-end server, storage, networking and printing solutions, as well as consumables and peripherals. As an HPE Distributor, Westcoast offers a comprehensive range of HPE server, storage and networking solutions.

Not surprisingly, the company's data centre and disaster recovery facility are equipped with a modern, highly scalable server and storage environment based on an HPE Converged Infrastructure containing HPE ProLiant server blades. Microsoft® Hyper-V forms the virtualization platform while HPE Networking solutions link all offices and provide core and edge connectivity at each site.

Over the last 15 years, the business has grown substantially with group turnover reaching £2.5 billion in 2018. The Sunday Times consistently ranks Westcoast in its Top Track of the 100 largest privately-owned UK companies.

"[A number of years before implementing iQuote] we entered a period of rapid growth and experienced a considerable increase in the number of quotation requests from both existing and prospective customers," explains Phil LeBlond, Enterprise Group Technical Manager, Westcoast Ltd.

iQuote increases quotation value by 40 per cent

"We required a more effective way to process quotations for resellers, especially those needing servers with customised configurations for the small-to-medium business sector. Our pre-sales specialists were spending far too long involved with the pre-sales process of small, single instance servers rather than focussing on larger and more complex infrastructure solutions, and resellers wanted a self-service approach to speed up their response times," continues LeBlond.

"We wanted to empower customers with a quotation and configuration tool for Servers, Networking and Storage by shifting to a self-service capability," states LeBlond. "We simply couldn't jeopardize customer service by increasing our quotation SLA to accommodate additional growth. HPE also recognized the importance of this problem within its reseller partner community and asked us to pilot a new tool in development by channelcentral.net."

Solution:

Web-based solution evolves.

After a successful pilot which introduced a series of improvements, the tool evolved into iQuote, a managed cloud-based service that resolves the problems associated with the provisioning of complex, rules-based sales quotations that also aids the hardware configuration process. iQuote has now become the global sales quotation tool for HPE SMB BTO Portfolio of Servers, Storage and Networking.

“We helped channelcentral.net to develop this solution and regularly suggested modifications to enhance its capabilities. Resellers now have a choice. They can access our hosted copy or deploy it on their own web site,” reveals LeBlond. “With Resellers using iQuote we managed to transform our quotation and configuration processes. It’s a powerful addition to our existing on-line tools. This solution became so successful, it was rolled out worldwide to Distributors, and it has become the HPE global sales tool for configuring servers, networking and storage.

“After deploying iQuote, the number of quotations generated and entering our system rose dramatically while maintaining our three-hour SLA even when our pre-sales personnel become involved,” says LeBlond. “Empowering our salesforce to generate their own quotes has allowed us to achieve a much better service to our customers and, as a consequence, increase revenue significantly. Handling this number of quotations with our existing staff level would be impossible without iQuote.”

The iQuote tool comprises of multiple functions, simplifying and accelerating the quotation, configuration and ordering process for Resellers. iQuote incorporates:

- Secure Login
- Browse/Search and even Switch To HPE (from a competitor)
- Configuration, validation and recommendations
- Price (and Promotional Pricing)
- Stock to optimize the quote against our inventory
- Save Quotes, Templates, Reopen, Share, Export and Buy Now
- Solutions
- Loose Parts (accessory/option only quoting)
- Demand Shaping: Top Recommended Options and Auto Add
- Engage and Grow Points
- Matching of pre-installed items.
- Reporting Services and Vault (New) are available to ensure return on investment and close sales leads.

“iQuote is a real time saver. It has all the compatible options in one place, which helps to ensure accuracy and provides optimal performance for our customer’s requirements,” declares Ian Starling, Account Manager, Netteam Consultants Ltd.

If Resellers approach a wholesale Distributor, such as Westcoast, that hosts iQuote, they benefit from real-time stock and pricing, shopping cart integration and Distributor promotions. Resellers using this intuitive self-service facility, eliminate the generation of multiple quotations which could potentially frustrate their customers, leading to lost orders.

“To help resellers maximize margins and increase revenue while offering better customer service, our business development managers provide a comprehensive training programme to help the Resellers’ sales forces use iQuote,” adds LeBlond.

Benefits

Pre-sales enquiries fall while quote value climbs.

Today, approximately 400 Westcoast customers employ iQuote generating over 4,000 quotes per month. The quotation and configuration tool provides the company’s UK and Irish resellers with a highly efficient and error-free self-service system for placing orders, frequently without involving Westcoast personnel.

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Phil LeBlond, Enterprise Group Technical Manager, Westcoast Ltd

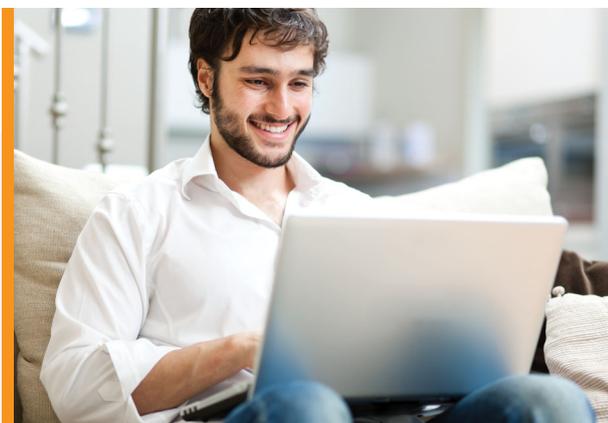
After deploying iQuote, the value of quotations generated and entering our system on a monthly basis increased by 40 per cent while maintaining our three-hour SLA. By empowering our salesforce to confidently generate their own server quotes we’ve freed up our pre-sales experts to work on more complex HPE infrastructure solutions.

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A dedicated portal for Westcoast servers helps Resellers focus on HPE ProLiant server sales while direct feedback to channelcentral.net drives continuous improvements of iQuote.

“iQuote allows us to quickly and accurately build server solutions while providing the correct solution first time, at the best price for our customers,” says Colin Weeks, Technical Director, itQED Ltd.

“Although we saw a dramatic increase in the number of quotations generated, the quantity of pre-sales enquiries handled by our pre-sales specialists fell by 50 per cent while the quotation value managed by the team increased by 40 per cent,” comments LeBlond. “Sales personnel no longer experience excessive backlogs and they don’t create customer service issues due to incorrect configurations or recommendations.



Rising market share and revenue

Westcoast has also found that iQuote is helping an increasing number of Resellers to drive sales of HPE ProLiant servers, HPE Storage and HPE Networking solutions to small-to-medium business users although many of them do not have an active salesforce.

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Following the introduction of iQuote to empower the smaller businesses, we saw monthly sales revenue grow by 100 per cent. This impressive performance has benefitted both our organization and HPE, concludes LeBlond.

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**Hewlett Packard
Enterprise**

iQuote

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About channelcentral

channelcentral is a highly focused and dynamic software provider for organisations in the IT Channel.



CHANNELCENTRAL.NET
TECHNOLOGY BUSINESS SPECIALISTS

channelcentral's key strength is its expertise and ability to take complex data sets and provide user friendly tools that provide fast, accurate and relevant product and service quotations for Manufacturers, Resellers and Distributors in the IT Channel. channelcentral services enable companies in the IT Channel to become more efficient, profitable and easier to do business with. channelcentral is a leading Configure, Price, Quote (CPQ) Software as a Service (SaaS) Company with clear specialisms in the IT Industry and eCommerce environments.

For more information on channelcentral services go to
www.channelcentral.net

