



# Beaverbrooks

To enable more efficient collaboration across the company, Beaverbrooks wanted to give its employees an easy way to communicate with each other and with head office. Novell Vibe® provides a 'company home page', bringing together a growing array of podcasts, wikis, messaging tools, workflows and task-management tools to help streamline operations and foster better connections between staff.

### Overview

Established in 1919, Beaverbrooks is a family-owned jewellery retailer with 64 stores across the UK. More than 800 people work for the company, which is proud of its record as an employer: it achieved first place in the Sunday Times "100 Best Companies To Work For" list in 2009, and has made it into the top four in seven of the past nine years.

### Challenge

Beaverbrooks puts considerable emphasis on customer service, and wants to ensure that its salespeople have all the right information to be able to help customers find the right items to suit their taste and price-range. This might include information on: precious metals and stones in general; specific items of jewellery; stock and pricing levels both in the home store and across the group; and information on seasonal promotions.

In the past, head office operated an e-mail memo system to communicate items for action to managers and other employees. Not only was this a very top-down form of communication that did little to promote inter-store communications, but also it meant there was limited visibility over what was actually being achieved. Beaverbrooks wanted a far more transparent and user-

friendly way to disseminate information and track the completion of company-wide tasks.

### Solution

"Whenever we have a new IT requirement, our first instinct is to consult Novell," said Patrick Walker, IT Director at Beaverbrooks. "We like the quality, reliability and performance of our Novell® systems, and our enterprise agreement makes the adoption of new Novell technologies cost-effective. In this case, we quickly realised that Novell Vibe was the collaboration solution we needed."

Following the rapid deployment of Novell Vibe, the newly appointed Head of Communications at Beaverbrooks ran a series of workshops to train users and promote the solution. "Technically, it was very easy to set up the solution," said Walker. "We've never seen this as an IT project—for us, the key strength of Novell Vibe is making it easy for users to create and maintain shared content, which in turn motivates them to communicate and share more. The solution acts almost as a homepage for the business, and a jumping-off point for podcasts, training videos, blogs, wikis and 'guest books' that employees can use to build links with their colleagues in other stores."

### Beaverbrooks at a glance:

Family-owned jewellery retailer with 64 stores

#### ■ Industry:

Retail

#### ■ Location:

UK

#### ■ Products and Services:

Novell Vibe

#### ■ Results:

- Enhanced the productivity of in-store staff with targeted information tools
- Ensured greater focus on core selling tasks by minimising administrative effort
- Enabled new levels of collaboration and interaction between staff and stores

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#### Patrick Walker

Head of IT  
Beaverbrooks



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Novell Vibe provides secure online workspaces that empower users to build teams, interact, and create and manage content. With built-in calendars, messaging tools, workflows, dashboards and content management tools, Novell Vibe is designed to foster productivity and creativity, augmenting or replacing existing intranet solutions.

“The solution is currently being developed to enable us to create tasks for the entire company, for subsets of users, or for individual employees,” said Walker. “When they log in, users will be able to see any outstanding tasks, and head office can track tasks through to completion.”

In the future, Beaverbrooks plans to create workflows in Novell Vibe that will integrate data from point-of-sale, sales order and stock control systems.

Beaverbrooks is now trialling touchscreen kiosks in staff break rooms, and is also rolling out netbooks for in-store staff and smartphones for area managers—all to enable easier access to Novell Vibe.

## Results

By avoiding changes to its existing infrastructure, and by utilising its Novell enterprise

licensing agreement, Beaverbrooks was able to design, develop and deploy the Novell Vibe solution at a fraction of the cost of alternatives.

“We analysed the costs of building a similar solution on another major vendor’s platform, and calculated that it would have cost around £30,000 for the software licensing alone,” said Walker.

Novell Vibe is now the first port of call for all employees, acting as a gateway to internal information services. Users value the ability to quickly see what tasks they need to accomplish and what new information is available. They also use Novell Vibe workflows to make holiday requests, and Beaverbrooks plans to add numerous other workflows.

“For Beaverbrooks, the key benefit of Novell Vibe is that it makes it easier for our salespeople to help customers,” said Walker. “By freeing our people up from administrative tasks and giving them the information they need at their fingertips, the Novell solution enables them to really focus on customer service.”



### For More Information:

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### Novell UK Limited

Novell House  
1 Arlington Square  
Downshire Way  
Bracknell  
Berkshire  
RG12 1WA  
United Kingdom

Tel.: +44 (0) 1344 724000  
Fax: +44 (0) 1344 724001  
E-mail: [contact-uk@novell.com](mailto:contact-uk@novell.com)  
[www.novell.com](http://www.novell.com)

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