

£1.8bn

JLP'S SALES OVER 2015'S SIX-WEEK FESTIVE PEAK

3

TRADING PEAKS THAT NOW DEFINE CHRISTMAS

23:00

LATEST EXTENDED CLOSING TIME IN JOHN LEWIS

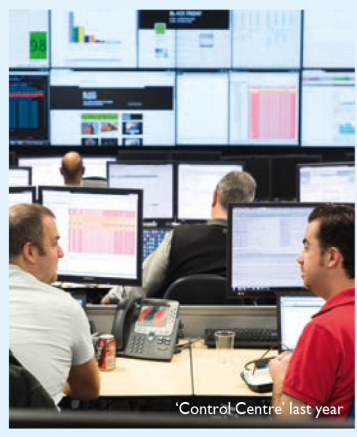
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FESTIVE WEEKENDS PLANNED AT LECKFORD

All systems go

It's down to IT to ensure the Partnership's systems remain resilient throughout peak and this year's planning began in January, says Dean Prior, Senior Manager, Service Planning and Management, Partnership IT. "We look at what was successful last year, what we need to develop and what the business is expecting," he says. "It's difficult to predict what our customers will do so it's our job to make sure we have the capacity to manage customer transactions, that everything is clearly tested, that we have round the clock support, have completed our security patching, have considered all the risks and have plans in place to manage them."

IT is currently in the 'black change period', meaning that only business-critical changes can go through systems. "All IT Partners are now on full alert to ensure that our systems support us to have a great peak," adds Dean.



'Control-Centre' last year

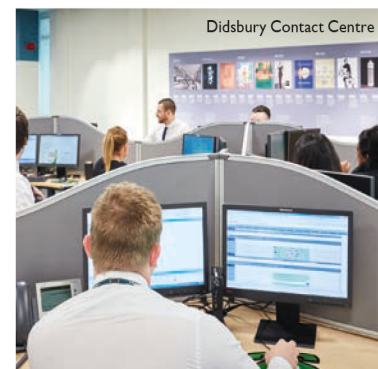


Get set for the turkey run

Two hundred and forty thousand. That's how many turkeys Waitrose is predicting it will sell this Christmas and it's down to the Waitrose supply chain to ensure each and every one of them makes it into shops in time to sell, or for customers to collect, by Christmas Eve.

The birds, which will occupy almost 75,000 cases, will be stored in Waitrose's Leyland Regional Distribution Centre in Lancashire from 6 to 18 December, before they're transported to branches between 19 and 23 December.

Richard Allen, Operational Change Support Manager, Distribution Services, has planned the turkey operation for almost a decade. "There's an enormous effort involved in making sure customers get their turkeys in time for Christmas," he says, "but it's big business for Waitrose so our Partners pull out all of the stops."



The phones are all busy

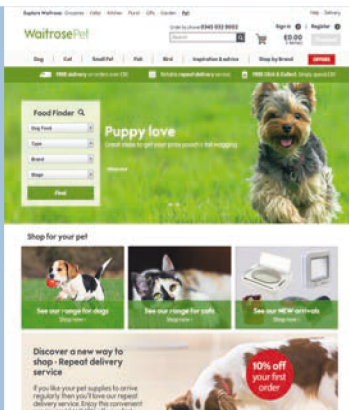
Black Friday marks not just one, but five of the busiest days of the year for John Lewis's customer contact centres, with peak activity stretching from Black Friday Eve through to Cyber Monday. Lynsey Elliot, Department Manager, Hamilton Customer Service, says: "Black Friday has changed over the years. We used to focus on the Friday, but now our busiest day and most challenging service level is Cyber Monday."

On Black Friday 2015, the Hamilton and Didsbury contact centre teams took 36,101 customer calls, generating significant sterling sales – which this year they're aiming to beat.

High call volumes will continue across November and December, with customers calling to check availability on sought-after products pre-Christmas and for after-sales support post-Christmas.

GIVE A DOG A BONE

...Or a luxury collar, squeaky Brussels sprout toy and flashing reindeer sweater. Heck, if we're talking about Buster the Boxer, why not just stick a trampoline on the list? These days gifts for our furry loved ones are big business, with both waitrosepet.com and johnlewis.com getting in on the act.



READ ALL ABOUT IT

In retail, Christmas doesn't just happen in December – it also happens in July. That's when Waitrose and John Lewis host their festive press shows to highlight our assortments, and many of the media mentions now appearing in glossy lifestyle magazines are the result of those summertime events.



OPEN ALL HOURS?

Not quite, but Waitrose and John Lewis do extend their trading hours at both ends of the day in the build-up to peak. JL Trafford stays open the latest of any of our full-line department stores, while branches such as JL Heathrow and Waitrose's Welcome Breaks benefit the most from shoppers on the move.