

Dobbies Garden Centres

Using SMART Enabled Refrigeration
to Reduce CapEx and OpEx





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For 150 years, Dobbies has stood for quality horticulture, holding their position as a market leader in Garden Chains across the UK. With over 3,800 colleagues in 77 stores, Dobbies are a household brand providing garden furniture, gardening equipment, outdoor living and home furniture. The organisation have a long commitment to sustainability with a focus on their products, recycling and initiatives within their stores.

Challenges and Opportunities

Dobbies required new refrigeration assets across their stores for a new product offering of fresh food. Investing in those assets across the estate would have led to a significant upfront Capital Expenditure (CapEx) investment for the organisation, and so a more flexible option with a sustainable focus was required.

- Had a requirement for new refrigeration assets but wanted to limit new CapEx investment.
- New assets had to align with the sustainability goals of Dobbies, ensuring they could introduce refrigeration without drastically increasing energy consumption or environmental impact of the stores.
- Needed new ways to cut store Operational Expenditure (OpEx) in order to maximise the profitability of existing stores so the organisation could continue to thrive and grow.
- Struggling to introduce full 360 visibility of asset performance and maintenance across the store facilities.
- Limited real-time monitoring capabilities across existing assets in stores and across the wider estate.

The Solution

Working with Rental+ and LoweConex, Dobbies initially rented 567 refrigeration cabinets and walk-in coldrooms as SMART Enabled, providing them with a no CapEx solution across their estate with associated technology to optimise OpEx over time.

- Rental+ provided Dobbies with the 567 units, providing delivery of each asset to every required store with the LoweConex SMART enabled technology installed.
- LoweConex monitor the operational performance of every refrigeration unit and ensure assets run on set schedules to standardise setpoint control and roll out remote switch-offs for non-perishable units to reduce energy consumption.
- The technology's operational monitoring then provides 24/7/365 alarms for any faults that may arise, ensuring Dobbies can get ahead of faults before they occur.
- If an asset does breakdown, LoweConex will liaise with the Rental+ maintenance teams to manage the work orders for Dobbies, minimising OpEx related to facilities and running costs even further.

Key Outcomes and Business Impact

£787.11

Annual Average Saving per Cabinet

£417,120

Total Savings



Procuring SMART Enabled Rental refrigeration from Rental+ and LoweConex has transformed the impact on our estate energy and maintenance efforts. The combined CapEx and Software offering provides us not only with the physical assets we require for our stores, but complete and ongoing visibility in to the performance of those assets and reliable maintenance services should they be required.

Michael Brooks | Head of Construction and Maintenance | Dobbies Garden Centres